



RESEARCH REPORT

# Equitable Development and Urban Park Space

Results and Insights from the First Two Years of Implementation of the  
Equitable Development Plan of DC's 11th Street Bridge Park Project

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This report is dedicated to the memory of Oromenta Newsome, a longtime champion for equitable development and equity for all people in the District of Columbia.

# Acronyms

BBAR	Building Bridges Across the River
CFH	City First Homes, an affiliate of City First Enterprises
CLEW	Community Leadership and Empowerment Workshop
CLTAC	Community Land Trust Advisory Committee
DCLT	Douglass Community Land Trust
DDOT	District Department of Transportation
EDP	Equitable Development Plan
LISC	Local Initiatives Support Corporation
THEARC	Town Hall Education Arts Recreation Campus
TOPA	Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act
Wacif	Washington Area Community Investment Fund



# Introduction

The vision for the 11th Street Bridge Park is ambitious: to create a lively pedestrian span across the Anacostia River that adds recreational, cultural, and environmental value for the District of Columbia while bringing greater economic opportunity and inclusion to long-time residents of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The 1,200-foot bridge is slated for completion in 2023. The Bridge Park planners, nonprofit partners, residents, underwriters, and other city stakeholders are now entering their third year of implementing the project's Equitable Development Plan. The stated goal of the Bridge Park's Equitable Development Plan is to ensure that the park is a driver of inclusive development—that is, development that provides opportunities for all residents regardless of income and demography. The plan includes strategies aimed at securing jobs, small business opportunities, affordable housing, and black cultural heritage for current and future residents with lower incomes. Bridge Park planners and other key stakeholders have intentionally pursued these strategies in tandem with activities to secure funds and permits for the physical structure of the park itself in an effort to ensure that the Bridge Park's expected economic and social benefits reach the residents of Washington, DC's, Ward 8, many of whom have been marginalized by years of systemic racism, segregation, and consequent disinvestment in neighborhoods like Anacostia, Fairlawn, and Congress Heights.

Bridge Park leaders have issued two versions of the 11th Street Bridge Park's Equitable Development Plan (EDP) since inception of the project. The first, the 2015 EDP, was released in fall 2015, and the second, the 2018 revised EDP, was released in early October 2018. Both plans lay out strategies for affordable housing, small business, and workforce development. The second plan also includes a new strategy for cultural equity. Both plans were crafted in consultation with community residents and other stakeholders.

The Bridge Park presents an especially valuable case study on the challenges posed when a highly anticipated new public amenity takes shape near distressed neighborhoods in a rapidly gentrifying city. The Park and its EDP also offer an opportunity to assess whether and how current residents of surrounding communities can reap the benefits of new development in their neighborhoods when economic developers make equity a priority. As the Bridge Park leaders acknowledge in the recently updated version of the EDP: "It is well known that the construction of signature public parks can significantly change land values and uses in surrounding areas."

This is the second implementation study report in an Urban Institute series of products that track the Bridge Park’s progress on its goal to be a “driver of inclusive development” for the neighborhoods surrounding the Bridge Park footprint. In the first report, the research team documented the creation of the design plan for the park and for the equitable development of surrounding neighborhoods and reported on early process results achieved by park planners. Some results included early and frequent resident involvement in the Bridge Park structural design and its plan for equitable development; the demonstrable commitment of Bridge Park leaders to setting and tracking numeric goals for the development of affordable housing, small businesses, and new jobs for current residents; and the attraction of a large and aligned \$50 million investment in equity for the surrounding neighborhoods.

This second report begins by laying out the regional, local, and historic context for development in neighborhoods surrounding the Bridge Park; then documents progress on the project’s equitable development activities and results over the past two years; and concludes with a discussion from the research team about how equitable development stakeholders and planners in DC and other cities might consider navigating the challenges and opportunities that often line the path to achieving equity as an outcome for long-marginalized groups of people.

# Key Context

Equitable development planners typically must balance two realities which, if left in tension, can easily undermine efforts to share prosperity among diverse income, racial, and ethnic groups in hot housing markets like DC, New York City, and San Francisco. The first reality is that it is difficult to improve the economic prospects of people in distressed neighborhoods without also bringing new investment. The second reality is that new investment often attracts more wealthy people to distressed places, thereby displacing people of lesser means who should be its first beneficiaries.

That said, this report begins by laying out four pieces of context that are crucial to understand before assessing the value of any results that Bridge Park leaders and stakeholders may have achieved to date: first, the large economic disparities between neighborhoods to the east and west of Bridge Park; second, the troubled history of development and disinvestment in DC's Ward 7 and 8 communities that has played a significant role in producing these disparities; third, what the recent regional development picture for metropolitan DC looks like; and, fourth, how some current low-to-moderate-income Ward 8 residents view their prospects for enjoying the results of revitalization in either DC or Ward 8.

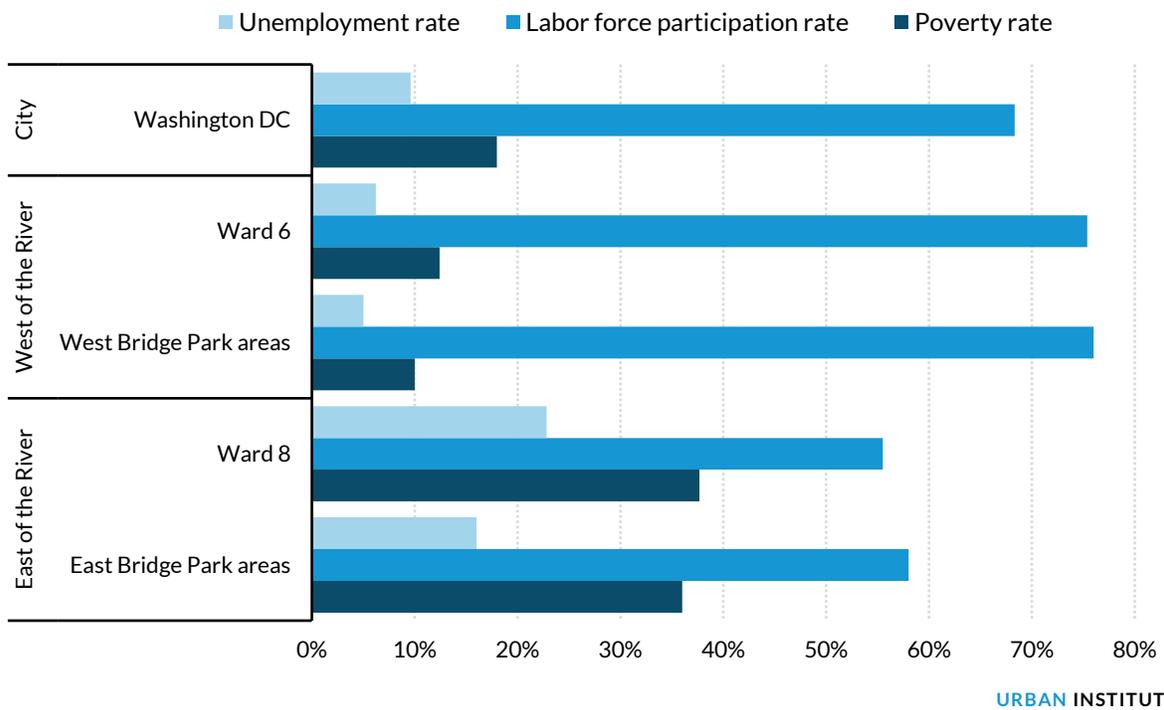
## A Large Gap to Span

There are stark economic disparities between the people who live in neighborhoods about a one-mile walking radius to the west (Navy Yard and Capitol Hill in Ward 6) and east (Anacostia, Hillside, and Fairlawn in Ward 8) sides of the Bridge Park footprint.

American Community Survey (2011–15) data reveal that residents in the east participate somewhat less in the labor force and have much higher rates of unemployment than residents in the west. In addition, over 36 percent of residents in the eastern area live below the federal poverty level, twice the city rate (18 percent) and more than three times the rate in the western area (10 percent; figure 1). Residents to the east and west of the Bridge Park also have dramatically different wages. In 2015, 81 percent of families living to the east of the Bridge Park site—and 75 percent of families living in Wards 7 and 8—had annual incomes below \$75,000, which is roughly equivalent to the living wage a family with two to three children in DC would need to pay typical expense like food, housing, and transportation (figure 2).<sup>1</sup>

FIGURE 1

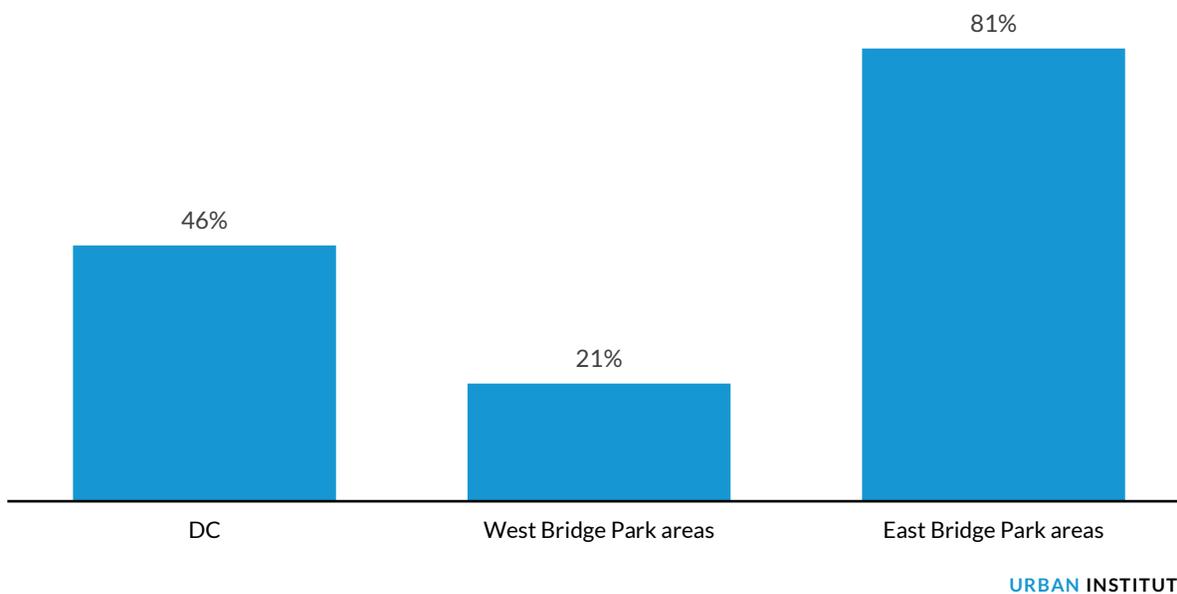
Comparative Analysis of Neighborhoods to the West and East of the Anacostia River



Source: Authors' calculations based on 2011-15 American Community Survey five-year data.

FIGURE 2

Share of Families with Incomes below \$75,000



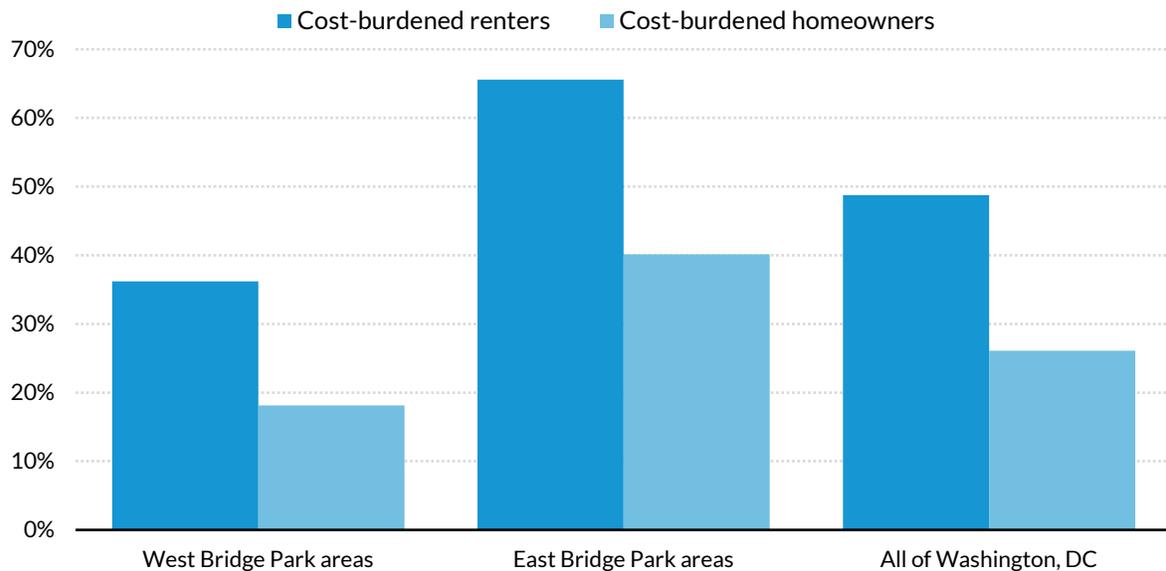
Source: Authors' calculations based on 2011-15 American Community Survey five-year data.

These disparities are also evident in educational attainment, which can lead to further inequality in employment, income, and housing. Though most residents on the west side have completed high school through some level of postsecondary education, residents to the east have experienced the opposite: most residents ages 25 and older have attained no more than a high school diploma or GED.

And although neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River hold a disproportionate share of DC's assisted housing, current residents to the east of the Bridge Park footprint are already significantly more rent burdened than others who live in the District. Far exceeding citywide rates, 60 percent of renters and 40 percent of homeowners of the neighborhoods to the east of the Bridge Park site spend more than 30 percent of their income on rental and housing costs, and 40 percent of renters are *severely cost burdened*, meaning they spend more than 50 percent of their income on rent. Renters ages 25 to 64 to the east experience housing-cost burden at more than twice the rate of renters to the west; the same holds true for homeowners ages 35 and older (figure 3).<sup>2</sup>

Each of these disparities has a racial element. Compared with the city, Ward 6 has a greater share of non-Hispanic white residents (52 percent), while Ward 8 is majority non-Hispanic black (92 percent, compared with 23 percent in Ward 6). Race and ethnicity, especially in DC, can and does determine socioeconomic outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

**FIGURE 3**  
**Share of Cost-Burdened Renters or Homeowners**



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**Note:** A household is considered cost burdened if it spends 30 percent or more of its income on housing costs.

