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**How an Environmental Crisis Catalyzed Community-Led Planning to
Address Racial Inequities:
A Case Study of Shingle Mountain, in Southern Dallas**

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I. Abstract

Equity is one of the “Four E’s” representing the core values for planning at the City of Dallas, Texas (City of Dallas, Core Values). However, many neighborhoods in Southern Dallas endure environmental injustices partly because land use planning ignores or disregards the needs of low-income communities of color. This report examines the Shingle Mountain environmental justice crisis in Southern Dallas to illuminate the environmental injustices that the community of Floral Farms has endured partly due to misguided planning and the neglect of the city of Dallas. The study focuses on examining how the grassroots, community-led land use plan developed by residents from Floral Farms has enabled community organizing among a bilingual community. I argue that community-led plans can inform city planning policies and at the same time enable equitable approaches to planning. This report calls for a better understanding and integration of community-led plans in city planning.

This report examines how the City of Dallas includes or disregards community-led plans in city planning. The report finds that to date, community-led plans developed by wealthier communities are included into policy while those developed by low-income communities and minorities, as exemplified by Floral Farms are disregarded. By comparing the actions and inactions of the City of Dallas in the Floral Farms case study to the other adopted neighborhood-led plans in the city, this report identifies best practices for integrating and leveraging community knowledge in city land use planning to address inequities. Specifically, this report identifies how cities can best support communities that have dealt with environmental justice issues in past land use plans and policies through neighborhood-led planning and makes recommendations based on the experiences of Floral Farms.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	2
Abstract.....	3
List of Tables.....	5
List of Figures	6
Introduction	7
Background	7
Research Questions	15
Timeliness	16
Planning Theory.....	18
Hypothesis & Definitions	18
Limitations	19
Literature Review	20
Methodology	41
Analysis	46
Findings.....	58
Implications for Planning	62
Conclusion	64
Future Research	66
References	69

List of Tables

Table 1. Illustrates the breakdown of boundaries and demographics for areas that have neighborhood-led and city-led plans.

Table 2. Compares the purpose for drafting the neighborhood-led plans as outlined in the planning documents.

Table 3. Shows the comparison between cities' approach to neighborhood planning and the different role that residents and staff play in those processes.

Table 4. A comparison of some of the procedural differences between the Neighborhood Self-Defense Project curriculum and the City-Led planning process.

List of Figures

Figure 1. Shows Shingle Mountain from an aerial view as covered by the Dallas Morning News. Source: Dallas Morning News (2020).

Figure 2. This map shows the boundaries for the Floral Farms neighborhood and the underlying zoning in the community. Source: City Plan Commission Dallas (2019)

Figure 3. This map shows the neighborhood boundaries, context within the City of Dallas, residential streets and some of the industrial zoning cases the neighborhood has fought since 2018. Source: Dallas Morning News (2021)

Figure 4. Shows the logo for the Neighborhood Self-Defense Project. Source: Southern Dallas Neighborhood Self-Defense Project website.

Figure 5. Clipping from a Spectrum News 1 article that outlines the concerns that Marsha Jackson and her neighbors had regarding the policy change restricting their ability to have their neighborhood-led plan adopted. Source: Spectrum News (2021).

Figure 6. Shows Arnsteins “Ladder of Citizen Participation” which articulates the levels at which citizen involvement is sought and a tool to assess the role residents are asked to play by those in power versus when residents have full self-determination in their role in a process and therefore its outcomes. Source: Arnstein, 1969.

Figure 7. A cartoon included in Arnstein’s piece on the Ladder of Citizen participation.

Figure 8. Shows the distribution of industrial zoning by race across the census tracts in Dallas. Source: DBPC (2020).

Figure 9. Shows the analysis created through the “People’s Plan for Overcoming the Hurricane Katrina Blues” of the structural damage in the 9th Ward to counter the narrative by the City and Urban Land Institute that the 9th ward was too damaged for repair.

Figure 10. Is the cover page for the People’s Plan which was drafted by the collaborative grassroots project and then adopted by the City of New Orleans.

Figure 11. Shows the conceptual framework for my methodology.

Figure 12. Shows the distribution of neighborhood-led plans and the percentage of population in poverty within those plan boundaries.

Figure 13. This map shows the distribution of the city-led plans and the neighborhood-led plans.

I. Introduction

a. Background

Shingle Mountain, a 100,000-ton mountain of illegally dumped roof shingles, piled up next door to Marsha Jackson's home from January 2018 to March 2019. Despite her calls and complaints to local and state officials, the mountain continued to grow and only became an issue of public concern when the Dallas Morning News published a piece in December 2018 about it (Wilonsky 2018).

