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Chapter 12 - Partnerships in Shrinking Cities: Making Baltimore 'Liveable'?

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Abstract

The governance imperative to increase the City of Baltimore's population and thus alleviate its 'fiscal squeeze' has brought the liveability of this shrinking city to the fore. City government has long engaged in seeking partnership with private (corporate and non-profit) actors to develop and deliver a policy agenda to stabilise and grow the city. Drawing from empirical research into collaborative governance in Baltimore, this chapter focuses on neighbourhood policy to examine the range of (explicit and implicit) liveability policies and initiatives. By considering the challenge of making Baltimore 'liveable' in terms of for whom and where/ which neighbourhoods, the research reveals the challenges posed by the city's deep inequities and exclusionary governance to the realisation of 'liveability' for all. It thus challenges how the liveability concept elides the trade-offs regarding who (and where) is included and excluded from the policies which result.

11.1 Introduction

City governance is undertaken by the local state (city government and its agencies) engaging in a variety of forms of *partnership* with a range of non-state actors to decide and enact policy priorities. Whether these partnerships are perceived as collaborative, co-optative, coercive or contested reflects different normative and ideological perspectives on the extent to which the priorities of those with most power do, and should, predominate. But in practice there is broad agreement that there has been a longstanding shift towards prioritising economic growth over equity, related to wider debates about the extent of city-level policy choice given broader political-economic constraints.

Increased competition between cities for investment has led to an emphasis on making cities more attractive to footloose capital and 'creative' workers who, it is claimed, are increasingly sensitive to the quality-of-life package offered by different cities (Florida 2005). Dominant policy prescriptions align with the conception of the entrepreneurial, competitive and creative city, interpreted by critical scholars as the neoliberalisation of the state's role to align with and seek to facilitate the priorities of the market and private interests rather than meet the social welfare needs of existing residents. Florida's (2005) creative class thesis, which has had significant policy influence, has been subject to critique as 'cappuccino urban politics' (Peck 2005) given the distributional impacts on other city residents (McCann 2007). But contestation of these governance priorities is nullified through deployment of 'common sense' arguments that the needs of the poor and less powerful will be met once economic growth occurs, despite increasing inequality leading to characterisations of the 'dual city' (Castells 1989).

Debates about the notion of liveability have played out within these broader analyses of city governance and governance priorities. Recent scholarship emphasises the discursive power of this now ubiquitous term within urban strategies and policy documents (Clarke and Cheshire 2018). Liveability is especially useful as it can be imbued with many meanings by different actors and groups, smoothing over conflicts and generating consensus. Who can reject the appeal of making a city more liveable? But the way the notion is deployed reinforces the power differentials of urban governance and the stark socio-spatial inequalities which result, rather than encouraging efforts to improve the lived experience of the majority of residents. What would actually improve quality of life would be to meet the diverse needs of a city's population in its entirety by confronting inequality. Unequal power relations are inherent in which actors get to frame (understand, define, categorise and measure) a policy problem. Such 'power dynamics of knowledge production' underpin how liveability is deployed to frame urban problems in such a way that it bolsters policies that favour the needs of the market over the needs of residents (McArthur and Robin 2019: 1716). Thus liveability as a concept does not confront the conflicts and trade-offs inherent in urban politics and policy making, described by Lasswell (1936) as 'who gets what, when, and how'.

11.2 The Case of Baltimore

Baltimore City in the State of Maryland provides a rich location in which to explore the partnerships and power relations of who gets what, along with the vital question of where, in order to interrogate how liveability and its corollaries are deployed amidst the policies being pursued in the city. It reveals that the policies which liveability discourse assists in justifying privilege some and further contain other populations, whilst also precluding debate and contestation about more equitable alternatives.

The analysis is informed by documentary review of City and State government and agency policies, research reports and evaluations, along with those of other key city institutions, plus local media reports. The review combines with primary data gathered via semi-structured interviews conducted with salient actors in the governance of the city, including: political leaders; public officials; philanthropic foundation staff; staff of 'ed and med' (education and medical, or university and hospital) 'anchor' institutions (so-called due to their inability to move and resultant vested interests); non-profit organisations (some neighbourhood-based); community groups and citizen activists. In total, 39 respondent interviews, 5 non-participatory observations, 3 group interviews and a stakeholder workshop were conducted between 2015 and 2017.