# Development and Disinvestment in DC's Ward 7 and 8

The disparities discussed above and current economic development in Wards 7 and 8 are preceded by a troubled history of development, redevelopment, and disinvestment.

## **Urban Renewal and White Flight Segregate Black Residents in the Early to Mid-20th Century**

The Washington, DC, of the early 20th century looked vastly different than the DC of today. At that time, less than 5 percent of the population of DC lived east of the Anacostia River, and those who did were mostly white. The creation of a predominately black, predominately lower-income enclave of communities across the river was the result of development decisions made over the 20th century that altered the landscape of DC significantly.

Washington, DC, was a favored destination of black people fleeing the Jim Crow south after the abolition of slavery. Many ended up in what we now consider downtown DC, living in alley slums in the city's tiny Southwest quadrant where many Capitol Hill neighborhoods and federal buildings are found today. Ironically, though some black people had established themselves in areas east of the Anacostia River, especially as "free blacks" during the 1800s, many 20th century would-be movers were blocked by exclusionary covenants. For example, covenants for Uniontown, the white working-class enclave that used to be where the Anacostia neighborhood currently sits reflected the racism facing black people seeking to move across the river. One covenant of this neighborhood forbade, "Negroes, mulattoes, pigs, or soap boiling."<sup>4</sup>

These conditions kept many migrant black families in slum housing in the alleyways of Southwest DC. By the 1930s, DC planners had identified black alley dwellers as a problem population. The National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the federal urban planning authority charged with managing all federally owned land in DC, produced documents detailing the number of so called "alley dwellers," the poor condition of their housing, and the resulting blight. By the 1950s, DC civic leaders decided to undertake a process of "urban renewal," as many other large cities across the country were doing. This decision came at the urging of wealthy white landowners who wanted to use the downtown land for new development to accommodate white professionals moving into the city. Urban renewal in DC was meant to clear the Southwest quadrant of alley dwellings and other substandard housing.<sup>5</sup> The National Capital Park and Planning Commission's original plan included the idea that families could be rehoused in place (NCPPC 1930). In practice, the policy resulted in the almost complete displacement of black households from Southwest.

This was the first step toward the formation of the Southeast quadrant, which includes most of DC's Ward 7 and 8, as it is perceived today. In a pattern that mirrors the redevelopment of other cities, low-income black residents were pushed to the less-developed, cheaper areas east of the Anacostia River. Two landmark Supreme Court decisions further accelerated the demographic shift: *Hurd v. Hodge* in 1948, which struck down enforcement of exclusionary housing covenants, and *Brown v. the Board of Education* in 1954, which paved the way for school integration. In the aftermath of the landmark decision, DC's Board of Education moved quickly to desegregate schools, making the city one of the first areas to move to integrate its schools (Knoll 1959). DC schools were a significant attraction for black families during the second wave of the Great Migration of black citizens from the South, but white residents who lived to the east of the river initially protested the *Brown* decision. Eventually, white families began moving away to prevent their children from going to school with black people.<sup>6</sup>

Over roughly the same period, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission grossly underestimated the number of housing units available to house former alley dwellers as well as the growing population of the District. Left with nowhere to shelter many of the former alley dwellers, the District began constructing large amounts of public housing. Originally these units were to be spread throughout the District. However, the availability of land in Wards 7 and 8 quickly made them the prime areas for public housing, and by 2015 those two wards held about 4 of every 10 public housing units. Increasing white flight, spurred in part by the uprising following Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, further concentrated poverty across DC, particularly in east DC neighborhoods. Beyond development of public housing, other public and private investments in the eastern most wards dried up.

The combination of displaced black people from the center city, continued migration from the south, and white flight to the suburbs changed the population of Anacostia from 82 percent white in 1950 to only 37 percent white in 1967.<sup>7</sup>

## **Disinvestment Ravages Already Distressed Communities in the Late 20th Century**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, DC was facing a rapid loss of residents and crippling disinvestment. The drug epidemics and high crime rates of the 1980s and 1990s only furthered the economic distress of the entire city during those years, as well as disinvestment in Wards 7 and 8. In response, middle-income black residents began to take flight from DC neighborhoods, often heading further east to resettle in nearby Prince George's County, Maryland.<sup>8</sup> The citywide poverty rate climbed to 24 percent in 1995, and by 2000, some neighborhoods in Ward 8 had rates over 50 percent. Redevelopment became a primary focus of DC government in the decades following the 1973 Home Rule Act, giving

control over local affairs back to District residents, and of the federally appointed Control Board, which oversaw the financially troubled city's affairs from 1995 to 2001 (Tatian et al. 2008). Redevelopment largely proceeded on two related, but often separate, tracks of economic development: businesses and commercial development aimed at bringing capital and jobs into neighborhoods, and housing development aimed at helping struggling residents afford housing through subsidies (Proscio 2012).

Community development corporations began taking on prominent roles in attempting to redevelop neighborhoods. These models were particularly conscious of the community role in redevelopment, in contrast to the top-down urban renewal process. Public works projects, including the expansion of the Green line in the city's transit system and the redevelopment of the Columbia Heights neighborhood, became the focus of heated debates about development outcomes along the centrally located 14th street corridor in community charrettes (Howell 2016).

Community development in neighborhoods to the east of the Anacostia River in the 1990s was especially fraught because of how hard hit the area was by white flight, long-term disinvestment, and the ravages of the crack epidemic. Residents in these neighborhoods experienced increasing concentration of poverty, unemployment, and other factors, which have depressed their economic mobility (Acs, Eyster, and Schwabish 2015). Though other areas of the city were the focus of concentrated revitalization efforts, development in Wards 7 and 8 was more sporadic, requiring significant effort and risk from community members and developers. This risk is exemplified by the "exception that proves the rule" development of the Villages at Parklands, a 1,400-unit apartment building that had fallen into disrepair, and its neighbor THEARC (The Town Hall Education, Arts, and Recreation Center). In 1991, William C. Smith & Co. purchased the Parklands during a time when few developers would invest in Congress Heights. The firm stewarded both the redevelopment of the Parklands and the creation of the multiuse community center in THEARC. The project required significant amounts of unconventional financing and investment in the Congress Heights community.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, in Anacostia, the Anacostia Economic Development Corporation had to petition the city to construct the Anacostia metro station as well as the Good Hope Marketplace Shopping Center.<sup>10</sup> Though none of these large-scale projects changed the broader pattern of economic disinvestment east of the Anacostia River, they were precursors for community involvement during the boom of large-scale public works and private developments that occurred in the early 21st century and continue today.

## Contemporary Trends in Investment to the East of the Anacostia River

A number of government-driven development projects in Wards 7 and 8 came on line around the first decade of the 21st century. These projects are in many ways precursors to the rising tide of private development occurring east of the Anacostia River today, especially in close-to-the-river Ward 8 neighborhoods, such as Anacostia, Fairlawn, and Hillside. In Ward 7, as part of the New Communities Initiative, a government program designed to revitalize severely distressed communities, the city has invested heavily in restoring the Strand Theater into a housing and a business incubator.<sup>11</sup> In 2009, the DC Department of Housing and Community Development moved from Northeast DC to the Anacostia Gateway;<sup>12</sup> it now anchors the commercial and retail redevelopment of a vacant plot near the iconic neon “Anacostia” sign at the corner of Good Hope Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue that has long greeted visitors crossing over from west of the river. Examples of other intentional public anchors for development to the east of the Anacostia River include the DC Department of Employment Services, which relocated to Ward 7 in 2010, and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity, which was recently established in the heart of Anacostia.

What is becoming increasingly clear is that, as space and affordability have become so competitive across the city, residents and developers are looking to the more affordable neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River as the place to stage DC’s next development wave.<sup>13</sup> Ironically, because of earlier disinvestment and systemic racism, Ward 7 and 8 neighborhoods have still not experienced the full weight of the affordable housing crisis facing many parts of the rest of the city, such as Navy Yard and the H Street corridor. Though the median home sale price citywide is \$726,943, in Ward 8 it is still just \$288,600.

A number of high-profile public and private developments are now in the works for close-to-the-river Ward 8 neighborhoods, which, above and beyond construction of the 11th Street Bridge Park, will reshape the local landscape for good. Several new development projects propose to replace affordable units and make a significant number of market-rate units available; these include the potential creation of up to 500 multifamily units as part of the transformation of the former Metropolitan Police evidence warehouse at Reunion Square and the New Communities Initiative project to redevelop the DC Housing Authority’s severely dilapidated Barry Farms public housing complex into a mixed-income residential project. The Barry Farms redevelopment is a source of significant controversy for current residents and local activists, who want the District government to redevelop the complex while residents remain in place to mitigate displacement.<sup>14</sup>

The challenge for those working on equitable development—core Bridge Park partners and otherwise—will be to buck the long-standing history of inequity when it comes to development of east of the Anacostia River communities and to distribute the benefits of new development fairly to current residents.

## Recent Housing Market and Population Trends in the DC Region

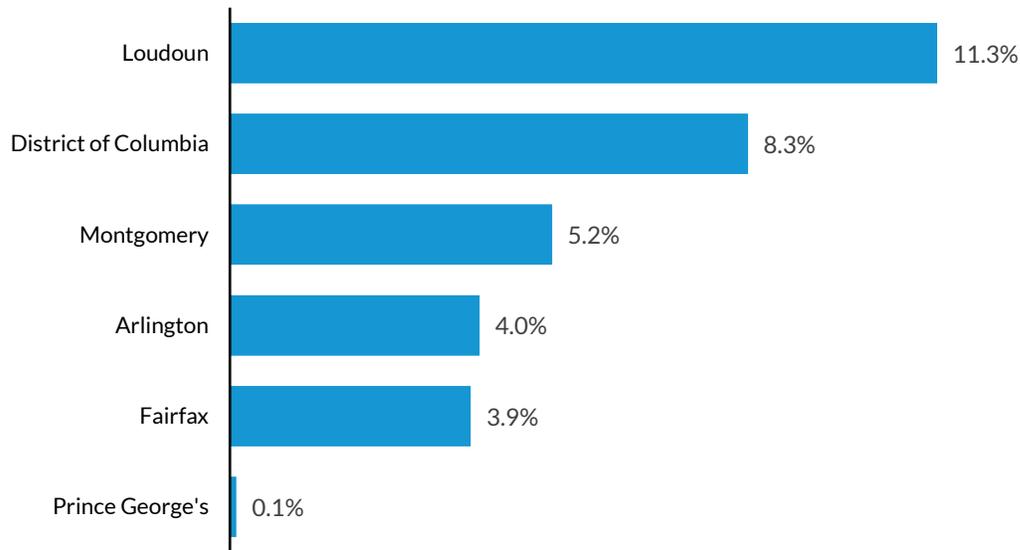
The Washington, DC, metropolitan area economy has been growing steadily for about the past 20 years. Prosperity in the region has increased the population from 4.8 million in 2000 to an estimated 6.2 million in 2017.<sup>15</sup> Those who wish to understand neighborhood-level change in DC's Ward 8 neighborhoods must also understand the regional housing trends that affect them: the upward shift in the proportion of higher-income levels and rising rents.

First, as Tatian, Turner, and Hendeby note in their recent Urban–Greater DC feature story on changes in DC's regional housing market, “the number of households in the middle of the regional income spectrum have remained essentially unchanged [since 2000], while the number of low-income households increased less than 20 percent... In contrast, the number of households with incomes above \$150,000 grew 34 percent, with the number of renters in this income bracket jumping 59 percent.”<sup>16</sup>

Second, in recent years, housing production has not kept pace with population growth, and home prices and rents are climbing in most communities. “Renters, who can be especially vulnerable to rapid changes in the housing market, have seen steep rent increases in many parts of the region.” Along with the shortfall in housing production, the surge in high-income households puts upward pressure on house prices and rents, making it more challenging for both low- and middle-income households to find housing they can afford. Rapid growth in the number of high-income renter households drives rent increases.” Between 2011 and 2017, rents climbed 8 percent in the District of Columbia, putting it only just behind Loudoun County as the regional jurisdiction with the most dramatically increasing rents (figure 4). These high costs have made many renters and homeowners cost burdened.<sup>17</sup> As we discuss later in this report, Ward 8 residents, especially those just to the east of Bridge Park's footprint, have experienced sharp rises in housing costs and the greatest rent burden in the District in recent years.

FIGURE 4

Increase in Median Rent by County, 2011–17



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Source: Urban Institute analysis of the Zillow Rent Index.

Notes: Median rents have been adjusted for inflation on an annual basis. The Zillow Rent Index is a smooth, seasonally adjusted measure of the median estimated market rate rent across a given region and housing type.

## Resident Perspectives on Development in Ward 8

New development and rising housing costs have not gone unnoticed by current residents of the neighborhoods surrounding the eastern side of the Bridge Park footprint. In December 2017 and March 2018, the Urban research team hosted focus groups with participants of the MANNA Homebuyers Club and Housing Counseling Services' tenants' rights workshops. As will be described in more detail in the "Implementing Four Core Strategies" section below, both programs receive funding from Bridge Park to assist with preserving and creating affordable housing and are included in the park's Equitable Development Plan. Focus group participants from the Homebuyers Club (the homebuyers group) included six African American women ages 24 to 51 who were native Washingtonians or Ward 8 residents and had lived in Anacostia for 5 or fewer years. Some participants had already purchased a home in Ward 8, and others had not yet done so. Focus group participants from the tenants' rights workshops (the renters group) included five African American men and women ages 50 to 67 who had lived in Anacostia anywhere between 1.5 and 60 years. Most of these participants were living on fixed incomes, with some residing in subsidized housing.

## Fear and Experience of Displacement

Participants in both focus groups are acutely aware of the dynamics of development in DC and vividly described how the city's history of residential displacement and neglect has disproportionately and negatively impacted the city's African American residents across decades. For most participants in the renter focus group, these sentiments and subsequent fears stem from personal experiences of being displaced or from observing the radical transformation of neighborhoods like Columbia Heights, the H Street corridor, and U Street. Regardless of their direct experience with displacement, participants in both groups consider DC's development history a racialized and class-based process that yields "winners and losers"—winners being people with "superior or elite status" who "dominate or take over an area for their own benefit" and losers being the most "vulnerable people."