Ms. Jackson lives in Floral Farms, a low-income and majority Black and Latino/a agricultural community in Southeast Oak Cliff, between the Great Trinity River Forest and Highway I-45 in Southern Dallas. The neighborhood is in the floodplain, ¼ mile north of the City Municipal Landfill (McCommas Bluff), and close to the border of Dallas and Hutchins, Texas. The neighborhood has five residential streets and is intersected by two major thoroughfares, Simpson Stuart Road, and South-Central Expressway. Despite historically hosting agricultural land uses such as nurseries and small-scale stables, the current zoning in the neighborhood allows for heavy industrial land uses, causing many environmental injustices such as Shingle Mountain, see Figure 1 and Figure 2.

NEWS

What you need to know about Shingle Mountain's complex history in southern Dallas

The pile of shingles showed up in Marsha Jackson's backyard in January 2018 and still stands, almost three years later.



Figure 1. Shingle Mountain from an aerial view as documented by the Dallas Morning News. Source: Dallas Morning News (2020).

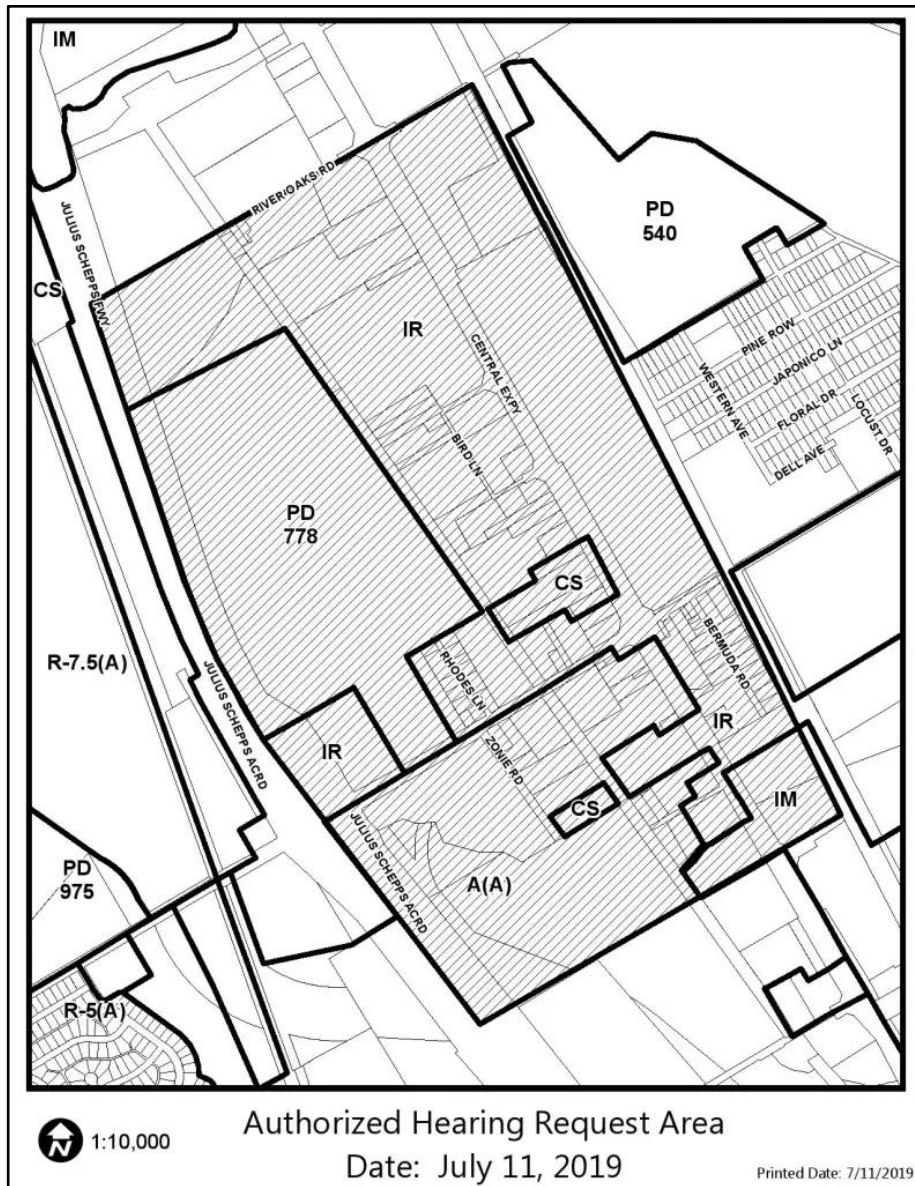


Figure 2. This map shows the boundaries for the Floral Farms neighborhood and the underlying zoning in the community. Source: City Plan Commission Dallas (2019)