Prior to examining current partnerships and policies, further context helps establish the path dependencies of Baltimore's contemporary governance: how it has become a shrinking, segregated city with severe socio-spatial inequality; and how partnerships between key state and non-state actors that formulate policies have changed over time.

The city's current population of 612,000 is over a third smaller than its 1950 peak of 950,000 and nearly a quarter of its residents fall below the federal poverty level (US Census 2017). Its 'population loss, economic downturn, employment decline and social problems' (Martinez-Fernandez et al., 2012: 214) stem not only from deindustrialisation but from a much longer history in which local and federal policies have concentrated and segregated its African American population. Federally-supported suburbanisation in the post-war period exacerbated the city's depopulation and its concentration of African American residents and of poverty. City neighbourhoods vacated by 'white flight' became renters' enclaves for African Americans, who had little choice but to rent substandard housing due to practices of 'financial apartheid' (Coates 2014). The displacement and disruption experienced by the city's communities were aggravated by urban renewal activities, aided by significant federal financial transfers for comprehensive redevelopment projects. As a state government official explained:

'in the '60s and '70s what people call 'urban removal' as opposed to neighbourhood-based change making… projects really messed up a lot of neighbourhoods, African American neighbourhoods particularly'.

An unsuccessful 1951 petition sought the withdrawal of federal urban renewal funds on the basis that redevelopments 'place[d] the full strength of the Federal government behind a policy of rigid residential segregation' (Williams 2005). It was not until 2005 that the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was found guilty of violating the Fair Housing Act (1968) by unfairly concentrating African American public housing residents in the city's most impoverished and segregated areas, the judge concluding that HUD had treated Baltimore 'an island reservation for use as a container for all of the poor' (Kline 2007). The city's continuing extreme spatial segregation is described as the 'black butterfly' of poor African American neighbourhoods west and east of the central spine of the city (Brown 2016). The city's population loss manifests in its built form, with more than 16,500 vacant residential properties (BNIA-JFI 2016). Unsurprisingly there is a very strong correlation between neighbourhoods with the highest densities of vacant properties and those in the 'black butterfly' which had been subject to 'redlining' (the highly racialised practice of refusing mortgage finance). As an anchor institution officer summarised:

'We have a tremendous amount of racism institutionally in how we've been planned as a city, how our institutions function as a city, and the lack of resources and leadership to… address the 50 plus years of delayed investment in… neighbourhoods'.

To contextualise Baltimore's contemporary governance it is also important to understand how the configurations of key state and non-state actors - and partnerships between these - have changed over time. These configurations play out in a context of decades of neoliberal urbanism, typified by the withdrawal of federal support for cities. All interviewed in present day Baltimore perceived 'fiscal squeeze' as an imperative for working in partnership. Fiscal squeeze refers to declining governmental revenues (whether derived from the local tax base or inter-governmental transfers) and increasing demands for public goods and welfare supports, as one interviewee explained, 'the needs are so great and the resources have dwindled… there's just not enough resources'. This imperative has long driven city government's efforts to partner with private actors. In terms of partnership types (chapter 1), the principal form is a longstanding, informal (type C) public-private partnership, wherein the local state is the public element, and the private element combines private companies (particularly property developers) and, especially latterly, private organisations with 'non-profit' status. These major non-profits are locally-based philanthropic foundations, which undertake a variety of grant giving activities, and 'ed and med' institutions with a vested interest in the proximate neighbourhoods in which they are 'anchored'. These partners have long set a broad policy agenda in terms of what types of investments and activities are prioritised where in the city. In undertaking the wide range of activities involved in implementing this agenda, different partners may also engage in other types of layered partnership, such as via grant-giving to smaller, neighbourhood-based non-profit organisations or perhaps grassroots civil society organisations (type F partnerships).