Participants in the renters focus group also expressed that the city's past approach to development has been both unjust and irresponsible, leaving the city's most vulnerable citizens with few alternatives after development. One participant shared their experience witnessing the gradual neglect of the Ward 8-based St. Elizabeth's Hospital in the 1990s:<sup>18</sup>

St. Elizabeth's used to be part of a mental hospital. Where do you think those people went when they got kicked out? They didn't create another place for them to go to. [The need for those] services don't stop just because you get rid of the building. That's the aspect of it that people seem to lose focus on. If you're going to come in to the neighborhood and take away part of the neighborhood, you need to be putting something else back in there to provide services. I'm talking about services. There needs to be housing, training, businesses there....You can't ignore people with mental illness or who are returning citizens [from prison]. You cannot push out low-income senior citizens. What kind of society do we have? You can only move so many people.

Participants from both focus groups believe that the city and other high-level stakeholders have repeatedly failed to account for the layered and intersectional vulnerabilities that people in a changing neighborhood may have, beyond just housing instability or limited income. For them, this means focusing on the needs of homeless people, returning citizens, youth, and the elderly through strategies like connecting youth to workforce development opportunities and creating permanently affordable housing for seniors.

For participants in the renter focus group, this history of exclusionary development and displacement has eroded community trust in government and developers, which has resulted in what some described as "a lot of apathy" among longtime residents in Ward 8. These participants fault the low-quality engagement strategies of city planners, who participants felt engaged residents only after decisions were made or did not make it easy for residents to participate (e.g., by not holding community meetings near where residents live). As one participant described, "[Many residents] are not trusting of

the builders or government, and so they have a deaf ear. It's like, 'It doesn't matter what I say, my input, what I do, it's gonna be what it's gonna be.'" As a result, participants in both groups suggested that more trust-building work needs to take place with Ward 8 residents, by way of community-based advocates who "speak the same language" as residents and who can "translate" critical information that residents need to know about development. In addition, participants in the renters group suggested that local elected leaders must also champion and come together around equitable development to break what participants describe as a vicious cycle of inequitable development.

### **Ambivalent Views on the Effects of Development and a Desire for Choice**

Looking toward the future, participants in the renters focus group offered a pragmatic view of equity in development. For them, change in Ward 8 and resident turnover is inevitable, and more robust civic engagement alone will not make future development more equitable. As one renter describes, the defining factor of equitable development is that all residents are offered a *choice* over how they reckon with that change:

Some people opt to leave. I know people selling their properties. I can't fault people—if they need the money, need to put kids through college, it's like, "You know what? I'd rather have this money real quick. I'm going to put my grandchild through college and this will help me do that. I want to help them start college." I don't want to fault anyone who's been here for three to four generations and they decide to sell their property in whatever neighborhood they live in. But for those who want to stay, there needs to be an effort to work out a plan where they're allowed to stay....Maybe everyone doesn't get to stay or maybe everyone doesn't choose to stay, but there ought to be a mechanism in place where people who have lived, raised their children, worshipped, gone to schools here, get to remain in the neighborhood that they've call home for 15 years, 20 years, or 30 years.

For participants in both focus groups, perceptions of DC's development history, which they believe essentially deprived displaced residents of choice, drives a shared sense of urgency to have a choice in how they respond to and benefit from current neighborhood change in Ward 8. For participants in the homebuyers focus group, this simply means finding a way to own a home as soon as possible. These participants strongly endorse the MANNA Homebuyers Club because they believe it offers pathways to homeownership for people who typically have limited choices in the face of rising home costs. By comparison, participants in the renters focus group were more pessimistic given the already rapid pace of development. As one respondent shared, with nods of agreement from many others, "No one is prepared for these changes. They're too drastic. This is from year to year. There is no preparedness."

Though they agree with the renters focus group that development is unlikely to equitably distribute benefits, participants in the homebuyers focus group expressed more excitement about new

development occurring in the Anacostia area. As current or future homeowners, this group views homeownership as a guarantee that they will benefit from incoming development.

On the other hand, many of these participants had witnessed the gentrification of other DC neighborhoods they grew up in and could empathize with how current renters in Anacostia and Ward 8 might feel. Participants in the homebuyers focus group were candid about their difficulty reconciling their desire to see their property values rise with their strong anti-displacement sentiments. As one participant explained:

From an economic standpoint, it's like we want our cake and want to eat it too. We do want subsidized housing and we do want more people to afford it. But the next question is, what about our property values? Will that go down? I want to make sure my \$300,000 home will be \$650,000 when I'm ready to sell, right? From an economic standpoint, you want to keep it affordable... So, where's the median? Let's be more realistic.

The homebuyers focus group participants also recognize that generations of Anacostia residents have borne the brunt of systemic and structural inequities in education, income, and even city services, like waste removal, snow removal, and police presence in Anacostia. As one participant shared, "I've lived in this community for about five years. I've seen gentrification even in the municipal services. For example, garbage collection would not come on time or would not come at all. In a way that's great because these services are [now] being performed, but [weren't] residents always here?"

In addition, several participants shared their perception that structural inequities may have also produced a pattern of "bad" behavior among some of their neighbors. A few expressed the view that their neighbors who don't own homes are less interested in improving the appearance of their neighborhoods. Further, as black native Washingtonians living in predominantly black Ward 8 neighborhoods, some participants of the homebuyers group said they see their role as empathetic intermediaries that might "educate" their neighbors in homeowner priorities, like beautifying their neighborhoods. In contrast to other Anacostia newcomers who are not necessarily black DC natives, these participants feel they are better positioned to talk to their more economically marginalized neighbors about neighborhood improvement.

## Concerns about Cultural Preservation

Participants in both focus groups expressed anxiety about the cultural change development might bring to the area. The homebuyers focus group participants, in particular, lamented the potential loss of distinct cultural experiences that were once more common across the city but have since become rare in most neighborhoods, like walking down the street and watching impromptu performances or hearing

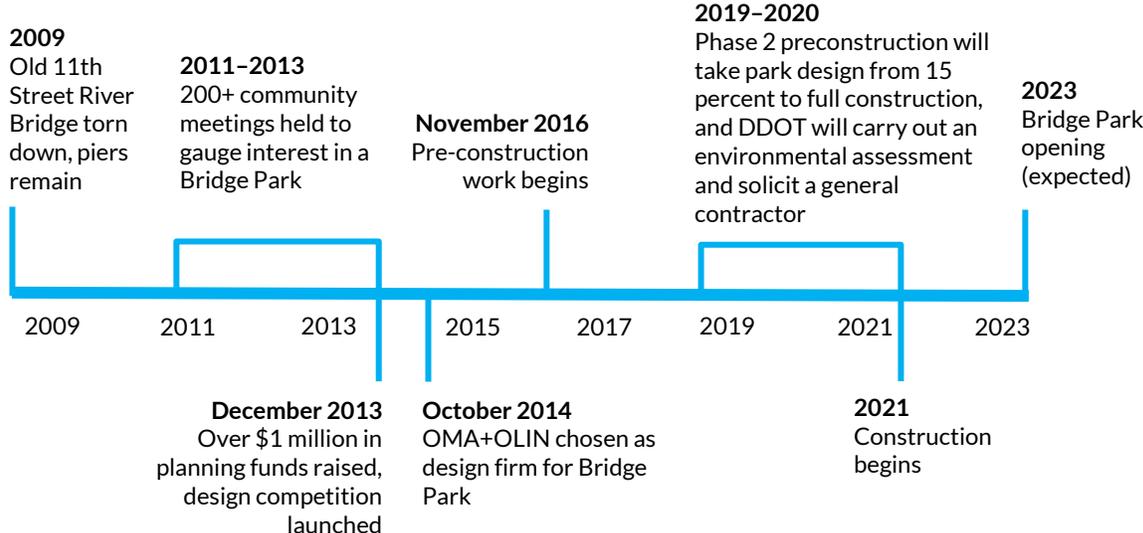
go-go music, a subgenre associated with funk originating from the DC area from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s. “Slowly but surely, every ward is being gentrified and we’re seeing these changes,” says one homeowner. “Not that it’s not a good thing. It’s great that people feel safe coming to Southeast. But the biggest fear is DC will lose its culture because we’re getting [pressure to develop] now and we can’t keep that authenticity.”

Participants of both focus groups were especially worried about the displacement of older longtime Anacostia residents, whom they view as the gatekeepers of DC’s most authentic history and culture. In the view of most of the focus group participants, preventing displacement helps ensure that these residents have an opportunity to pass down their culture to younger people. For the homebuyers, all of whom are lifelong natives of DC, this concern fortified their view that they also might be important bridges between newcomers to Ward 8, who are not black, and authentic DC culture.

# Bridge Park EDP Progress, 2016–18

The Bridge Park project can be tracked through multiple phases of planning and implementation—both for the park itself and for equitable development (figures 5 and 6). This section lays out how Bridge Park staff have built their capacity to advance these activities since the project’s inception and lays out progress on the four core equitable development strategies focused on housing, small business, workforce, and arts and culture over the past two years. The section concludes with a tabulation of high-level Bridge Park results on equitable development to date and insights for equitable development planners in other cities across the US.

**FIGURE 5**  
**Bridge Park Design and Construction Timeline**

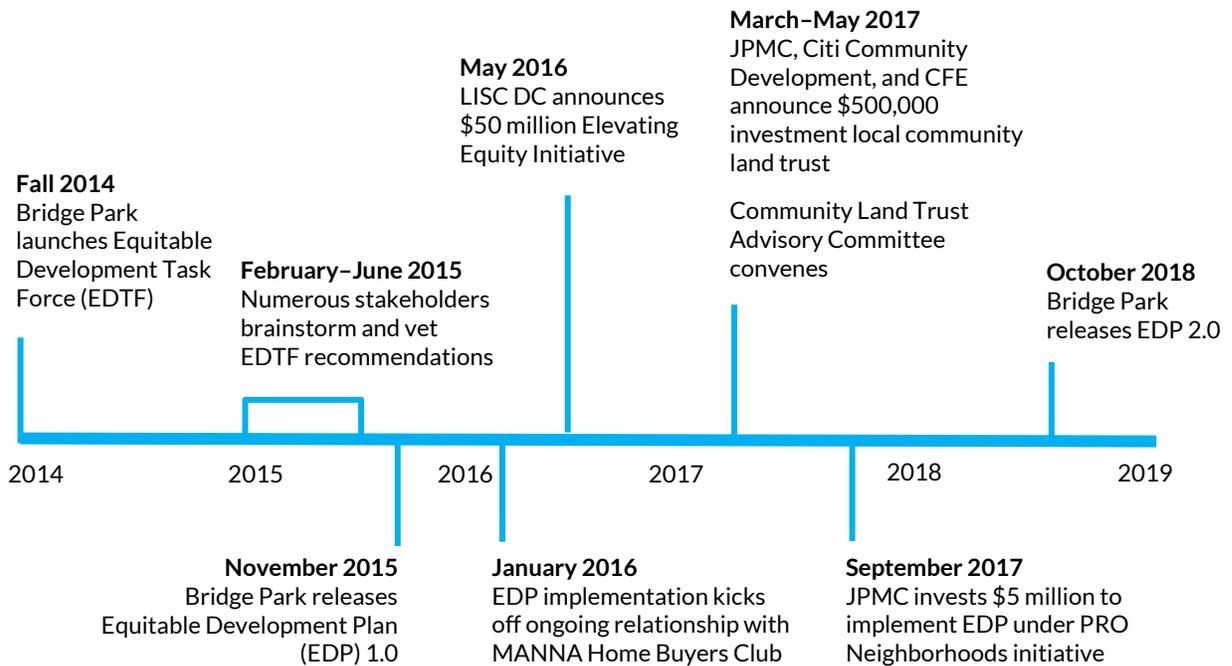


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Note: DDOT = District Department of Transportation.

FIGURE 6

Equitable Development Timeline



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Note: LISC = Local Initiatives Support Corporation.

## Building Capacity

Notable results in staffing, fundraising, and engaging neighborhood residents have cut across and formed a foundation for progress on all strategies during the first three years of equitable development plan implementation.

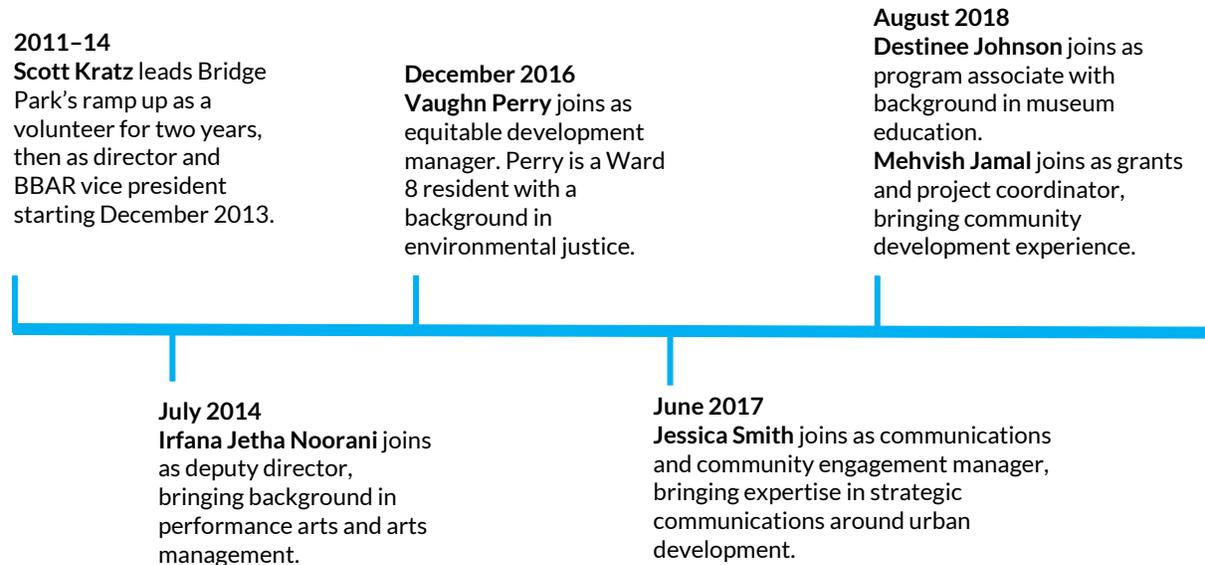
### Staffing

The Bridge Park staff team has grown to keep pace with a rapidly expanding portfolio of work (figure 7). As discussed at length in our first report, the Bridge Park project began as and remains a project of Building Bridges Across the River (BBAR), the DC nonprofit that manages Ward 8-based THEARC.<sup>19</sup> During the project’s very early days, BBAR vice president and Bridge Park director, Scott Kratz, was the sole staff person on the project. As of publication of this report, the Bridge Park staff complement stands at six full-time people across programmatic and managerial roles.<sup>20</sup>

FIGURE 7

## Growing the Bridge Park Team

A timeline of the Bridge Park team's expansion



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## Fundraising

The Bridge Park has been highly successful in securing a combination of multiyear competitive grants from national funders, smaller donations from local funders, and city funding. In total, the Bridge Park has raised \$57 million directly and indirectly toward its equitable development strategies. Multiyear funding has been critical to building staff and operational capacity and thrusting equitable development strategies forward, and one-off gifts support annual events and smaller-scale programs. The main driver of this success, according to the Bridge Park staff, is building and working from a community-driven vision. Having secured operational, program, and equitable development funding, Bridge Park staff feel they have more bandwidth to focus on the capital campaign to build the park, for which they need to raise an additional \$30 million. To date, the District Department of Transportation has committed \$11.35 million toward the park's design in its five-year capital budget. Other financial development milestones for the park and its equitable development strategies are summarized below.