Marsha Jackson was referred to Jim Schermbeck, Director of Downwinders at Risk in November 2018 at a community meeting regarding the Lane Plating Superfund site not far from Shingle Mountain, in the Highland Hills neighborhood. Mr. Schermbeck shortly after connecting with Ms. Jackson saw the mountain for the first time and contacted the Dallas Morning News.

Meanwhile, as Chair of Downwinders at Risk and previously as an employee of Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas, I worked with my colleague Rosetta Jackson to canvas the neighborhood, hear how residents were being impacted, and coordinated a meeting with the residents to discuss potential advocacy options. This led to the first meeting of the residents of Floral Farms and the establishment of the Neighbors United/Vecinos Unidos residential association, in the living room of the Garcia family's home on Choate Road in December 2018.

The primary goal of Neighbors United/Vecinos Unidos was to shut down and clean up the mountain that was poisoning their families and animals. They were soon supported by a city-wide coalition of social justice organizations including Downwinders at Risk (DAR), Southern Sector Rising (SSR) and the Inclusive Communities Project (ICP) in January 2019. As the campaign to "Stand with Marsha" and "Move the Mountain" was underway, additional industrial businesses such as rock crushers, concrete batch plants and others, applied for specific use permits and zoning changes to operate in Floral Farms, adding insult to injury to an already suffering community. See Figure 3.

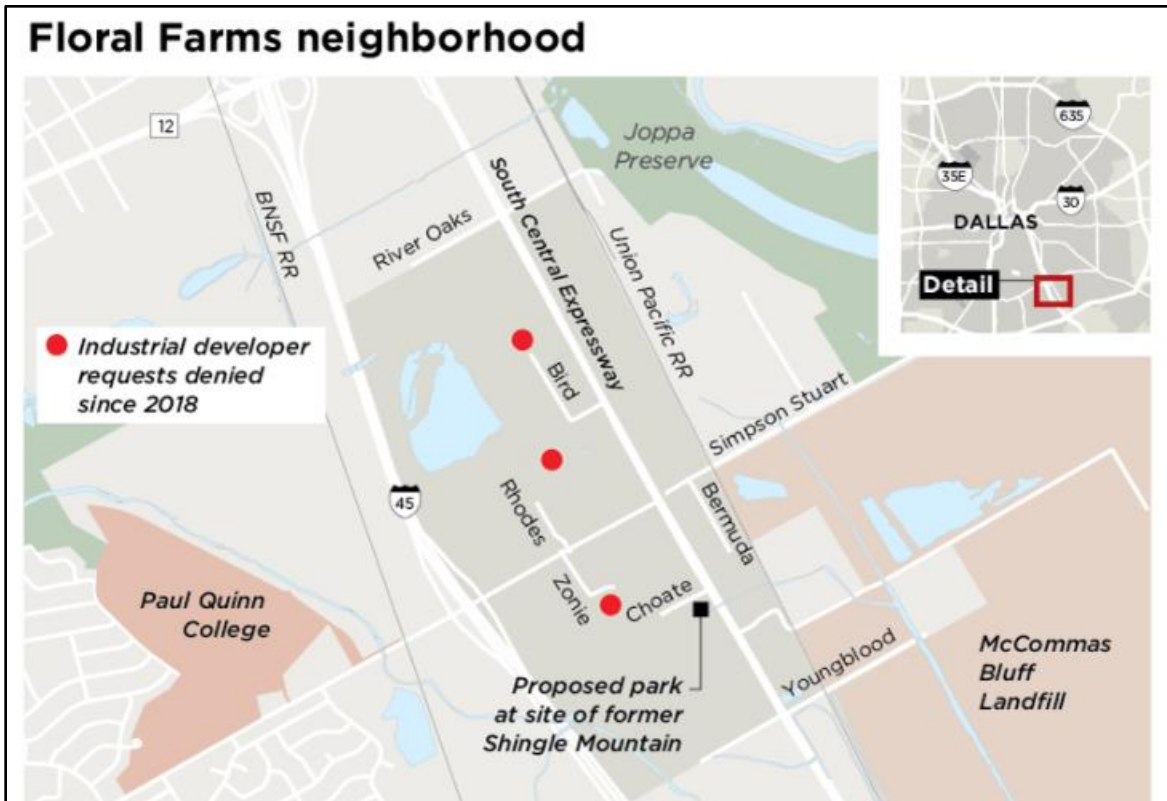


Figure 3. This map shows the neighborhood boundaries for Floral Farms and the location of the neighborhood within the City of Dallas. It also shows the residential streets within the community that have been threatened by industrial development. Source: Dallas Morning News (2021)