Reviewing the composition and changing agenda of this loosely organised type C public-private partnership over time highlights that its durability stems from its adaptability to changing circumstances. Its membership is determined by the power partners can wield in terms of the resources they have to determine and realise the agenda. Grassroots civil society organisations are excluded from these opaque agenda-setting arrangements, but are enrolled into implementation (via type F partnerships) when deemed necessary by powerful type C partners. Indeed, when discussing partnerships, elite actors did not tend to mention citizens and grassroots civil society organisations, interpreting partnership as being amongst themselves.

11.2.1 Partnering with local, private non-state actors

Federal withdrawal from cities in the 1980s led to the adoption of more localist practices combined with more privatist city governance (Barnekov et al. 1981) as city government increasingly needed to form alliances with private actors in order to gain 'power to' develop and implement policy agendas (Stone 1993). In Baltimore, the attention of type C elite partners remained focused on downtown and the waterfront, as favoured during the earlier period of federally-supported urban renewal. Other neighbourhoods did not gain elite attention and resource. Wealthier neighbourhoods which had the requisite voluntary capacity increasingly self-provided services. Funding mechanisms enabled by City and State government legislation such as Business Improvement and Community Benefit Districts generated additional funding streams for privatist forms of neighbourhood service provision. But there was also rising awareness of the spatial division between the favoured downtown and waterfront and the need to address the problems faced by the city's poorer, African American neighbourhoods. Calls for action came from BUILD, a community alliance rooted in the power base of the city's black churches. The city's rising philanthropic presence also asserted neighbourhood inattention, as manifested in the Goldseker Foundation's *Baltimore 2000* report (Szanton 1986). In 1987 Schmoke, the city's first African American mayor, was elected on a platform of addressing the long-neglected neighbourhoods.

Private actors such as the city's philanthropic foundations started to rise in importance in the type C public-private partnership given their 'power to' (amidst declining city corporate presence). Several foundations aligned with Schmoke's neighbourhood agenda. An example is the Enterprise Foundation, which partnered with city government and BUILD to sponsor a neighbourhood-targeted initiative (Pill, 2018). However, an advocacy organisation officer commented that:

'To really address the conditions in distressed neighbourhoods… requires something that only the federal government can do... We put 130, 140, 150, nobody really knows, million into Sandtown-Winchester in the '90s… but you can only do that once a decade at that level and it wasn't enough and it took money from all the other neighbourhoods'.

Thus the initiative became regarded as a lesson in the intractability of the city's neighbourhood problems. Schmoke and the philanthropic sector's neighbourhood emphasis did succeed in attracting some federal program funds, albeit subject to much greater (time-limited, market-leveraging) strictures compared to the large federal transfers of the urban renewal era. Under the Clinton administration, Baltimore gained a ten-year federal Empowerment Zone designation and a federal HOPE VI program for redevelopment of six public housing projects – though 'the goal of

deconcentrating the poor came largely at the expense of the poorest of the poor' (Stoker et al., 2015, p. 57) who were displaced, affirming the lack of attention to those most lacking power.

11.2.2 Asset-based approach

The advent of Schmoke's successor, O'Malley (in office 1997-2007) represented a disjuncture with emphasis on deprived neighbourhoods. The pivotal moment was the adoption in 2000 of an 'asset-based' (rather than need-based) mode of resource allocation to boost the city's housing market (explained below). Continued reductions in federal aid combined with the city's shrinking tax base led to the justificatory narrative of the 'greater realism' of market-based approaches. The director of a neighbourhood-based non-profit explained:

'In the '90s, Clinton was elected… everybody said, "Oh finally. The federal government's going to help cities again," right? Clinton's like, "I'd love to help but we're broke, we don't have the money". And that's when people started thinking… we're never going to get all the money we used to get. We have to figure out a different approach. And that's where the asset-based approach came from. It was a culture of scarcity'.

