NCRP Board of Directors Meeting #7: SUMMARY

19 September 2014 via teleconference

Participants: David Hulchanski (chair), Emily Paradis (minutes), Barb Besner, Jino Distasio, Kathleen Gallagher, Michelynn Lafîèche, David Ley, Bob Murdie, Valerie Preston, Damaris Rose, Paul Shakotko, Ivan Townshend, Alan Walks.

Regrets: Leslie Evans, Jill Grant, Leanne Holt.

Updates

1. Review summary and report-back on action items from March meeting. Document: NCRP Board Meeting #6 Summary

   - Changes to the website are underway, including a new blog feature. David Hulchanski will contact team members to invite blog submissions and consult on design and content for the CMA pages.
   - The Joint Analysis report on trends and change is soon to be released.
   - The “Documents for Team Members” section is being updated.
   - Helios, the firm that designed the NCRP website, is developing a format for a newsletter.
   - Rental housing research initiative: A national working group for this initiative met in August and will meet again Sept. 26. The group is defining a plan of work for this initiative. There will be more discussion at the October NCRP team meeting.
   - Other major research initiatives: There are active working groups in Toronto making progress on potential cross-CMA projects, in the areas of Aging in the City, Neighbourhood Collective Efficacy, and Urban Youth, Schooling and Criminalization.

2. CMA & partner updates

   - **Vancouver**: The team has acquired Equifax data on mortgage and consumer debt for 2007-2013, at FSL and street-level geography that can be coded against complete postal codes, for the Vancouver CMA and also the Frasier Valley. Analysis is underway.

   - **Calgary**: There are no new proposals in development, but the team is looking in detail at the issue of rental housing. The focus for Calgary will be illegal second suites, including a profile of their residents, safety issues, and intersections with hidden homelessness. Calgary team member Derek Cook’s position has changed and he is no longer able to serve on the NCRP team. Byron Miller will take the lead on the
rental housing project. David Ley noted that Alan Smart in Calgary supervised a recent thesis on secondary suites.

- **Winnipeg**: Barb Besner will be the new NCRP Board representative from United Way Winnipeg. The Winnipeg “Three Cities” report is well underway and will be ready for the October NCRP meeting. A recent public forum to launch the report on rooming houses was attended by more than 100 people and has led to many follow-up activities. The team has project proposals in development.

- **Toronto**: Working groups on Collective Efficacy and Urban Youth have been very active over the summer and are moving forward with preliminary work to develop proposals for potential cross-CMA projects. Two NCRP papers from the United Way Toronto’s Building Opportunity project will soon be published. Alan Walks (Uoft) and Mihaela Dinca-Panaitescu (UWT) are conducting data analysis at the RDC on changes in income inequality; a paper from this work is planned for January 2015.

- **Montréal**: After a period when discussions on research project priorities and timeframe had to be put on hold due to staffing uncertainties at lead partner Centraide, these discussions will be renewed this fall. The Montréal team has met with the City housing directorate to discuss the rental housing project. The City highlighted the issue of unregulated rooming houses related to chain migration, and the crossover of stock from social to private housing in the context of expiring federal operating agreements. The Working Poor project is underway.

- **Halifax**: The team has hosted two well-attended community forums to share income inequality and typology data. Though the maps and data have been understood by attendees, it seems that the information they convey is not seen as compelling. Questions from the forums have led to the recently-funded proposal on perceptions of neighbourhood in Halifax.


- The group reviewed the PI Update. There were no major questions or clarifications.

- The Collective Efficacy project was discussed in more detail. This project was initiated by NCRP partners, with a goal of articulating some of the neighbourhood-level impacts of community-based organizations, beyond their programmatic interventions with individuals and families. PhD student Jessica Carrière has completed a literature review. Next, she and Rob Howarth (Canadian Association of Neighbourhood Services), will conduct key informant interviews to develop tools for measuring collective efficacy at the neighbourhood level, and for auditing the activities of community-based organizations. The working group is developing an NCRP proposal.
4. Rental Housing Research Initiative.