It became clear that the root cause leading to the increased legal and illegal industrialization of Floral Farms was the land use designated in the zoning of the neighborhood. Without changes to the zoning, industry would continue to encroach on the neighborhood. This spurred the creation of the “Neighborhood Self-Defense Project” (NSDP) in partnership with Downwinders at Risk (DAR), Inclusive Communities Project (ICP) and Southern Sector Rising (SSR) in December 2019, see Figure 4. The goal of the NSDP is to both protect people from polluters by working with neighborhoods to undo the industrial zoning in their communities, and to promote a vision that reflects their values through the development of bilingual community-led land use plans that reach the whole community, including Latina/o families (NSDP 2019).

The project combines community organizing, collaboration and neighborhood-planning to promote environmental justice and fair housing through community self-determination.



Figure 4. Shows the logo for the Neighborhood Self-Defense Project. Source: Southern Dallas Neighborhood Self-Defense Project website.

I was personally involved in the NSDP as a planner and community organizer in the campaign to shut down and clean up Shingle Mountain as Chair of Downwinders at Risk. My firsthand experience working with the residents of Floral Farms to eliminate Shingle Mountain and develop their own grassroots land use plan is the reason that I am interested in outlining this report as a potential model.

The City of Dallas Planning and Urban Design Department was aware of the NSDP and the intentions of using community-led planning as a tool to resolve the environmental injustices in Floral Farms. Other neighborhoods in North Dallas had previously worked with City Staff to review and adopt their community-led land use plans, however when Floral Farms requested the

same support, the process changed and no longer allowed for community-led plans to be adopted into City policy. This change caused equity concerns amongst the residents and planners involved, given that a policy previously leveraged by higher income majority white areas, was now not available to a lower income Black and Brown neighborhood association, see Figure 5.



Figure 5. Clipping from a Spectrum News 1 article that outlines the concerns that Marsha Jackson and her neighbors had regarding the policy change restricting their ability to have their neighborhood-led plan adopted. Source: Spectrum News (2021).

Shingle Mountain was a crisis that catalyzed the residents in Floral Farms not only to organize an association and advocate for the cleanup, but also led to the unprecedented grassroots planning process in Southern Dallas now known as the NSDP. Before Shingle

Mountain, there was no neighborhood association or meaningful civic engagement by Floral Farms residents in city processes. One of the first questions we asked the residents is “what is this neighborhood called”, because it was known by outsiders as the neighborhood with Shingle Mountain. It wasn’t until a few months into the planning process that the name Floral Farms was recalled by Marsha Jackson, and then confirmed by Dallas Morning News records from the 1990s. It was because of Shingle Mountain that the neighborhood reclaimed the name Floral Farms and began the long fight to also reclaiming their health and community’s future. Floral Farms is now a model that other neighborhoods dealing with similar conditions can and are following to reclaim their own communities.

The community of Floral Farms developed a grassroots, bottom-up neighborhood-led plan to face the environmental injustices they endure as a result of the Shingle Mountain illegal dump. They followed the process of developing a neighborhood plan, as the city requested, and despite following the process and creating a bilingual, democratic, bottom-up plan, the city rejected it. In other words, even when communities commit to the planning process dictated by the city, the city finds ways to reject plans developed by low-income communities of color.

II. Materials and Methods

a. Overview

This section describes the research design strategy of this report. The central research question is, how can community-led planning support equity for low-income communities of color enduring environmental injustices? The supporting research questions are as follows,

- Question 1: How can community-led planning help reconstruct trust from low income and Black and Latino/a communities in planning?
- Question 2: How do misguided planning processes trigger the environmental injustices faced by the community of Floral Farms?