### TAKING A LEAP OF FAITH TO SECURE CORE OPERATING SUPPORT

After two years of volunteering time to galvanize community support around a shared Bridge Park vision, Director Scott Kratz realized that part-time project support would not be enough to move the park forward. In 2013, Kratz launched a pre-capital campaign to fund a nationwide design competition,

raising over \$1 million from funders ranging from the DC Office of Planning to foundations and private donors.<sup>21</sup> These pledges enabled Kratz to facilitate a successful community-driven design competition. They also provided critical capacity support, enabling Kratz, and Deputy Director Irfana Jetha Noorani soon after, to join BBAR and lead the Bridge Park full time.

#### ALIGNING WITH LOCAL CHAMPIONS

As described in the first implementation report, DC's Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC DC) provided early and critical strategic and analytical support to the Bridge Park that continues today. Key LISC champions include the late Oramenta Newsome, former LISC executive director who brought over 20 years of experience as a dedicated DC-based community development leader, and Adam Kent, a senior program officer and longtime thought partner to the Bridge Park. In July 2016, LISC DC launched its Elevating Equity initiative, which invests \$50 million through loans, grants, tax credit equity, in-kind services, and technical support to nonprofits that support residents in neighborhoods adjacent the future park. Outlays from the initiative support tenant advocacy, early childhood education, medical care, food support, and the arts in the neighborhoods surrounding the Bridge Park site.

#### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FUNDERS THROUGH SMALL GRANTS AND LOWER-STAKES ENGAGEMENTS

Since 2015, the Bridge Park has managed several events that extend beyond the EDP, including the annual Anacostia River Festival, the fall Harvest Festival, and art installations in the Navy Yard neighborhood. These events are lower-stakes opportunities to involve funders. In a few cases, the events have led to larger funding commitments to the Bridge Park's equity strategies.

#### ATTRACTING A WIDE RANGE OF FUNDERS THROUGH MULTISECTOR FOCUS AREAS

The wide array of sectors covered by the Bridge Park—from arts and culture, environmental protection, and urban farming to small business development, workforce development and housing—create more entry points for funders with diverse interest areas.

#### ATTRACTING CITY SUPPORT THROUGH AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Bridge Park staff note that their community-centered approach has been another selling point to potential funders). Bridge Park staff also feel that the city's initial commitment to the design competition in 2013 and the District Department of Transportation's capital commitment strongly communicate the city's support of community engagement to private funders.

## SECURING COMPETITIVE, MULTIYEAR GRANTS FROM NATIONAL FUNDERS

Bridge Park staff say that they cannot underestimate the value of multiyear funding for both internal capacity building and project initiatives, for which national donors offering competitive grants have been critical. In September 2017, the Bridge Park was awarded a \$5 million implementation grant through the competitive JPMorgan Chase PRO Neighborhood initiative. The three-year grant allocates

- \$3 million to stand up the Douglass Community Land Trust (DCLT) in collaboration with City First Enterprises;
- \$1 million in capital for minority-owned small businesses in collaboration with a DC-based community development investment fund called the Washington Area Community Investment Fund (Wacif); and
- the remainder for workforce development activities led by the BBAR project Skyland Workforce Center, as well as an implementation study and support for continuous improvement, provided by the Urban Institute.

The Bridge Park has also secured competitive multiyear general support grants from the JPB Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, TD Bank’s Major Grants initiative, ArtPlace America, the Educational Foundation of America, and the Citi Foundation Community Progress Makers Fund.

## BUDGETING FOR NEW, UNREALIZED OPPORTUNITIES

The Bridge Park has also leveraged more flexible funding to set aside what staff call “opportunity funds”—dollars reserved for new opportunities that come up over the course of a grant. Through this budgeting strategy, the Bridge Park funded its Community Leadership and Empowerment workshop, described below.

### Community Engagement

Bridge Park’s efforts to engage both the Ward 8 and overall DC communities have grown alongside increases in staff and funds. In general, all Bridge Park staff take on Ward 8 engagement roles along with their other duties, by serving on boards of local organizations like the Anacostia Coordinating Council and the United Planning Organization, as well as consistently attending monthly neighborhood meetings like the local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.

As detailed in the first report, Scott Kratz and other stakeholders had hundreds of conversations about how the park should be designed and how equitable development should factor into Bridge Park

plans during the ramp-up years from 2011 through mid-2015 (Bogle, Diby, and Burnstein 2016). In the year or so following release of the 2015 EDP, Bridge Park leaders regularly convened a targeted group of local experts and stakeholders to advise on implementation. The Equitable Development Plan Advisory Committee is made up of local housing, small business, workforce experts, service providers, and Ward 8 residents. Most, if not all, members have participated in the development of the first version of the EDP. Drawing on experiential knowledge, members of this group offer strategic advice on the nitty-gritty aspects of implementation, like prioritizing projects, navigating local government bureaucracy, or clarifying the nuance of government policies, to ensure the Bridge Park optimize them for the plan.

Since mid-2017, Bridge Park staff and project allies have stepped up their engagement of city councilmembers and agency leadership. Since mid-2017, Bridge Park staff have codeveloped several presentations with their JPMC PRO Neighborhoods partners, including Wacif, Skyland Workforce Center, and City First Homes. The group has testified before city council and presented to several councilmembers as well as city agencies including the deputy mayor for planning and economic development and the deputy mayor for greater economic opportunity. They have also reached out to local civic associations and politicians, such as the Historic Anacostia Block Association, the Hillcrest Community Civic Association, and DC Advisory Neighborhood Commission 8A, around standing up a community land trust.

Since early 2018, Bridge Park leaders have placed increased emphasis on directly engaging and building resident leadership around equitable development. To this end, Bridge Park's Community Leadership and Empowerment Workshop (CLEW) program offers a series of curriculum-based workshops that strengthen the advocacy skills of community leaders, regardless of experience.

Bridge Park staff say that CLEW results have already exceeded their expectations. During the seven-month CLEW pilot (March–October 2018), members of Douglass Community Land Trust Advisory Committee (see the “focal example” discussion about the DCLT below) along with a Ward 8 nonprofit leader, city councilmember's staff person, and a few area residents, participated in nine three-hour sessions. At least three participants have been elected to city positions as Democratic committee members, and others have won grants to facilitate political organizing workshops with city staff. Based on this success, the Bridge Park has raised funds to sustain and expand programming to include a train-the-trainer component.

An unforeseen byproduct of the program has been how the Bridge Park staff say they have changed after participating in the CLEW pilot. “We did not realize the impact [the training] would have not only

on ourselves but the entire BBAR staff,” says Vaughn Perry, equitable development manager. “What I’ve learned the most is to recognize the power of my own voice....Without the training I received...I wouldn’t have been able to navigate [challenging] meetings successfully...or recognize when it was time to take my Bridge Park hat off and wear my community hat,” Kratz adds, “This is a vehicle that allows us to build relationships that also have tangible impacts...We can see if participants are winning local elections or starting their own leadership workshops in their communities.”

Moving forward, the Bridge Park aims to enroll up to 150 community members in the workshops over the next two years.

## Implementing Four Core Strategies

Bridge Park leaders and partners have largely focused on four equitable development strategy areas since 2015: housing, small business, workforce, and arts and culture. Tables 1 through 4 list the strategies as rendered in the recently updated EDP.

### **Supporting the Preservation and Creation of Affordable Housing**

Largely because of the capacity provided by early EDP partners, such as well-established DC-based housing nonprofits MANNA and Housing Counseling Services (HCS), Bridge Park’s affordable housing strategy has made the earliest and most robust gains since late 2015. Currently, the Bridge Park affordable housing strategy targets opportunities across Ward 8.

Through program-level financial support secured by Bridge Park from Wells Fargo, PNC Bank, and TD Bank, MANNA continues to lead the Ward 8 Homebuyers Club, a program that prepares low- and moderate-income people to become homeowners in DC. From January 2016 to July 2018, the program engaged 342 current Ward 8 residents and successfully supported 70 home purchases. In addition, the Bridge Park directly supported down payments for residents to move into a 12-unit MANNA-owned affordable housing development near the Bridge Park site at Hunter Place SE in Ward 8.

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*You have a lot of development and everything coming to the city. And the city is changing. And me being a homeowner, nobody can push me out because I own my home. And with the first-time homebuyers program, that's what they push towards. And after being homeless, I knew then I had to make a plan...For Christmas, I bought my kids a home. And I had made a promise to my kids, I said we would never be homeless again, and nobody was going to push us out.*

*—Robin McKinney, MANNA Homebuyers Club Member and Ward 8 home owner<sup>22</sup>*

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With support from LISC and the Bridge Park, HCS has held tenants' rights workshops in public meeting places in Wards 6 and 8 since July 2016. HCS has also canvassed and provided counseling services to tenants and landlords. The workshops and counseling educates tenants about their legal rights and responsibilities under DC housing law, exposes them to DC housing programs like the District's Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), and helps them improve the quality of their housing. For example, TOPA requires that the owners of any building up for sale or demolition offer current tenants the first opportunity to buy the building within a 45-day window. By connecting tenants to housing alternatives like cooperatives, Bridge Park equitable development leaders and HCS work to help Ward 8 renters to stay in their homes. To date, HCS has engaged 567 residents through tenants' rights workshops in Wards 6 and 8, canvassed 1,942 homeowner and renter properties in Wards 6 and 8, and worked closely with several apartment buildings to assess tenant needs and resolve tenant-landlord conflicts.

TABLE 1

**11th Street Bridge Park Housing Strategies for Equitable Development**

Strategy	Key activities
<p><b>Strategy 1: Educate and inform</b></p> <p><i>Collect, organize, and disseminate resources and information regarding housing opportunities to residents in the Bridge Park impact area</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partner with city agencies and nonprofits to educate and inform residents in the Bridge Park surrounding neighborhoods early about existing DC legislation, such as the TOPA, the DOPA, and tenant rights.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 2: Preserve and expand affordable housing</b></p> <p><i>Work with city agencies and existing nonprofits on strategies to preserve existing affordable housing (rental and ownership) and leverage existing public and private resources to build new affordable housing near the Bridge Park. Coordinate this effort with the mayor’s annual commitment of \$100 million in the Housing Production Trust Fund to increase and preserve affordable housing in the District.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pursue and secure philanthropic funding for a down payment assistance program modeled after the CityLift Program for MANNA’s Hunter Place SE townhomes, a new 12-unit homeownership development located within Ward 8.</li> <li>▪ Pursue and secure philanthropic funding for a chapter of MANNA’s Homebuyers Club for residents living within the Bridge Park surrounding neighborhoods.</li> <li>▪ Pursue a CLT or other affordable housing models, prioritizing vacant and blighted properties that are tax delinquent to help create housing opportunities near the Bridge Park (both rentals and access to affordable homeownership) for current Ward 8 residents.</li> <li>▪ Building off the Bridge Park’s work with MANNA, continue to partner with organizations in the housing industry to increase philanthropic support for affordable housing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 3: Build partnerships</b></p> <p><i>Engage and participate in partnerships with those in the housing community to support and advocate for policies that preserve existing affordable housing and spur the creation of new affordable units within the Bridge Park’s surrounding neighborhoods.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partner with DCHA to ensure the Build First model moves forward with DCHA properties near the Bridge Park.</li> <li>▪ Use the Bridge Park surrounding neighborhoods as a pilot for affordable housing preservation strategy.</li> <li>▪ Coordinate work with DHCD’s “Housing Preservation Strike Force,” whose goal is to develop the means and money to protect thousands of units of affordable housing that are expected to lose federal subsidies over the next few years.</li> <li>▪ Work with a broader coalition of affordable housing advocates to push for a change in DC’s Comprehensive Plan to ensure a higher percentage of affordable housing is built when up-zonings are approved.</li> <li>▪ Work with CNHED and other affordable housing organizations to advocate annually for the District to continue its strong investment in affordable housing in DC.</li> </ul>

**Notes:** CLT = community land trust; CNHED= Coalition for Non-Profit Housing and Economic Development; DCHA = District of Columbia Housing Authority; DHCD = DC Department of Housing and Community Development; DOPA = District Opportunity to Purchase Act; TOPA = Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act. Strategy table information is based on 2018 revised Equitable Development Plan.

**FOCAL EXAMPLE: HOW BRIDGE PARK STOOD UP A COMMUNITY LAND TRUST**

The Douglass Community Land Trust (DCLT) is the newest and largest component of the strategy to preserve and create affordable housing.<sup>23</sup> The 10-year goal of the DCLT is to acquire 1,000 units of rental and homeowner housing at sustainably affordable prices for low- and moderate-income residents

of Ward 8. Here, we detail the development of the DCLT to illuminate the multifaceted and complex nature of implementing Bridge Park’s equitable development strategies overall (see figure 6).