The approach was adopted by O'Malley and still remains the purported basis for city planning and resource allocation. It is manifested spatially via a typology of housing markets with different policy prescriptions and thus differential prioritisation of city elite resources - ranging from 'stressed' neighbourhoods (subject to demolition for site assembly, especially if aligning with the growth needs of anchor institutions); through 'the middle' (where interventions seek to 'help the market'); to 'regionally competitive' neighbourhoods (not requiring intervention). Crucially, city and foundation resource allocation maintains the asset-based rationale in what is prioritised for support via type F partnerships. The physical development activities of neighbourhood-based non-profits such as Community Development Corporations, and pro-market approaches of other non-profits (such as encouraging homeownership) in neighbourhoods 'in the middle' are favoured. For example, the non-profit organisation Healthy Neighborhoods undertakes neighbourhood marketing to prospective homebuyers, along with provision of some financial assistance and advice for housing purchase and rehab, in thirteen city neighbourhoods 'in the middle'. In emphasising that they 'work "in the middle"', neighbourhood-based non-profit officers affirmed their enrolment into the spatial priorities of their type C funders through layered type F partnerships.

11.3 'Change to Grow'

The previous review of elite actors (type C partners) who have determined the spatial priorities for investment and attention sets the scene for a critical examination of how liveability has been

deployed (explicitly and implicitly) in the city's policies. Liveability as a term is not prominent in city discourse and is not deployed directly in plans and strategies, but it is clearly implied in the governance imperatives which predominate and the policies which have been developed and are pursued as a result. This is best encapsulated in 'Change to Grow' (City of Baltimore 2013), presented as helping to achieve then Mayor Rawlings-Blake's goal (in office 2010-16) to grow Baltimore by 10,000 families in ten years by:

'*… allowing new investments in neighbourhood infrastructure... providing a funding surge for the demolition of more than 4,000 vacant homes; all while reducing homeowner property taxes by more than 20%'.*

It is notable as a financial reform rather than spatial plan, highlighting the predominance of the strictures of 'fiscal squeeze' as a governance imperative. But beyond its deficit reduction emphasis the plan's policies align with and seek to reinforce the existing spatial policy prescriptions established in the housing typology. That the city's population shrinkage and hyper-concentration of the poor has resulted in a shrinking tax base and rising service needs is cited to reinforce a narrative of 'harsh realities' to frame policy pronouncements. The plan's first aim, to 'eliminate a nine-year $750 million structural budget deficit', is located as the basis to free up funds for realisation of its other aims. As clear in its title, the plan's explicit goal is to attract people to live in the city, thus reversing its decades of shrinkage and decline. It is therefore clearly predicated on a liveability discourse about making the city attractive to potential residents. But what was described by a city official as the 'meta-goal' is to deconcentrate poverty, explicitly sought through attracting new (wealthier) residents through a focus on (some) neighbourhoods and by reducing property taxes (the city has the highest in Maryland). Less emphasised is the poverty deconcentration which results from the displacement of the city's poor through relocation resulting from 'stressed' neighbourhood redevelopment, as well as via housing mobility strategies (explained below).

'Change to Grow' encapsulates the emphasis of Baltimore's type C elites on realising 'the great inversion', or gravitation of a younger, more affluent population to the city (Ehrenhalt 2013). The supposition is that millennials are attracted to urban life given their 'urban values' (Ross 2014). The activities supported in neighbourhoods 'in the middle', such as marketing and provision of financial incentives to homebuyers, are part and parcel of these efforts. The predication of city strategies on attracting and retaining such residents seeks to link the city with its wealthier surrounding region and beyond, with the city framed as providing a cheap housing option despite its relatively high property taxes. As the director of a Community Development Corporation explained:

'Thirty years ago, Baltimore was in a bad position because it was a city in a small region when you compare it to New York or Boston or Philadelphia. It was squeezed between Washington and Philadelphia. But now that whole thing has merged together and now we're a low-cost alternative in a high-cost region. And that region goes, you know, from Washington to Boston'.

Type C partner emphasis on attracting a younger as well as more affluent population was reflected by interviewees mentioning 'millennials' as a prominent target group. In her 2015 State of the City speech, the Mayor trumpeted Baltimore as the 'fourth fastest growing city for that demographic', expanding on this theme in her 2016 speech:

'Baltimore is getting national attention for how many millennials are moving here. There are a number of reasons – jobs, of course, being one. But the reason they will stay is because Baltimore is pretty awesome. From musicians to artists to foodies, we have made Baltimore a hip place to be. People want a real city, not a generic landscape. They want to be part of a sustainable city. A walkable city. A city that shaped our nation's history. A welcoming city. A vibrant city in which each neighbourhood has its own unique identity. A city of robust arts and culture'.