The concentration of industrial land uses in communities of color has perpetuated racial inequities and environmental injustices, such as the exposure of the community of Floral Farms to Shingle Mountain, truck storage and repair yards, the municipal landfill and concrete batch plants. The zoning in the neighborhood is majority industrial, despite the majority land use being agricultural and single-family homes. This misalignment of the zoning and land use can be traced back to the City of Dallas zoning code transition plan in 1986 that further industrialized neighborhoods in southern Dallas and protected neighborhoods in North Dallas from further industrialization (City of Dallas, General Transition Plan 1986).

This report uses the community-led planning effort undertaken by Neighbors United/Vecinos Unidos through the NSDP, in addition to the campaign to move Shingle Mountain, to explore how community organizing is critical for successfully addressing environmental injustices through land use planning. The research questions are informed by the role that racial segregation by governments, continue to inform health inequities, and reduced economic opportunity for communities of color (Rein 2012, 8). Failing to proactively

deindustrialize communities of color will continue to perpetuate air pollution burdens and exacerbate environmental health concerns (Boone 2014, 41). Given the ongoing challenges of City Planners to reconcile the policies and practices that have led to today's inequities, this report seeks to find ways to successfully collaborate with communities to promote racial and environmental equity through planning. Like many other large cities in the U.S., Dallas was built and designed with racial segregation as a core land use policy. This led to the concentration of low-income communities of color to hazardous industrial land uses (DBPC, 2021). This report examines the community of Floral Farms which lies in a district that is classified as industrial despite the existence of a community. This report studies the experiences of planners and residents of Floral Farms in developing a community-led plan. In doing so, this report seeks to understand better how community-led plans may inform more equitable approaches to city planning for Dallas and elsewhere in the US.

b. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study involved reviewing the past adopted neighborhood-led plans and the Floral Farms Neighborhood-Led plan, as well as media coverage of Shingle Mountain and Floral Farms.

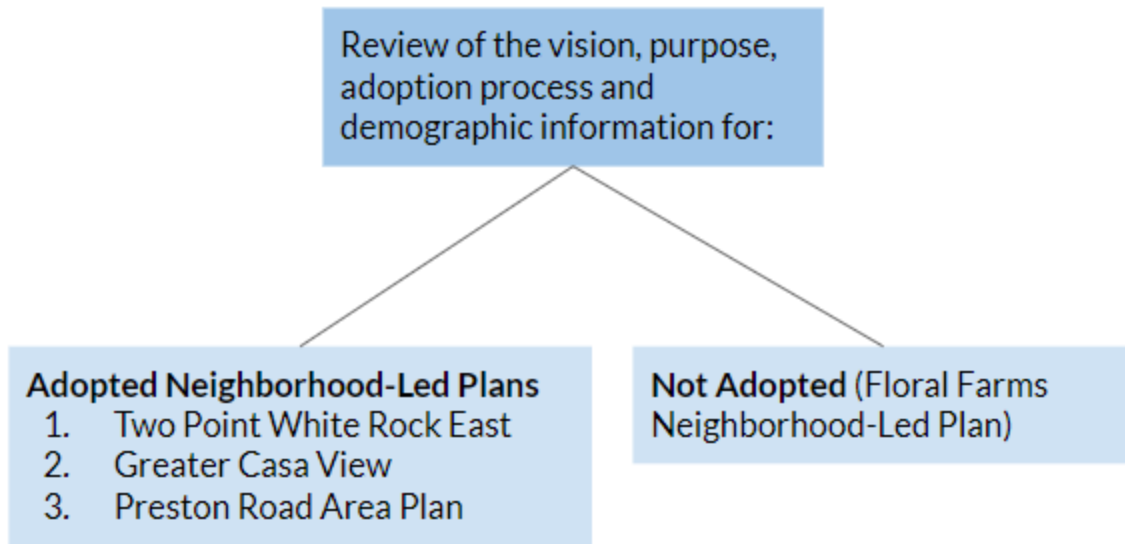


Figure 11. Shows the conceptual framework for my methodology.

The research questions, methods and data sources are summarized in the table below and further articulated in this section.

Table 1. Research questions, methods, and data sources.

Research Questions	Methods	Data Sources
Q1. How can community-led planning fill the gap in reconstructing trust from low income and Black and Brown communities in planning?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of the motivation for the plan and vision statement for adopted neighborhood-led plans in the City of Dallas and compare by creating a matrix 2. Demographic analysis and mapping of Floral Farms area compared to other adopted neighborhood-led plan areas including race, gender, age, poverty and other factors of the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City of Dallas Planning and Urban Design Department 2. U.S. Census Bureau

	population living within the plan boundaries.	
Q2. How do misguided planning processes trigger the environmental injustices faced by the community of Floral Farms?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of the motivation for the plan and vision statement for adopted neighborhood-led plans in the City of Dallas and compare by creating a matrix 2. Reviewing newspaper articles, interviews and other secondary sources on the reaction of the City in regards to the Floral Farms neighborhood-led plan. Archive analysis to document the history of environmental justices. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City of Dallas Planning and Urban Design Department 2. Newspapers, social media, videos

Question 1: How can community-led planning fill the gap in reconstructing trust from low income and Black and Brown communities in planning?