Local residents were the impetus behind the DCLT. Through the EDP planning process, residents repeatedly voiced a desire for community control of affordable housing creation and preservation. Among the many successful affordable housing preservation strategies at the Bridge Park’s disposal, community land trusts resonated most with residents, since they allow for community control of land (see box 1 below for more background on community land trusts).<sup>24</sup>

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#### BOX 1

##### **What Is a Community Land Trust?**

Community land trusts help preserve affordability and prevent displacement in communities, especially those undergoing rapid change. These private nonprofit corporations buy and hold land, then make that land available for residential or commercial development that aims to benefit the community. The Bridge Park Equitable Development Plan explains further:

While there are many forms of a Community Land Trust, in general, CLTs are non-profit organizations—governed by a board of CLT residents, community residents and public representatives—that provide lasting community assets and permanently affordable housing opportunities for families and communities. Permanently affordable homeownership programs invest public funding into a property in order to make home purchase affordable for a family of modest means. The organization supports the residents to attain and sustain homeownership. In return, the homeowner agrees to sell the home at a resale-restricted and affordable price to another lower income homebuyer in the future. Consequently, the homeowner is able to successfully own a home and build wealth from the investment, while the organization is able to preserve the public’s investment in the affordable home permanently to help family after family.

In many community land trusts, community members typically make up a majority of the board of directors to ensure that development decisions serve community interests. The Bridge Park is following this model by including a two-thirds majority of local residents, business owners, and advocates on the advisory committee for making early decisions about the new land trust.

**Source:** CLT Network from *11th Street Bridge Park’s Equitable Development Plan* (Washington, DC: BBAR, 2018, 16).

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With this strong base of community support, the Bridge Park released a Community Land Trust Action Plan in May 2016, which put forth initial ideas for the formation, partnership, governance, properties, funding and financing, and vision of the DCLT. With action plan in hand, the Bridge Park partnered with City First Homes (CFH), a local nonprofit with experience stewarding over 240 units of

permanently affordable housing in the District (Theodos et al. 2015). As an active champion of the EDP and affordable housing in DC, CFH was well positioned to support the CLT. Before the formal partnership, City First Bank (an affiliate of City First Homes) participated in the plan's first planning sessions in 2015, contributed to Bridge Park programs like the Anacostia River Festival, and hosted the Bridge Park's funder reception with the Washington DC Economic Partnership.

DCLT creation efforts accelerated in early 2017. In February, CFH-affiliate City First Enterprises, with the support of Citi Community Development, made the first investment of \$250,000 toward the DCLT that was soon after matched by JPMorgan Chase & Co. With an additional contribution from the Ford Foundation, the Bridge Park had secured \$550,000 in financing for the DCLT by March 2017.

As the Bridge Park scaled up DCLT efforts, education around community land trusts—their purpose, function, benefits, and implications for Ward 8 neighborhoods—became a new focal point for community engagement. The Bridge Park, CFH, and other partners presented an overview of the DCLT to local neighborhood civic associations including the Historic Anacostia Block Association, the Hillcrest Community Civic Association, and the Hillcrest Coordinating Council. Meanwhile, the Bridge Park engaged over 400 community members through broader public events, including documentary screenings, panel discussions, and community cookouts featuring local stakeholders and national community land trust experts. These events also doubled as recruitment opportunities for what would become the Community Land Trust Advisory Committee (CLTAC).

In May 2017, the Bridge Park convened CLTAC, a group tasked with overseeing the formation of the DCLT. CLTAC comprised residents, business owners, and advocates from Ward 8 (box 2). Members were recruited through the public DCLT events the Bridge Park hosted or were referred from partners and other involved community members. To date, the CLTAC has focused on developing standards for governance, including establishing a mission statement and principles. The group has also designated a property development subcommittee, a subcommittee on communications/community engagement, and a task force on the development of the bylaws and articles of incorporation to become a distinct nonprofit. The CLTAC plays an important role in shaping the goals and strategies of the DCLT, and several members of the CLTAC may have an opportunity to serve on the board of the future DCLT nonprofit.

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## BOX 2

### Members of the Douglass Community Land Trust Advisory Committee

Brett Theodos, Urban Institute <sup>a</sup>	Kiesha Davis, Ward 8 resident
Christie Gardner, Ward 8 community advocate	Kim Harrison, Office of Ward 8 Councilmember
Claire Zippel, DC Fiscal Policy Institute	Trayon White Sr.
Daniel Blaise, Ward 8 resident	Kymone Freeman, We Act Radio and Ward 8 resident
Jade Hall, Housing Counseling Services	Meche Martinez, Ward 8 resident
Keiva Dennis, PNC Bank	Morgann Reeves, Ward 8 resident
	Sheldon Clark, Ward 8 resident

**Source:** 11th Street Bridge Park’s Equitable Development Plan (Washington, DC: BBAR, 2018).

**Notes:** Former members include Sam Jeweler, Bread for the City; Akaai Lineberger, Ward 8 resident; Trish Ofori, Ward 8 business owner; and Pastor Willie Wilson, Union Temple.

<sup>a</sup> Not a member of the Urban Institute evaluation team

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Notable milestones since the advent of the CLTAC include the production of the “Feasibility Study & Business Plan for the Douglass Community Land Trust (DCLT) Serving Washington D.C. East of the River and Beyond” (Urban Land Conservancy 2018). The study invoked data on DC’s U Street corridor—showing that the share of black households in the central U Street census tract dropped from 77 percent in 1990 to 22 percent in 2010—to underscore the urgency of Bridge Park and DCLT equitable development efforts, saying: “Without focused preservation efforts and intentional market intervention strategies, significant portions of existing Ward 7 and 8 naturally occurring affordable rental housing may in the immediate future be purchased by private investors and converted to upscale market rate housing. The ownership shift would set prices for that housing well beyond the reach of current working-class households.” The business plan was commissioned by CFH and funded by JPMorgan Chase.

Another key milestone occurred in August 2018 when, after launching a national search, the CLTAC hired Ginger Rumph to join the effort as the founding executive director of the DCLT, which is currently pursuing 501(c)3 status as an independent nonprofit. A major player in DC’s affordable housing scene, Rumph previously served as a vice president of the Coalition for Non-Profit Housing and Economic Development. Since her hiring, Rumph has been gathering information and feedback on potential challenges and opportunities for the DCLT, talking to community members, housing practitioners, and others.

The CLTAC is currently deliberating several important decisions concerning the path forward for the fledgling land trust: How can the DCLT offer the most added value, rather than duplicate the

existing affordable housing assets in the neighborhood? For example, if affordable homeownership offerings in the area mostly accommodate homeowners at 60 to 80 percent of the area median income (AMI), could the DCLT prioritize homeownership for people at or below 60 percent of AMI? How should the DCLT distribute and support rental, homeowner, or commercial properties?

There are challenging issues embedded in these decisions, as the Bridge Park, CFH, and CLTAC have learned. For example, homeownership, typically viewed as a wealth-building vehicle, may not be accessible to the extremely low-income people and families whom the DCLT aims to serve, so rental properties may be more appropriate. Property acquisition, which is already a challenge given how expensive land is in DC, is further complicated when it interacts with other DC affordable housing policies. For example, DCLT leaders recently approached a local nonprofit that manages an affordable multi-unit property near the future Bridge Park site about including that property in the land trust. Though the nonprofit and the DCLT share a mission to develop and preserve affordable housing, building consensus and a shared vision with existing tenants proved difficult. The tenants had recently used TOPA to establish collective ownership of the building. Successfully achieving ownership under TOPA can be a long and arduous process, and residents were naturally apprehensive about adjusting course. Also, the DCLT idea was unfamiliar to most and was introduced too late in the sequencing of the building's TOPA process to gain traction. Ultimately, the tenants decided against including the building in the land trust. Through this and other attempts, the Bridge Park equitable development planners have learned that finding good acquisitions for a CLT can take time and patience.

Another critical question has centered on the location of DCLT properties. At first, Bridge Park and DCLT leaders were searching for properties within the one-mile walking radius around the future Bridge Park site. They soon learned that it was not feasible to limit their search to such a tight geographic stretch, especially one that is already showing distinct signs of gentrification. (The signs are particularly evident on the west side of the bridge site, but they are also seen on the east side; the DCLT feasibility study acknowledged as much when it noted that the historic nature of much of the Anacostia neighborhood appropriately limits the range of high-impact tactics the DCLT might pursue there.) Consequently, DCLT leaders have expanded the catchment area for property acquisition to all of Ward 8, and Bridge Park leaders have shifted the park's impact area from a one-mile walking radius to the "surrounding neighborhoods to the east of the Bridge Park footprint."

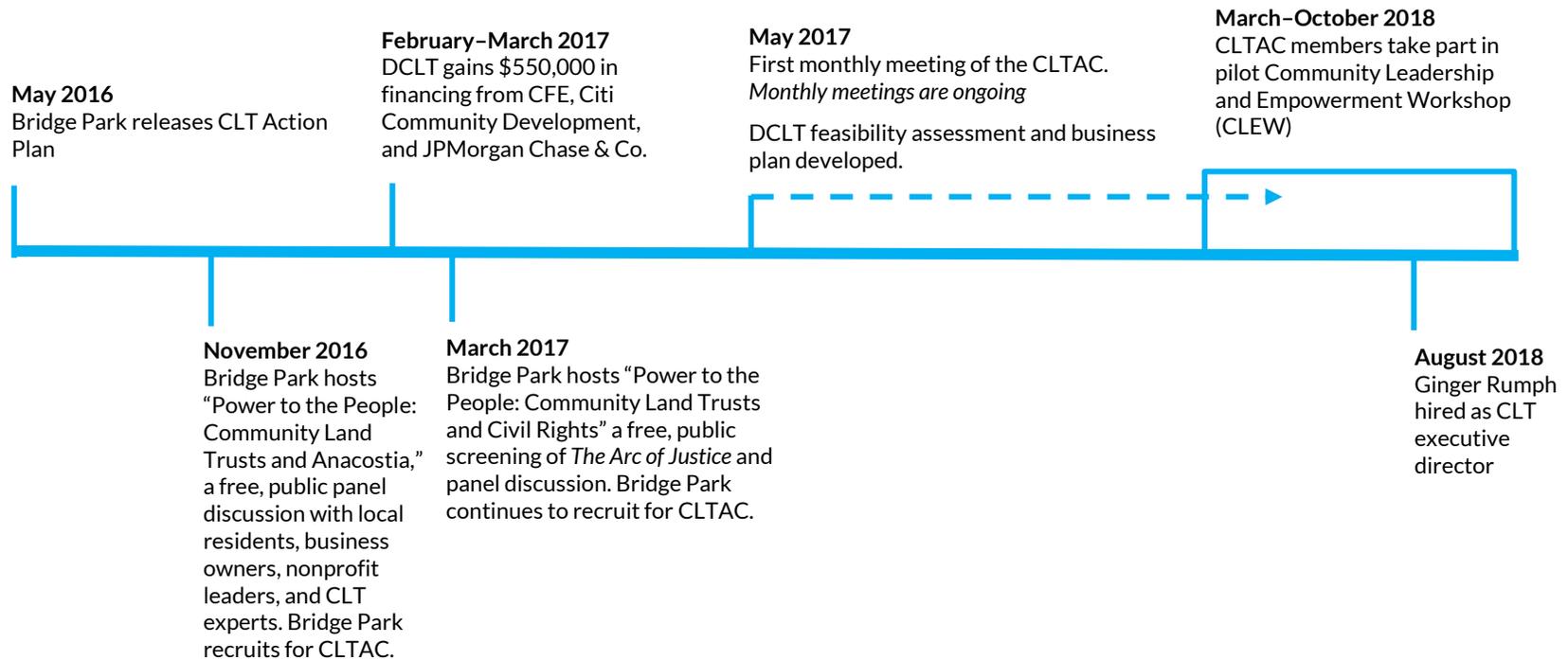
As of January 2019, the DCLT has not yet acquired any property but has several promising prospects. These include a letter of intent to purchase the land underlying a 65-unit rental apartment in the Ward 8 neighborhood of Congress Heights, a parcel owned by National Housing Trust, which has applied for funding through the District's Housing Production Trust Fund. The Bridge Park has

partnered with a developer to apply for and write down the affordability for three contiguous DC-owned parcels, also in Congress Heights, and is working with other developers about possibilities for other DC-owned land.

Finally, the DCLT has been actively pursuing DC government support. As has been well-documented by the National Community Land Trust Network, local government support is critical because municipalities assume greater responsibility for creating and preserving affordable housing (Davis and Jacobus 2008).<sup>25</sup> The DCLT has held several conversations with city councilmembers and leadership to explore how the city could be involved and supportive, though no commitments have been made to date. Moving forward the CLTAC, City First Homes, Bridge Park, Grounded Solutions, and DCLT executive director have continued to explore collaborative funding programs with District representatives and agencies.

FIGURE 8

Standing Up a Community Land Trust



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**Note:** CLT = community land trust; CLTAC = Community Land Trust Action Plan; DCLT = Douglass Community Land Trust .

## Laying the Groundwork for Small Business Development

The Bridge Park small business strategy targets three tiered groups: (1) entrepreneurs who will be doing business on the Bridge Park itself; (2) entrepreneurs in the neighborhoods adjacent to the future Bridge Park site; and (3) communities and populations in Ward 7 and 8 that may lie outside neighborhoods immediately to the east of the Bridge Park site.

Although slow to start in the year immediately following release of the 2015 EDP, the strategy has gained considerable momentum since the JPMorgan Chase PRO Neighborhoods grant fueled major operational and lending components. The Washington Area Community Investment Fund (Wacif), a community development financial institution (CDFI) partner to the Bridge Park, has assisted 104 small business entrepreneurs and issued \$525,000 in loans to small businesses based in Wards 7 and 8. These program and loan recipients have gone on to create or maintain 68 jobs in Wards 7 and 8.