This rhetoric encapsulates how liveability discourse has combined with economic development and competitiveness in a way that is seemingly congruent with the creative class thesis (McCann 2007; 2013). In this combination, liveability is narrowly conceptualised as focusing on who the city's type C elites want to attract - a putative population of mobile millennials - rather than incorporating what is needed to improve the lived experience of poorer, predominantly African American existing residents who have been excluded from partnership governance arrangements. As an anchor institution official explained:

'Our approach to current challenges has been… to bring more white people back into city, to highlight the good that is existing in a lot of our neighbourhoods… But there's a polarity that I don't think we own as a city, I don't think we own it as a country… we are not addressing the root causes of a lot of the issues of our city'.

The narrowed liveability of 'Change to Grow' has implications for the existing poor communities which are contained spatially, socially and economically in the 'black butterfly' of this highly segregated city. It reinforces the housing typology's de facto policy prescription of abandonment for such 'stressed' neighbourhoods deemed unattractive to capital and new residents and thus lacking the asset-based rationale to benefit from what one non-profit official described as even 'basic services'. However, the 'stressed' neighbourhoods do form the focus for one policy which benefited

from the 'funding surge' predicated on realisation of the 'Change to Grow' plan's deficit reduction measures. The Vacants to Value initiative, launched by the City of Baltimore in 2010, targets the city's vacant residential properties concentrated in its 'stressed' neighbourhoods. The initiative comprises a more focused type C public-private partnership through which the local state seeks to enrol the private sector in 'fighting blight' through provision of investment incentives, coupled with increased code enforcement and strategic demolition. The program also offers grants to assist buyers purchase formerly vacant, renovated houses (360 awarded as of 2015). A City-commissioned evaluation reported that 513 demolition permits has been issued during its first 5 years of operation. But the analysis concluded that the program could not reverse market trends in terms of reducing property vacancy (BNIA-JFI 2016). Another report sponsored by a city philanthropy (Jacobson 2015) concluded that the program had been successful in code enforcement in some stressed neighbourhoods. But it found that development of vacant properties had been highly uneven and the practice of selling city-owned houses to for-profit developers had not created or maintained affordable housing for current residents. As such, the program demonstrates that narrow framings of liveability such as those contained in 'Change to Grow' not only result in distributional issues given their emphasis on the preferences of the relatively privileged (McCann 2007; 2013), but that the initiatives that result such as Vacants to Value can exacerbate inequality, in this case in terms of reduced access to housing for the city's poorer residents.

11.4 Making Baltimore Liveable - for whom, in which neighbourhoods?

A key question which arises when considering the challenge of making Baltimore liveable (or in city parlance, 'changing it to grow') is for whom? In such a starkly socio-spatially divided city this question closely equates to where or which neighbourhoods. Given the city's fiscal squeeze and reliance on localist and privatist approaches, the research reveals an opportunistic practice, albeit one which aligns with the spatial typology of policy interventions determined by the asset-based approach. Indeed, the city's neighbourhood revitalisation efforts have been described as scattered 'improvisations shaped by the pursuit of resources' (Stoker et al. 2015, p. 69). Neighbourhoods gain the attention of type C elite partners when they intersect with other priorities – most notably economic development and the attraction of wealthier residents.

The city's current waterfront megaproject, Port Covington, illustrates the forms of development prioritised and how 'public-private partnership' is operationalised. The development has approvals for $660 million of tax increment financing (TIF) to assist redevelopment of 80 hectares of railyards and former industrial property in South Baltimore to create a 'city within a city' of fifty new city

blocks, with parks, apartments, office space and retail, housing 10-15,000 new residents (Broadwater 2016). Elites acknowledged the project raises 'gentrification and race issues' but did not question the underlying assumptions about the city's development priorities in terms of for whom and where. Citizen activists and advocacy organisations in contrast were united in their disdain, as an activist explained:
'*a bajillion-million-dollar TIF... they get these breaks from the city government and they're encouraged to develop these areas… this corporate park in Port Covington… it gets all the funding and all the city benefits'*.