- Documents for the Rental Housing Research Initiative can be found on the website, under the About tab (password: rent).
- Greg Sutter’s paper on Canada’s housing system has been posted, along with new maps showing neighbourhoods scoring high on the Rental Housing Disadvantage Index.
- The working group plans to start with comparative, parallel work, followed by a focus on local CMA issues.

Issues for Discussion


- The Board reviewed a budget update for Year Two.
- After 28 months, we have spent about $600,000 of our $2.6 million budget. Only 21% of the amount budgeted for local CMA projects has been allocated. (Amounts shown as “spent” for local CMA research have been transferred via sub-grant out of the central NCRP grant, but may not yet have been spent). Only $23,000 has been spent so far on cross-CMA comparative research.
- It is important to get major initiatives framed and funded as we move into Year 3, in order to meet NCRP’s timelines and objectives. There is a risk of falling behind as time passes. Getting major initiatives going takes start-up time.
- In Year 4, the Board will conduct a detailed review of the projected budget and re-allocate remaining funds.
- It was noted that this budget shows the NCRP is in good shape, and can consider allocating larger amounts to major initiatives such as a conference.
- It was also noted that in spite of low spending in the line for comparative cross-CMA work, output in this area has been substantial.
- Much of the work so far has not cost much, because it has been carried out by academics (whose work comes free) and by the NCRP data analyst, half of whose salary is paid directly by the Faculty of Social Work.
- It was further noted that budgets for early local CMA projects have been modest. Now, as the NCRP progresses, we can expect to see more ambitious proposals.

6. Agenda for October 16-17 NCRP Team Meeting Document: NCRP Oct-2014 Team Meeting Day 1 and 2 DRAFT Sept. 18

- The Board reviewed a draft agenda for the October team meeting. October 16 will be a research day featuring presentations and discussion of the Three-Cities reports from Halifax, Winnipeg, Calgary and Hamilton, followed by presentations of other NCRP funded projects. October 17 will be a smaller meeting with presentations and
discussion of projects in development. Some Board members have been invited to
frame and facilitate a discussion on thematic areas that are so far undeveloped.

- Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal’s Three Cities reports will not be presented, but
Damaris Rose and David Hulchanski will lead a discussion synthesizing the trend
analyses from the 6 CMAs (David Ley is unable to attend the October meeting).

- It was noted that comparative discussion of the “Three Cities” analyses for the 6
CMAs is not possible without the Toronto CMA (the Toronto report examined only
the City). The challenge is scale: Toronto CMA has about one thousand census tracts;
Peel Region, just one of four suburban regional municipalities, would be Canada’s
fourth-largest city. Alan Walks agreed to develop a discussion paper on the CMA in
time for the meeting.

- A discussion of policy interventions was suggested, perhaps at the end of Day One.
This will connect with the planned discussion of Knowledge Mobilization on Day
Two.

- It was noted that the upcoming Mid-Term Report, due in fall 2015, should be
discussed. SSHRC has not yet provided any details or templates for this report;
however, Board members who have led large SSHRC projects in the past commented
that the Mid-Term Report is significant. NCRP will need to showcase outputs such as
a major conference. The project’s schedules and timelines for the coming year
should be oriented to that. The Board agreed to add the Mid-Term Report to the
agenda, and that the Milestone Report (on which the Mid-Term report will be based)
would be distributed for review prior to the meeting.

7. Next Board meeting

- The next Board teleconference will be Thursday, 18 December, at 2pm EST.

- Subsequent Board meetings have been set for 19 March 2015 at noon EST, and 18
June 2015 at noon EST.

8. Next NCRP Team meeting

- The group agreed to poll for a date for the next NCRP team meeting in late April or
early May 2015. The location has not yet been selected.

Documents are available under: ABOUT / Research Team Documents
http://neighbourhoodchange.ca/about/research-team-documents/