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*I started my business, first of all, to support the artists—independent artists—in giving them a brick and mortar place to sell their goods and their items on ... As a small business owner, I do see huge potential opportunity. One of the biggest ones, of course, is traffic, which is really huge for us. A lot of people say that being east of the river is a barrier to entry, especially if you're west of the river. So having a bridge that actually connects the two and makes that cross section exciting, includ[ing] art, really shows the vibrancy of both communities is something that would make it exciting and drive traffic over, which is always a plus when you're in business. So we need that traffic...The 11th Street Bridge Project says, I see you. I see the value in what you do, and let's do this together. And I think that's completely different. And that removes the fear of that obliteration [from gentrification] I was nervous about.*

*—Anika Hobbs, Ward 8 resident and founder and curator of Nubian Hueman, a Ward 8-based boutique featuring fashion, accessories, art, and beauty representing the Africa diaspora*

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TABLE 2

11th Street Bridge Park Small Business Development Strategies for Equitable Development

Strategy	Key activities
<p><b>Strategy 1: Businesses at the Park</b></p> <p><i>Support and nurture a thriving network of small businesses that operate on the Bridge Park following construction.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish kiosks on the Bridge Park that feature existing and new small businesses from the surrounding neighborhoods.</li> <li>▪ Identify locally owned businesses, organizations, and creative entrepreneurs for specific contracting opportunities to support Bridge Park services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 2: Business surrounding the Park</b></p> <p><i>Leverage the 11th Street Bridge Park to build and sustain small businesses in the surrounding community.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage building and sustaining a community of small businesses, arts organizations, and creative entrepreneurs through mentorship, entrepreneurial training, and partnerships.</li> <li>▪ Advocate for developers to commit to including small business tenants, including local artists and creative entrepreneurs, in city and privately owned properties zoned for commercial use east of the Bridge Park.</li> <li>▪ Partner and support nearby social enterprise and workforce incubator, such as ARCH Development’s HIVE. Connect incubator for local businesses to adaptive reuse and rehabbed vacant properties surrounding Bridge Park.</li> <li>▪ Through partnerships with the arts community and city government, advocate for policies that preserve and create new affordable/flexible/multi-use work, performance, and presentation spaces for local creative entrepreneurs in the Bridge Park’s surrounding neighborhoods (e.g., incentives for developers to include studio space and incubators in their projects).</li> <li>▪ Support and advocate for zoning that preserves the ability for arts and culture organizations to open and maintain space in the Bridge Park’s surrounding neighborhoods and commercial corridors (e.g., zoning code that allows mixed uses that foster arts and culture, such as live-work space and pop-ups, and minimizes regulatory hurdles that may prevent arts and cultural uses, such as music ordinances).</li> <li>▪ Advocate for prioritization of local businesses, entrepreneurs, artists, and arts organizations’ use of spaces zoned for the creative economy in the surrounding neighborhoods. The goal of this advocacy is to ensure that local and black businesses occupy new and redeveloped spaces (e.g., Community Benefit Agreements)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 3: Connection</b></p> <p><i>Ensure the Bridge Park is deeply connected to business corridors on both sides of the Anacostia River.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve walkability between the Bridge Park and surrounding commercial corridors.</li> <li>▪ Encourage pedestrian access and visitor exploration of key economic hubs in the Anacostia and Capitol Hill/ Navy Yard neighborhoods by collaborating with local business improvement districts (BIDs) on wayfinding signage.</li> <li>▪ Partner with the Anacostia and Capitol Riverfront BIDs to provide neighborhood maps highlighting local businesses and cultural organizations for visitors.</li> </ul>

Note: Strategy table information is based on 2018 revised Equitable Development Plan.

Wacif also recently launched its Ascend Capital Accelerator, a 12-week asset-based development program that provides small to mid-sized businesses with financial and management training, a suite of

industry-specific enhanced technical assistance services, access to professional services, networking opportunities, access to affordable loan capital, exposure to government contracting and procurement opportunities, and guidance to gain and leverage benefits within the District's Certified Business Enterprise and the federal government's Minority-Women-Disadvantaged-Owned Business Enterprise designations. To date, this program has helped two businesses in Ward 7 maintain or acquire Certified Business Enterprise designation. Wacif plans to expand outreach efforts in 2019 to reach more Ward 8 businesses.

Moving forward, Wacif will also work with fellow EDP partner Skyland Workforce Center and Life Asset, another DC-based entrepreneur service provider, to provide online QuickBooks trainings to Skyland's workforce development participants.

The Bridge Park is also leveraging its own programs and influence to support small businesses. In October 2018, the Bridge Park convened a group of local nongovernmental organizations that support small business and are active in the Anacostia corridor to explore future coordination and collaboration opportunities. These included Anacostia Business Improvement District, Wacif, Latino Economic Development Center, Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative, Anacostia Economic Development Center, and ARCH Development Corporation. Additionally, the Bridge Park has funded an art installation in the underpass of a well-traveled Anacostia street in collaboration with the Anacostia Arts Center to ensure a stronger connection between the future Bridge Park site and the Anacostia business district. Finally, the Anacostia River Festival hosts the Kresge-funded Ward 8 Artists Market and, through street closures and signage, encourages its 9,000 attendees to explore area businesses.

## **Prioritizing Training and Park Jobs for Residents**

During the first two years of EDP implementation, Bridge Park's workforce strategy has been largely confined to ensuring DC residents with low income will have access to construction jobs related to the Bridge Park itself. The 2018 revised EDP has added strategies that broaden the scope of workforce activities to include advocating for more training dollars in surrounding neighborhoods as well as for programming to build the talent base and earning capacity of local artists.

Skyland Workforce Center, a Bridge Park equitable development partner and fellow BBAR project, is the anchor partner for training skilled and unskilled people as contractors for the Bridge Park's construction, linking them to existing positions and engaging the DC Department of Transportation to ensure residents are hired for those jobs. The Ward 8-based center represents a collaboration of six nonprofits that deliver employment programs and services.

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*I have a host of certifications that I acquired while I was incarcerated. However, ...once [potential employers] done the background check and they seen that I was incarcerated for drugs, they just said no. So I had one door after another close on me...When I got [to Skyland Workforce Center], ... the director, Sheree Finley, started working with me from day one to polish everything up—how to interview, how to talk, how to present yourself, how to dress. She really worked with me extremely hard. So without Skyland, I would be still out there in the field, looking, bumping into walls, not finding my way, because Ms. Finley was the glue to my puzzle. She was that glue.*

*—Richard Sullivan, Ward 8 resident currently employed as a truck driver*

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Under the JP Morgan Chase PRO Neighborhood grant, Skyland has delivered four intensive OSHA-10 (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) and OSHA-30 construction cohort-based training programs in partnership with the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, as of December 2018. The program targets Ward 7 and 8 residents with a high school diploma or GED regardless of skill level, and provides participants with transportation stipends and case management services, as well as referrals to housing, child care, and other resources. The seven-day training covers everything from workplace dress code and conduct to technical construction skills. After finding that many incoming participants lacked a broader understanding of construction careers, Skyland developed a unique industry-awareness training that tracks career outcomes based on labor projections in the District. At the end of each cohort, Skyland convenes local construction employers with vacancies through a job fair open only to program graduates. In addition to sharing regular job postings with participants, Skyland staff follow up with graduates periodically during the first 90 days of completing the course. Referrals make up another major component of Skyland's offerings, including to housing, child care, education, and other social services, as well as to other workforce development providers and apprenticeship programs.

TABLE 3

**11th Street Bridge Park Workforce Development Strategies for Equitable Development**

Strategy	Key activities
<p><b>Strategy 1: Construction jobs</b></p> <p><i>Ensure that neighboring residents in Wards 6, 7, and 8, as well as harder-to-employ District residents, including youth, are prioritized in the application process and hired for construction jobs and apprenticeships on the Bridge Park.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use the First Source agreement to set local hiring goals and requirements to maximize construction job opportunities on the Bridge Park for surrounding residents, with a special emphasis on harder-to-employ residents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 2: Postconstruction jobs</b></p> <p><i>Ensure that neighboring residents in Wards 6, 7, and 8, as well as harder-to-employ District residents, are prioritized in the application process and hired for postconstruction jobs on the Bridge Park.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Prioritize and maximize postconstruction job opportunities on the Bridge Park for surrounding residents, with a special emphasis on harder-to-employ residents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 3: Equitable distribution of funding and programming</b></p> <p><i>Advocate for equitable distribution of grants and educational programs that support capacity building, including mentorships, internships, and technical assistance within the Bridge Park’s surrounding neighborhoods (e.g., advise and connect with DC foundations, institutions, and grantmaking bodies on equitable application processes that align with community values and lower barriers to funding access).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Advocate for technical assistance and capacity-building grants within the surrounding neighborhoods, especially east of the river, with the goal of providing more opportunities for emerging artists, entrepreneurs, and organizations to access these resources (e.g., the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities and local foundations).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 4: Build capacity of local artists</b></p> <p><i>Support and facilitate ongoing programming at the Bridge Park that builds the capacity of local artists, especially emerging artists and youth.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Foster mentorships between youth, seniors, veterans, artists, scholars, and organizations and institutions by providing opportunities for collaborative and educational programming at the Bridge Park.</li> <li>■ Prioritize programming at the Bridge Park that builds the capacity of local youth and creative entrepreneurs. Work with local partners who have expertise in areas of need.</li> <li>■ Use the Bridge Park’s venues and network of local artists and organizations to connect park users with existing and new STEAM educational opportunities in the surrounding neighborhoods (e.g., the Bridge Park may serve as an outdoor classroom for youth engagement and education).</li> </ul>

**Notes:** Strategy table information is based on 2018 revised Equitable Development Plan. STEAM = science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics.

Since January 2018, 48 east DC residents, averaging 38 years old, have participated in trainings; 31 have maintained full-time jobs 90 days after completing the training, making \$21.30 an hour on average. Though Bridge Park construction is not slated to begin until 2021, Skyland will continue to provide workforce training in the hopes of building the capacity of Ward 7 and 8 residents to claim Bridge Park construction jobs.

The Bridge Park and its advisors understand job training alone will not guarantee construction jobs on the Park itself for east DC residents. As such, the team is exploring mechanisms like first-source agreements, community workforce agreements, and project labor agreements to build in Ward 8 hiring requirements for park construction, slated to begin in 2021. Active and effective oversight by municipalities is a critical incentive for contractors to honor workforce agreements. DC's track record with establishing and enforcing first-source agreements has seen both successes, as with the construction of Nationals Park,<sup>26</sup> and more recent challenges, such as substandard record-keeping practices.<sup>27</sup> Thus, ensuring that DC government can effectively enforce such agreements could become a key undertaking for the Bridge Park and its partners. Alternatively, establishing community workforce agreement or project labor agreement could allow the Bridge Park to hire a more reliable third-party enforcer. Still, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has the final say on selecting a contractor for Park construction. Bridge Park leaders plan to continue to work closely with DDOT to stay abreast of the Park's hiring needs and to maintain local hiring as DDOT's priority.

The Bridge Park has also made progress on its workforce development strategies aimed at equitable distribution of employment-related funding and building the capacity of local artists to benefit from park-driven opportunities. In October, the Bridge Park hosted a grant writing workshop led by the District Department of Energy and Environment on applying for environmental funding from the city. Additionally, over the past two years, the Bridge Park has hosted a market for artists based in Wards 7 and 8 at the annual Anacostia River Festival. The Bridge Park also has funded an art collaboration with students from Ballou and Eastern High Schools along with 8 Arts & Culture to design, build, and install giant art installations telling the history of the Anacostia River along the river trail. The Bridge Park contributed to BBAR's paid iCAN intern program to provide back-of-house technical support for the 2018 Black Love Experience—a major convening of local black creatives—and will continue to do so in 2019.

## Amplifying the Arts, Culture, and Heritage of Ward 8

Bridge Park leaders, community members, and stakeholders articulated a fourth strategy focused on amplifying surrounding-community arts and culture in the 2018 revised EDP. Like the workforce strategy, this strategy focuses tightly on using the Bridge Park itself to cultivate and hold up the art, culture, and creativity of residents from neighborhoods to the east of the Bridge Park site. The EDP makes clear that it is the culture of black DC residents—their forms of expression, their voices, and their history—that are to be preserved and protected through Bridge Park equitable development strategies.

Though only recently formalized, the arts and culture strategy has its roots in feedback Bridge Park leaders received during the first wave of Bridge Park community engagement efforts from 2011 through early 2015. During this phase, many Ward 7 and 8 community members expressed fear of cultural displacement, which is often a visible but less tangible consequence neighborhood change. These concerns were echoed by the focus groups we held with participants in the MANNA Homebuyers Club and the HCS tenants' rights workshops. Said one member of the homebuyers focus group, "the biggest fear is DC will lose its culture because we're seeing clashes now and we can't keep that authenticity. You see gentrification in Brooklyn in New York or even Philadelphia. But the small businesses are not allowing it. They're keeping that Philly culture. They still have the mom and pop shops. Here, now there's a Starbucks on every corner in Ward 8. And it's like, I don't even drink Starbucks. I don't see anybody with Starbucks, so why is it here?" Though this resident's point about Starbucks's ubiquity may be exaggerated, it is not completely off base. There are now two Starbucks in Ward 8, whereas there were none in the ward as of September 2017.<sup>28</sup>

Participants of the focus groups were also clear that Bridge Park leaders should prioritize including longtime residents in the Bridge Park. One participant offered this perception of how developers of new amenities treat current residents of changing neighborhoods, "It's often, 'Oh, they can come if they want to' and they come, but you make them feel uncomfortable like they don't belong, like they can't intermingle, or that they're wrong for trying to intermingle with you." Several focus group participants expressed their concerns that Bridge Park is intended mainly for white newcomers "who want to see an undiscovered part of the city" and tourists. To ensure that the Park remains inclusive, participants across both focus groups were adamant that the park ensure programming is accessible to all people, and especially Ward 8 residents. Many of the participants' suggestions mirrored strategies now in the 2018 revised EDP, including removing barriers to entry like cost to Ward 8 residents.