Sandtown, a 'stressed' neighbourhood located in the West Baltimore part of the 'black butterfly', stands in stark contrast. It is subject to the policy prescription of demolition (ideally for site assembly) given its '33% vacant and abandoned housing' as an anchor institution officer explained. The neighbourhood has latterly gained greater elite attention and resource. The City's ongoing Vacants to Value initiative has been accelerated and expanded by Project CORE (Creating Opportunities for Renewal and Enterprise), a 4,000 property demolition and redevelopment initiative principally funded by the State of Maryland. Sandtown's selection as site for the initiative launch was symbolic as it formed the locus of the April 2015 uprising in the city following the death of a young black resident, Freddie Gray, due to injuries sustained whilst in police custody. As a government official explained:
'It related to the unrest because Mister Freddie Gray… that was his neighbourhood. I think that was also a turning point for [the State Governor], because he wasn't as familiar with what was happening in these neighbourhoods… through the State's role in addressing that unrest, it was startling to him to see the level of vacancy and blight'.

In its first year of operation (2016), 400 properties were demolished in 'stressed' target neighbourhoods. A city official explained how it boosts the city's efforts for more strategic 'demolition in the context of a broader land use plan, and a phasing plan, and a greening plan'. The City's resultant Green Network Plan is described as:
'a bold vision for reimagining vacant and abandoned properties and transforming them into community assets, creating an interconnected system of flourishing spaces throughout the city. Through a collaborative and community-directed process, the Plan will direct resources to underinvested areas and lay the foundation for the revitalization of some of Baltimore's most challenged neighbourhoods' (City of Baltimore Office of Sustainability, nd).

Another government official explained the perceived opportunities of combining demolition and greening strategies in terms which encapsulate elite emphasis on enhancing the city's liveability to attract wealthier, homeowning residents:

'A community like Sandtown needs some fairly big interventions… do we need to really think big about bigger parks that rearrange how the city is designed? Back in the 1800s, as the city was growing out... some smart person laid out a series of residential squares which survive today [where there is] strong home ownership… so, there is a power that a park strategy, if we can sort out the politics and community equity issues around how much you'd have to really rearrange the deck chairs to come up with major spaces out of what is now a sea of empty row houses, or half empty row houses'.

In contrast, community activists based in West Baltimore saw these policies as a gentrification strategy displacing poor, current residents, one explaining, 'this community is left with a bunch of holes or green spaces as they like to say… you're proposing all this demolition to lure developers… it's a slow gentrification process'. In terms of the 'meta-goal' of poverty deconcentration, the way in which such neighbourhood clearance contributes is implicit by removing residential properties. But it is accompanied by initiatives which are explicit in seeking the relocation of existing (poor, black) residents of stressed neighbourhoods. These stem from litigation ('fair housing complaints') to counter Baltimore's role as 'a container for the region's poor' (Kline 2007). The outcome, regional housing mobility strategies (now institutionalised as the non-profit Baltimore Regional Housing Mobility Program), involves provision of housing vouchers to former public housing residents to relocate to rental housing in the city's neighbouring counties. An advocacy organisation officer explained that vouchers had been provided to 3,300 households, estimated to reach 4,400 by the following year (2018). A city government official saw such efforts as vital rather than continuing attempts to improve neighbourhoods 'beyond repair'. The bifurcation between such elite views and those of citizen activists regarding gentrification and displacement underscores the exclusion of existing residents from debates about priorities regarding 'liveable for whom and where'. Thus the city's liveability strategies are targeted at attracting a (wealthy) mobile population rather than improving the quality of life for existing *immobile* residents through making their neighbourhoods *liveable* - in ways that work for those communities. In turn, strategies also seek to boost the mobility of the immobile through removing them from the city, as a result of demolition and displacement, or housing 'mobility' programs. An activist group member described the situation in stark terms as:

'a scramble for resources and space in Baltimore where essentially white folks are trying to take Baltimore and push black folks out'.

Certainly it is clear that neighbourhoods in Baltimore gain attention when they intersect with the priorities of city elites involved in the broad type C partnership which determines and seeks to deliver its neighbourhood agenda. Port Covington gains top priority due to its perceived economic development and (wealthier) population growth opportunities, and tools (notably tax increment financing) are deployed to seek to realise these. Sandtown as a focus for Project CORE exemplifies city (and State) attention at the other end of the spectrum - a focus for demolition rather than development (albeit envisaged as enabling green infrastructure), linked by existing residents to longer-term gentrification, clearing poor residents as part of the city's 'changing to grow' to attract others. The initiative also serves the political imperative of being seen to take concerted action following the city uprising. But demolition as a reaction to the uprising, which was sparked by the city's inequities and police violence, is not the most needed response to improve the situation for current residents. Indeed, in neither example are the needs of the city's current residents to the fore. Consultation mechanisms are absent or, in the case of the city's Green Network Plan, regarded by resident activists as tokenistic. Whilst some interviewed saw the necessity of neighbourhood prioritisation given resource scarcity, others stressed that neighbourhoods which do not align with elite priorities are 'written off', in the words of a community activist. An official of a West Baltimore anchor institution described its location as a 'containment area', explaining that Baltimore was often described in terms of 'a tale of two cities… one doesn't have anything to do with the other'.

Some neighbourhoods beyond the preceding examples may gain elite attention when they are proximate to the city's major anchor institutions and in which the institutions therefore have a vested interest in seeking to ensure stability and safety. Civil society-private (type F) partnerships ensue between the smaller, neighbourhood-based non-profits and the major, private (but designated non-profit) 'ed and med' institutions (which are also members of the predominant type C partnership which sets the city's neighbourhood agenda). For example, the non-profit Central Baltimore Partnership gains support and resource given its proximity to Johns Hopkins' Homewood campus and its Community Partners Initiative. This in turn encourages other resource flows (such as from Maryland State's neighbourhood initiative and foundation and bank support for its development fund). Another example is the partnership between the city's longstanding community alliance, BUILD, and a community development financial institution to develop housing in the neighbourhood proximate to Hopkins' hospital, a type F partnership which levers from the major investment anchored by this institution. Indeed, it is these partnerships, located in specific anchor-

proximate neighbourhoods, which have been most successful in drawing down Vacants to Value resource (Jacobson, 2015). Resource allocation therefore continues to reflect the spatial prioritisation of certain spaces in the city, which in turn reflect the power of certain private partners. Potential community partners recognised the need to work with these elite city anchor institutions, especially as support from the city's philanthropic foundations tends to align with anchor resource allocations to enable 'collective impact'. In other words, weak neighbourhood-based organisations seek type F partnerships with powerful private (non-profit) type C partners. Indeed, many interviewed stressed the vital role played by these non-profit actors in contrast with city government's lack of leadership. An officer of a neighbourhood-based non-profit explained 'the City no longer sees itself as a leader in community development'. An elected politician described the necessity of 'outside institutions… working hard with each other because there's a vacuum in city government'. An official of a philanthropic foundation explained it in the following terms:

'the non-government actors are very committed to this city… the great anchor institutions in our city have really, in my view, stepped up and increased the climate of collaboration. And I think that all of us have realised that without collaboration, again, in spite of city leadership… we won't be able to accomplish our goals'.

11.5 Conclusion

The imperative to increase the City of Baltimore's population and thus alleviate its fiscal squeeze has brought the liveability of this shrinking city to the fore. City government has long been engaged in an informal type C partnership with private (corporate and non-profit) actors to develop and deliver a neighbourhood policy agenda which seeks to stabilise and grow the city. By considering making Baltimore liveable in terms of for whom and where, the challenges posed by the city's deep inequities and exclusionary governance to the realisation of liveability for all its residents are revealed. Baltimore affirms how conceptions of liveability work to elide the conflicts of who gets what and where in urban politics. The city's strategies and plans, particularly 'Change to Grow' and the typology of policy prescriptions for different neighbourhoods, combine with its elite and exclusionary governance to affirm the city's continuing socio-spatial inequality. The strategies deployed appeal to 'common sense' given the city's 'fiscal squeeze', politically useful as this avoids contestation of priorities and obscures the power differentials and inequalities of the city's governance. The city seeks to attract a putative population of the mobile and (relatively) wealthy, whilst the residents of the 'black butterfly' are further contained, lacking voice in envisaging a more liveable, equitable city - on their own terms. Thus Baltimore is set to continue as a 'twin-track' city, aligning with the dual city thesis advanced by scholars considering the increasing inequality of

neoliberal urbanism. Citizens and civil society organisations are excluded from the public-private partnership that determines what constitutes 'liveability' in the city.