TABLE 4

**11th Street Bridge Park Arts and Culture Strategies for Equitable Development**

Strategy	Key activities
<p><b>Strategy 1: Information hub</b></p> <p><i>Create an information hub to share information about events and programming, occurring both at the Park and in the Park’s surrounding neighborhoods, with nearby residents and visitors.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Share upcoming events and programming at the Bridge Park and in surrounding neighborhoods by designating a physical space on the park to crowdsource information like a community bulletin board or kiosk.</li> <li>▪ Use the Bridge Park’s website and social media presence to connect park users with programming at the Park, community events, and existing neighborhood resources.</li> <li>▪ Use the Bridge Park’s website and social media presence to share information on relevant topics aligned with Bridge Park’s Equitable Development Plan (e.g., provide information on local history and culture, highlight narratives and voices of black residents; provide information about EDP resources like Ward 8 Home Buyers Club).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 2: Accessibility</b></p> <p><i>Ensure that programming on the Bridge Park is affordable and accessible to all visitors, especially existing residents.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facilitate the setup and operation of a sustainable funding source (e.g., endowment, capital reserve) that ensures the Bridge Park’s services and programming are accessible and affordable for all users.</li> <li>▪ Provide training to Bridge Park staff, rangers, and security staff that encourages the creation of a welcoming environment for all visitors (e.g., offer implicit bias training).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 3: Space</b></p> <p><i>Ensure that design of the Bridge Park includes a variety of spaces that support a range of informal, formal, and temporary uses.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foster informal gathering spaces that support free and spontaneous programming and creative expression and provide spaces for relaxation and healing.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that surrounding-neighborhood residents inform park design by soliciting continuous community feedback (using formal stakeholder groups such as the design review committee).</li> <li>▪ Create a timely, transparent, and user-friendly process for use of spaces at the Bridge Park (based on THEARC model). Provide visible and clear instructions for permitting on the Bridge Park’s website.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy 4: Build capacity of local artists</b></p> <p><i>Prioritize programming at the Bridge Park that fosters collaboration with residents, local organizations, artists (of all disciplines—visual, performing, and literary), and humanists in the surrounding neighborhoods, especially programs that amplify the narratives and voices of black residents.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As a platform for local culture and heritage, prioritize programming on the Bridge Park that showcases DC metro area artists, humanities practitioners, and entrepreneurs working with a variety of disciplines (including visual, performing, culinary, environmental, healing, and literary art forms).</li> <li>▪ The Bridge Park aims for residents, stakeholders, and culture contributors of neighborhoods surrounding the Bridge Park to make up the majority of the Equitable Development Advisory Committee.</li> <li>▪ Partner with local artists, creative entrepreneurs, organizations, and civic associations to create intergenerational programming that reflects the heritage of surrounding neighborhoods.</li> <li>▪ Develop an ongoing documentation plan for park programming.</li> </ul>

**Note:** Strategy table information is based on 2018 revised Equitable Development Plan.

The staff of BBAR are the core implementers of the Bridge Park’s arts and culture strategy. As managers of THEARC already, they offer a great deal of experience and capacity for managing a venue. Though the emphasis to date has been on showcasing visual, performing, culinary, environmental,

healing, and literary art forms of Ward 8 and DC black culture through BBAR and Bridge Park-sponsored festivals and other events, staff plan to track the numbers and success of Ward 8 artists featured once by monitoring their own program data and mechanisms like point-in-time observations.

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*[My small business has] a yearly event called the Black Love Experience where we bring close to about 1,500 to 2,000 people to [our location, which is in] the Anacostia Arts Center. And we focus on art. We have live music, DJ's, vending. And it's just a really, really exciting experience of just celebrating being black and the love that is within that. Sometimes in that moment, we're able to take down our guard and really focus on ourselves as a community and bettering and just loving ourselves if you will. And the 11th Street Bridge Project has supported [us] in that.*

*—Anika Hobbs*

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Although Bridge Park has sponsored numerous cultural offerings since its earliest days, three activities exemplify the cultural work under way. The first is the annual spring Anacostia River Festival, which Bridge Park cosponsors with the National Park Service. The festival features a wide array of cross-cultural activities, such as outdoor games, exploration or riverfront trails, and informational booths on conservation and clean water, as well as art, such as hand dancing, DC's official dance,<sup>29</sup> and go-go.<sup>30</sup> Over 9,000 visitors attended the 2017 festival. East-of-the-river vendors made \$4,165 at the Artist Market, also hosted by the festival.

The second set of activities focuses on building community capacity to grow food. Since 2015, the Bridge Park has funded the development of seven "Bridge Park Plots," urban farms in Wards 6 and 8, in collaboration with communities of faith and nonprofits. Together with the THEARC farm, BBAR's urban farm, the Bridge Park Plots have harvested 2,685 pounds in fruits and vegetables provided to local families at affordable prices in 2018 alone. Through these urban farms, BBAR sponsors workshop and training opportunities for local chefs, herbalists, gardeners, nutritionists, and aspiring urban farmers. BBAR's agricultural activities culminate in an annual Harvest Festival in the fall that attracted 170 attendees in 2018.

And finally, Bridge Park leaders have held up the history of communities in Wards 7 and 8 in partnership with the Double Nickels Theatre Company, which gathers and retells the reminiscences of black elders in various venues like “Wildflower” its Mobile Front Porch, which is a flatbed trailer built out to resemble a front stoop, a widely recognized venue for African American storytelling and family gatherings.<sup>31</sup> Typical Double Nickels offerings feature stories about people like World War II veterans from DC and places like the Seafarers Yacht Club, which is the oldest black yacht club on the East Coast and located just north of the John Philip Sousa Bridge.<sup>32</sup>

## Driving Inclusive Development

Bridge Park and its partners have produced notable results in the past two years, particularly in outputs like trainings provided, funds raised, and capacity built. Results with the greatest direct financial impact on DC and Ward 8 residents of modest means include 70 homes purchased, 31 full-time jobs construction jobs created, and \$525,000 in small business loans issued. Based on these results, the research team finds that Bridge Park leaders and their allies are well on their way to achieving their goal that Bridge Park be a “driver of inclusive development” for the surrounding neighborhoods. Table 5 displays the most notable quantifiable results to emerge from implementation of the four strategies discussed above.

TABLE 5

**Early Equitable Development Plan Results (January 2016–December 2018)**

<b>Housing</b>	
<i>Ward 8 Home Buyer's Club: MANNA</i>	
Participants	342
Homes purchased by participants	70
<i>Tenants' rights: HCS</i>	
Total number of homeowner and renter properties engaged through direct mailings	35,358
Total number of homeowner and renter properties engaged through door-to-door canvassing	1,942
Total number of residents engaged through workshops held in Ward 6 and Ward 8	567
<i>Douglass Community Land Trust</i>	
Attendees to Douglass Community Land Trust education programs (most are Ward 8 residents)	400
<b>Small business development</b>	
Total amount in loans awarded to Wards 7 and 8 small businesses by Wacif	\$525,000
Wards 7 and 8 small businesses assisted by Wacif loans or technical assistance	104
<b>Workforce development</b>	
Full-time jobs created or maintained by small businesses in Wards 7 and 8 assisted by Wacif	68
Participants in Skyland Workforce Center's construction training program residing in Wards 6, 7, or 8	48
Full-time jobs maintained by Skyland Workforce Center's construction trainees 90 days after program completion	31
<b>Arts and culture</b>	
2017 Anacostia River Festival attendance	9,000
Total earned by East of the River vendors at 2017 Artist Market during 2017 Anacostia River Festival	\$4,165
2017 Harvest Festival attendance	75
2018 Harvest Festival attendance	170
<b>Additional strategies</b>	
Participation in the pilot CLEW	15
Families registered in Ward 8 Children's Savings Account Program	110
Bridge Park Plots (urban farms) established	7
Total pounds of fruit and vegetables harvested on Bridge Park Plots and THEARC Farm in 2018	2,685
Total pounds of fruit and vegetables harvested on Bridge Park Plots and THEARC Farm since 2015	7,603

**Source:** 11th Street Bridge Park.

**Note:** CLEW = Community Leadership Empowerment Workshop; HCS = Housing Counseling Services; Wacif = Washington Area Community Investment Fund.

# Charting a Course for Equity

The results laid out above speak to the success of Bridge Park leaders in implementing their equitable development strategies and in aligning those strategies with those of others to drive forward inclusive development in Ward 8. As the insights rendered in the next section acknowledge, Bridge Park leaders have shown wisdom by charting course for equitable development results that can realistically be achieved by the direct reach of their own resources and/or their limited sphere of influence. It would simply be impractical—and potentially disastrous from a community relations standpoint—for Bridge Park leaders and their closely allied stakeholders to claim that they intend to achieve outcomes for the surrounding neighborhoods that are beyond the scope of their direct control or influence.

This cautionary note exposes an important tension for most equitable development work: namely, that *achieving a set of equitable development results is not the same as achieving actual equity* (i.e., fairness and justice) *for an historically marginalized community*. After all, it is possible to imagine any number of equitable development projects being completed in a previously disinvested-in neighborhood without true equity ever being achieved. In other words, **more** affordable housing, small businesses, jobs, and cultural experiences may be preserved or created without there ever being **enough** of these things to prevent displacement of many current residents, much less to substantially mitigate the widespread effects of systemic racism on black and low-income residents living in places like DC's Ward 8.

So, what is required to define and achieve equity in the context of an equitable development effort? We conclude this report by using the data provided by our study of the Bridge Park's EDP to explore key aspects of that question, as well as the larger challenges that face any organization that seeks to produce meaningful gains for historically marginalized groups.

## The Importance of Setting an Equity Outcome

To achieve actual equity, it is important to set equity itself as an outcome and to define it in a way that can be measured across the results produced by multiple actors. In the case of the surrounding neighborhoods to the east of the Bridge Park footprint, no relevant entity or set of entities—including local government, developers, resident leaders, lenders, funders, nonprofits, or others—has yet defined what the joint impact of all successful equitable development efforts in Ward 8 should ultimately look like. In more technical terms, there is no shared equity outcome that can be operationalized with clear

metrics. There is no “north star” against which all stakeholders—Bridge Park and beyond—can chart and measure their progress.

For this discussion, the research team proposes defining the implicit equity outcome of the efforts undertaken in Ward 8 by Bridge Park and others in this way: *That people who live to the east of the Bridge Park footprint (and/or a commensurate or greater share of people who are like them demographically) will be able remain comfortably in Ward 8 even as the neighborhoods around them continue to change dramatically.*

The measurable level of change needed to achieve this equity outcome is complex and dynamic; it is not one thing, it is a carefully balanced combination of things. Reaching the equity outcome will require changes in person-level factors, like income and assets, to happen in concert with changes in place-level factors, like housing-cost burden, economic opportunity, cultural preservation, and laws covering things like taxes and zoning. In fact, when anchored to an equity outcome, no single development strategy can be called truly equitable unless it is understood as part of a larger arrangement of strategies that change various forms of capital—human, social, and economic—in right relation to one another.

Furthermore, no person- or place-level intervention can be pursued without taking into account the systemic factors that may have driven and/or continue to drive how inequities are produced in the first place. In other words, activities like job training and financial education for people must be commensurate with efforts to produce good jobs, business opportunities, and affordable housing, as well as actions to root out discriminatory practices that lead to disparities in income and assets between people of different racial and ethnic groups. Because preventing displacement of residents from gentrifying communities like Anacostia, Fairlawn, and Congress Heights is about identifying *the right combination* of changes in people, place, and system, identifying the targets for success and how to reach them can be complex. The deliberations of the advisory committee for the DCLT over how to balance support for renters and homeowners (see the focal example above) provide a glimpse into the kind of complexity that those who wish to achieve true equity must grapple with when balancing person, place, and system factors correctly.

## Finding the Right Mix of Measurable Change

Comparisons of two subpopulations of people with low incomes in Ward 8 demonstrate how the changes needed to achieve equity will differ for different groups. The first subpopulation is residents who have relatively fixed barriers to employment, such as age or disability, and who therefore may have a fixed income or no income at all. Per 2012–16 American Community Survey data, 26 percent of

seniors in Ward 8 live below the federal poverty level.<sup>33</sup> This group cannot change characteristics like being elderly or disabled, so characteristics like their earned income are not particularly malleable either. Keeping this group comfortably in Ward 8 requires a heavy emphasis on quantifiable place-level change, such as the preservation and increase of the supply of high-quality affordable housing, senior and otherwise. The second subpopulation is made up of residents who can and often already are working, and who might need help overcoming personal barriers, like low skills and educational attainment, in tandem with systemic remedies to overcome increasingly unaffordable market-rate housing. Keeping this group comfortably in Ward 8 will likely require both more access to affordable housing—such as expanded eligibility for housing subsidies, efforts to combat housing discrimination, and increased supply of housing—and more earned income.

Below we provide an example of the interaction between measurable person-level characteristics like income and place-level characteristics like housing costs that will be needed to achieve our equity outcome, as defined, for workers with low income in Ward 8.

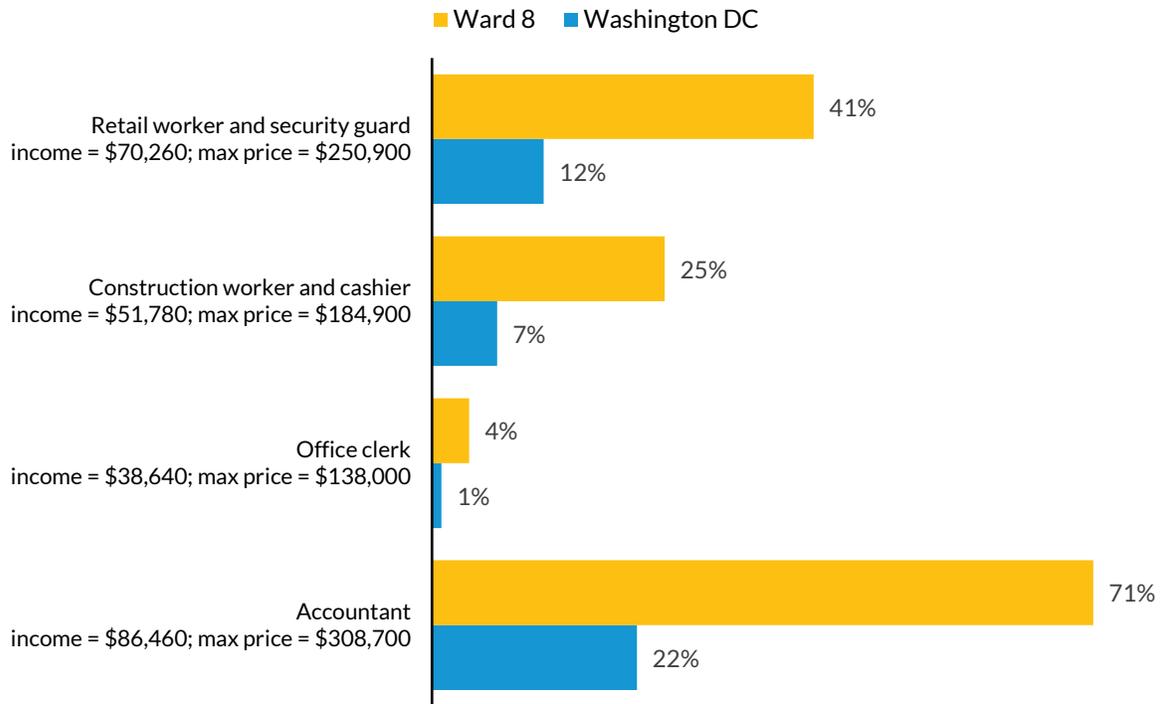
More homes in Ward 8 are affordable for first-time buyers with lower incomes than homes in other parts of DC (figure 9). However, the price of most Ward 8 homes is already out of reach for workers in the many occupations paying below \$75,000, the rough living-wage annual salary threshold for a small family.<sup>34</sup> People in construction work—the occupation emphasized in the Bridge Park EDP—are unable to afford about 75 percent of the homes in Ward 8 and 88 percent of the homes throughout the District. Strategies that focus on job attainment and earning potential without regard for rising home prices miss the inevitable dilemma working-class Ward 8 residents will face if they try to remain in or move to these neighborhoods: finding affordable housing. In fact, rising earning potential will only compound this dilemma for people who are eligible for housing subsidies and will likely lose eligibility as their income rises.

Where home purchase prices go, so go rents. Rising rents are a particular challenge to the prospects of workers with low skills and low educational attainment remaining comfortably in neighborhoods east of the Bridge Park footprint. This group—especially the many already in low-skilled jobs who do not typically qualify for or receive housing subsidies—will be unable to afford coming rent increases unless the right mix of workforce and housing policies and interventions is introduced. By investing in the training of Ward 8 adults so they can get the higher-skill, higher-wage construction jobs that will emerge from Bridge Park and throughout Ward 8 in coming years alongside efforts to preserve and increase affordable housing stock, equitable developers like Bridge Park and its allies are already implicitly addressing this dilemma. However, in the years ahead, more explicit alignment of strategies at the person and place levels may be needed to elicit the changes needed to ensure equity as an outcome for people like the construction workers Bridge Park helps to train.

FIGURE 9

Home Sales Affordable to First-Time Buyers in 2016, by Occupation

Percentage of sales



URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban Institute analysis of Department of Labor Occupational Data and Real Property data from the Office of Tax and Revenue. Originally tabulated by Leah Hendey.

Notes: Figures relate to the share of home sales recorded in Ward 8 and in Washington, DC, overall that would have been affordable to a first-time homebuyer given each occupations' annual median salary.

## Leveraging Density

The anticipated growth of density in Ward 8 is yet another important component to account for when weighing the combination of measurable change needed to help people with low incomes remain comfortably in neighborhoods like Anacostia, Fairlawn, and Barry Farms. City planners often see growing density as a vehicle for including low-income residents in gentrifying neighborhoods. But planners acknowledge that public policies and other strategies must be put in place thoughtfully and in advance to take advantage of the many opportunities density can present to produce equitable outcomes. The most recent District of Columbia Office of Planning's (OP) Long Range Cooperative Forecast, which was conducted in 2015 for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, forecasts widespread job, household, and population growth.<sup>35</sup> According to the Office of Planning's analysts,

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### BOX 3

#### How Are Gentrification, Displacement, and Density Related?

**Gentrification** is used to describe the influx of middle-class or affluent people into an economically distressed neighborhood that often accompanies a process of neighborhood renewal. In and of itself, gentrification is not a bad thing; it can boost a local economy and diversify the class, race, and ethnic make-up of a neighborhood.

**Displacement** is used to describe when gentrification becomes inequitable and socioeconomically vulnerable residents, often people of color, are pushed out of or prevented from moving into once-affordable neighborhoods because they cannot accommodate the higher cost of living gentrification often brings with it.

**Density** is used by developers and planners to describe the increase of dwelling units, people, and jobs in a geographic area, including the increasing share of overall space taken up by buildings/development. Increased housing density in a gentrifying neighborhood can revitalize the neighborhood equitably in various ways, such as creating more opportunities for policymakers to provide subsidized housing, keeping market-rate rents affordable via greater supply of units, and accommodating more residents who fuel market demand for high-quality stores, parks, physicians, restaurants, and schools and a consequently increased supply of jobs.

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Washington, DC, is projected to experience a 17.1 percent increase in population and a 12.1 percent increase in employment between 2015 and 2025 (District of Columbia Office of Planning 2016). By comparison, neighborhoods bordering the Bridge Park site will experience double the city's population increase (35 percent) and double the city's employment growth (24.3 percent; figure 10).

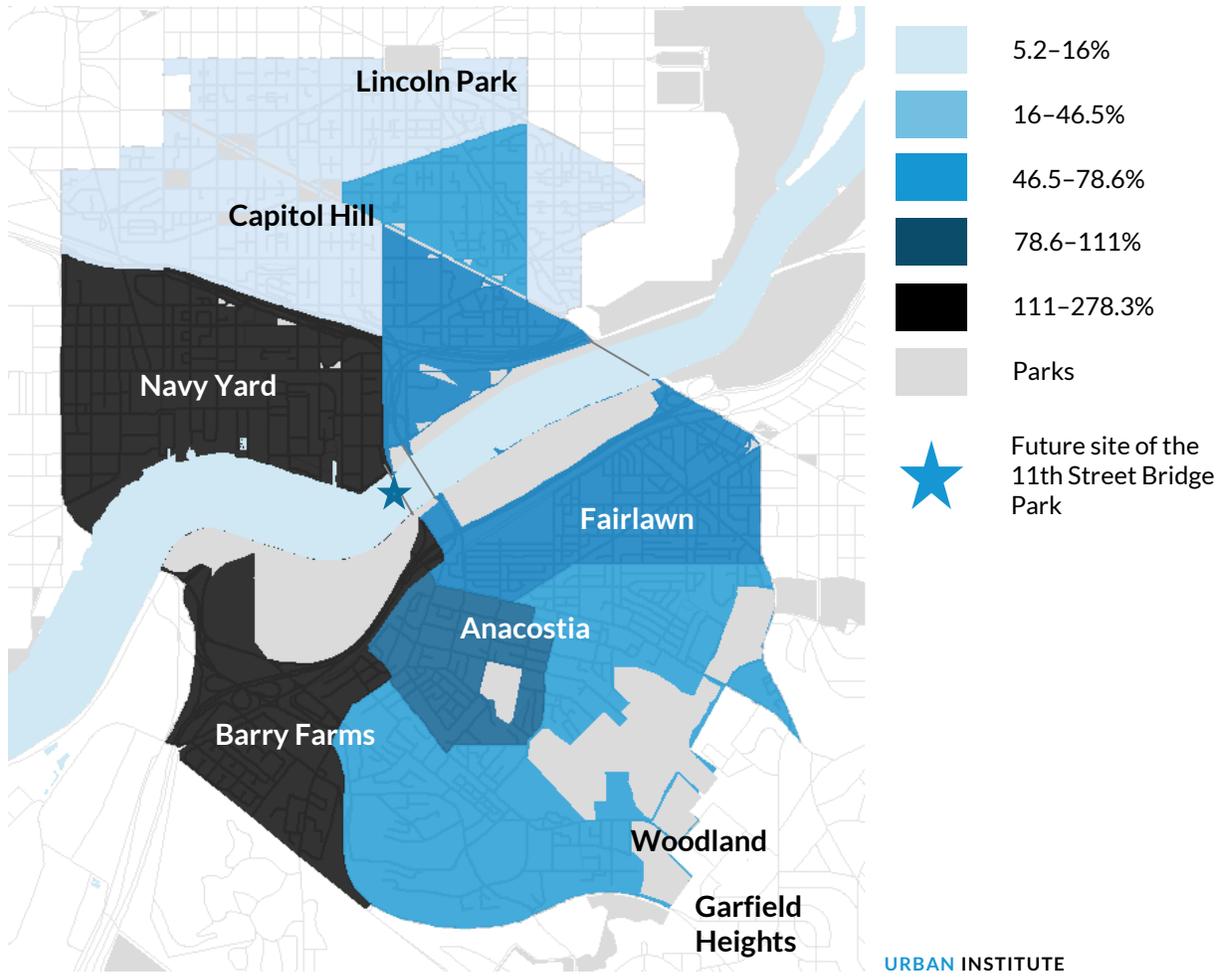
Neighborhoods just to the east of the Bridge Park footprint are expected to experience even greater growth; projected employment growth is expected to be six times the city's average (74.6 percent).

Specific to the current Bridge Park context and as discussed above, we can already see Bridge Park EDP strategies anticipating the opportunities created by increasing density in the sophisticated tactics recommended in the DCLT business plan:

Any CLT program serving Ward 8 should also be prepared to take advantage of future opportunities to provide long term Stewardship services for the inclusionary zoning (IZ) required for permanently affordable units. Such new IZ affordable housing should be anticipated from future private market investment, catalyzed by the 11th Street Bridge Park, generating higher density mixed use development in Wards 7 & 8 and similar to other areas of Washington such as the Capitol Riverfront area just to the west. Offered on a fee-for-service basis, the CLT would permanently protect the affordability, quality, and security of these new re-sale-restricted homes either financed with public subsidies or mandated by the [city's] existing Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

FIGURE 10

Percentage Change in Number of Households: Census Tracts East and West of the Future Bridge Park Site, 2015–45



Source: DC Office of Planning, DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer.

Note: A large portion of land near the Barry Farms neighborhood is national park land that will be home to a mixed-use development.

# Insights for the Field

The research team offers the following insights for those who wish to lead equitable development efforts in gentrifying communities. These insights are based on the results and challenges experienced by Bridge Park stakeholders and are augmented by our own research and review of the literature.

- **Develop a realistic plan.** Bridge Park leaders and allies have been careful to develop a goal and strategies that reflect only the direct reach of their resources and/or their limited sphere of influence with other organizations engaged in equitable development in Ward 8. The recent revision to the EDP was both to expand its scope to include additional voices and new ideas, and to adjust it based on growing experience with implementation. For example, in the first version of the EDP, Bridge Park leaders defined the park’s “impact area” as neighborhoods within a mile of its footprint; but because of experiences like trying to find available land for the DCLT, leaders redefined their focal geography in the revised EDP as the “surrounding neighborhoods east of the Bridge Park footprint.”
- **Engage a network of partnerships and key resource holders.** Bridge Park leaders look for ways to link their strategies to the similar and related efforts of other entities such as District economic development agencies, employers, resident groups, lenders, and developers. They also look for ways to connect the influence and expertise of direct partners and other entities, and to connect everyone’s work across sectors. They recognize that a much larger network of government agencies, nonprofits, and developers—not just Bridge Park and its immediate allies—must come together to produce equitable development for marginalized people in the District. This approach augments Bridge Park’s commitment to delivering on only promises they can realistically keep by holding other key players accountable for their fair share of developing equitably.
- **Set performance-level targets to coordinate effort and track progress for achieving equitable development results across partners.** Bridge Park leaders are setting performance-level targets to hold themselves and their immediate partners accountable. Those targets define the number and type of results each partner aims to achieve within the EDP strategy or strategies most relevant to them. Performance-level targets also ensure transparency among stakeholders when adjustments to the goals and timeline become necessary, as they inevitably have been.

- **Hold multiple parties accountable for achieving equity in a measurable way.** Bridge Park’s performance-level targets for equitable development represent pieces of a much bigger pie that must be accounted if actual equity is to ever be achieved. Neighborhood- and population-level targets that clearly state thresholds for the number and types of people who will be helped to remain in or move to the area need to be aligned and owned across multiple resource holders—far beyond just Bridge Park and its current partners—to ensure actual fairness to longtime Ward 8 residents and other DC residents of color with low incomes. These targets need to account for resident voice and projected population growth.
- **Be in it for the long haul.** Equitable development is not a quick process. When speaking to funders, Bridge Park leaders frame implementation of their equitable development strategies over 20- and 30-year intervals in recognition that this is how long success will take. Early implementation of strategies has been slower—on all fronts—than Bridge Park leaders anticipated when they released the first version of the EDP in 2015.
- **Build resident voice and power.** Bridge Park leaders have discovered that recognizing, engaging, and empowering resident leadership may be the most important strategy they can pursue. Years of systemic racism and structural barriers to opportunity often demotivate residents from participating in the revitalization of their neighborhoods. Leaders from within and outside an affected community must commit to making equitable development an “inside job,” with those most affected by neighborhood change participating in and often carrying out strategies. This insight also acknowledges that city legislative, regulatory, and investment decisions often have profound effects on neighborhoods. As activities of the Bridge Park CLTAC have affirmed, true equity may only ever be achieved when equitable development strategies put the existing community in control of land use and other aspects of development.

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*“We can minimize displacement and extract that from the equation of development. Because [the two don’t] have to be synonymous. Just because you move in does not mean I have to move out... Self-determination is actually the foundation and, of course, is the cornerstone of what we’re doing here.*

*—Kymone Freeman, Ward 8 resident, founder of We Act Radio, and Bridge Park CLTAC member*

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# Conclusion

Large numbers of new and different sorts of people can come into a community without necessarily having to displace or incommode the people already there. Resources are available for doing the hard work of equitable development in DC and the region: An analysis of federal capital community development flows ranked Washington, DC, highest in combined investment for housing, small business, and impact investing.<sup>36</sup> However, a large network of government agencies, nonprofits, developers, funders, vocal citizens, and others—not just energetic champions like Bridge Park—needs to ensure that these resources yield positive equity outcomes for marginalized people. Bridge Park and its core allies have demonstrated the power of coordinating efforts to achieve notable results in a short amount of time. However, it is unlikely that they can keep pace with the real estate and population changes coming to Ward 8 unless everyone does their part.

In DC, there is ample evidence that the will is there. Socially conscious investors are already helping residents successfully mount Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act projects, and the District government is actively exploring and pursuing strategies like inclusionary zoning and vacant properties reclamation projects.

What remains to be seen is whether these strong glimmers of will can turn into a beacon lighting the way to equity for citizens who have long been seeking it. Future products from this study will document what happens next.

# Notes

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- <sup>22</sup> The pull quotes in this report are taken from footage of Equitable Development Plan Instructional Videos, Pendragwn Productions, October 2018. The video incorporates points of view from Ward 8 residents who appreciated the Bridge Park efforts. The research team will collect a wide range of resident feedback on Bridge Park implementation results during the next phase of this study.
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