The predominant partners who determine and seek to realise Baltimore's neighbourhood policies are the local state (city government and its agencies) and Maryland State, along with key non-state actors (philanthropies and anchor institutions) who also partner amongst themselves in the absence of local state leadership. Existing residents are largely excluded from these arrangements, which seek to accommodate the needs of corporate actors and in particular property developers perceived as offering what is needed to attract residents to this shrinking city. The emphasis on attracting millennials by making Baltimore, in the words of the Mayor 'a hip place to be', and a 'low-cost alternative in a high-cost region', are the shrinking city version of how cities compete for internationally mobile capital and people. Millennials are thus shrinking cities' target population in the way that the preferences of 'well-educated, internationally mobile individuals and families' (McArthur and Robin 2019, p. 1720) predominate in how cities are ranked globally in composite urban liveability indexes.

Baltimore's expression of the widely (ab)used, narrow notion of liveability aligns with critiques which assert that liveability does not acknowledge socio-economic disparities and how these could be addressed through planning, service provision and governance structures and strategies at city level (McArthur and Robin 2019). Elite attention and resource are not targeted in terms of what would be revealed by a 'people-centred' approach of meeting the human needs and capabilities (Fainstein 2014) of the city's existing residents. Resultant policy choices would differ, such as retaining the recreation centres widely used by young 'black butterfly' residents closed as a result of the 'Change to Grow' deficit reduction measures; and shifting the spatial targeting of policy tools such as tax increment financing.

Whilst urban liveability indexes emphasise the preferences of the privileged (and mobile), their underlying metrics point to what would be needed to make Baltimore more liveable in terms of improving the quality of life for all residents, both putative and existing. In their review of six global indexes, McArthur and Robin (2019) identified four metrics that were shared: crime, healthcare, schools and infrastructure. Crime (in terms of the need for improved police-community relations) was emphasised by all those interviewed in Baltimore as a realm which needed to be addressed as a prerequisite for other change in the city. This is unsurprising as the city uprising was in response to the city's socio-spatial containment of its poor, black communities reinforced by violent policing

practices. These communities understand that in terms of liveability, basic security and freedom from violence and trauma are key, as explained by a community activist:
'Police-community relations… I think everything else is so minor… that developer developing Port Covington don't have absolutely nothing to do with my day-to-day existence'.

In terms of current strategies, progress towards achievement of the city's 'meta-goal' of deconcentrating poverty - through attraction of a wealthier, mobile population and spatial mobility (relocation/ displacement) of the existing, poor population - remains halting. The 1,000 person population increase (indicated by US Census mid-year estimates) trumpeted by the Mayor in her pre-uprising State of the City address (2015) was followed by a post-uprising estimated population decline (of 6,000 people in mid-2016 estimates, and a further 3,000 decline in mid-2017). In expressing concerns about student recruitment following the uprising, a university anchor institution officer recognised the importance of having a more holistic understanding of quality of life:

'we've took a hit as far as students coming to Baltimore… [the uprising brought the underlying issues that] we've all known have been there to international attention, like how horrible is Baltimore that the poverty is this, the vacancies… the incarceration, the joblessness'.

Certainly Baltimore – with its extremes of poverty and violence by Global North standards – provides a set of salutary lessons about the meaning of 'liveability' for different groups in society. The city is riven by starkly visible, longstanding and deep inequities. Those interviewed expressed different views on the way forward. Some stressed the need to find 'ways of partnering in a positive manner'. Others stressed the need for an alternative to what a citizen activist described as the 'let's attract corporate dollars to try and create a space where people come to the city' approach. Such an alternative would benefit from clearly specified goals which seek to improve the city's liveability in terms of the actual needs of its current, and especially most disadvantaged residents, rather than the imagined needs of a putative and mobile group of possible residents. Realising this would entail much more open and equal partnerships between citizens, grassroots organisations, the local state and private actors.

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