To answer the first question, we must understand how community-led planning efforts like Floral Farms happened: why they were necessary, how the plans were created, how the City of Dallas responded to their creation, and how they can/will move forward to be adopted by the City of Dallas into policy. We also need to answer the above questions in relation to previously adopted community-led land use plans, to understand the precedent for community-led planning efforts in the City of Dallas. A comparative analysis between the Floral Farms plan and other successful neighborhood-led plans should also be conducted to understand potential causes for the difference in reception of the plans by the City of Dallas.

Question 2: How do misguided planning processes trigger the environmental injustices faced by the community of Floral Farms?

Similarly, to understand how the City of Dallas can best support communities that have

dealt with environmental justice and fair housing issues due to past planning efforts we need to understand what caused many of the issues identified by Floral Farms in their land use plan. Reviewing local and national newspaper articles, interviews, and other secondary sources by doing online ‘news’ keyword searches that outline how the residents have felt in Floral Farms and what they are fighting for to heal their community will help outline potential solutions to how the city can overcome the harm done for generations to neighborhoods like Floral Farms.

c. Data Collection

1. Adopted Neighborhood-Led Plans

This report included a thorough revision of the contents of several planning policies and land use plans developed by the City of Dallas. I reviewed the three different types of land use plans adopted by PUD: neighborhood-led, city-led, and interagency-led land use plans. I identified the neighborhood-led plans and reviewed why they were initiated, who initiated it, their vision, and demographic characteristics of the people within the plan boundaries. The three adopted neighborhood-led plans are the Greater Casa View plan, Two-Point White Rock East, and Preston Road plans. I did a keyword search to understand the significance of zoning in the plan’s purpose and recommendations, as well as analysis on the way that race was addressed or included in each plan. I reviewed the Floral Farms neighborhood-led plan to compare with the other three adopted neighborhood-led plans and compared the planning methodology between the plans (i.e., whether the plans are made available in Spanish or had any indication of bilingual meetings).

2. Adoption Process for Neighborhood-Led Plans

I sought to understand how the city works with communities to provide support in the development of community-led plans, so I reviewed past presentations and literature created by

the City of Dallas on the neighborhood-led planning process. This included the “Guide to Neighborhood Plans” created by PUD in 2019, and the more recent changes to the neighborhood-led planning process included in a City Plan Commission briefing by PUD in April 2021. I also reviewed the process for the plans to be adopted according to the process that the Greater Casa View plan went through as articulated by residents involved in that planning process. This allows a comparison of the neighborhood-led planning policy before, and after the Floral Farms neighborhood plan was completed.

3. Attitude of PUD Towards Neighborhood-Led Planning

Another important fact that I reviewed was the commitment of planners to support the participation and engagement of low-income communities of color in planning processes. In July 2021, the Director of PUD resigned and was replaced by a new Director in August 2021. This new Director has shown interest and commitment to transparency and inclusion, as demonstrated by their planning dashboard online. It is because of this new Director’s openness to collaborating with Floral Farms that the neighborhood-led planning policy is currently being restored and rebuilt, and other ways to address environmental injustice through ForwardDallas are being reviewed to align with the CECAP and the Racial Equity resolution. Based on preliminary conversations between Floral Farms residents and the new Director, PUD seems open to honoring the work of Neighbors United/Vecinos Unidos in ForwardDallas, but remains unclear about whether that means plan adoption or just incorporation. The public rezoning process (Authorized Hearing) is also being reviewed because of Floral Farms’ advocacy and is being addressed by this new planning department.

To ensure the Floral Farms plan becomes policy, the Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination was formed by Downwinders at Risk, Inclusive Community Project and

Neighbors United/Vecinos Unidos. The Coalition is also working to ensure that the neighborhood perspective is central to the comprehensive plan update. The environmental injustices faced by the community of Floral Farms urged planners to consider and support community-led plans to develop more equitable planning approaches. The Coalition broadened their scope to address the needs of other neighborhoods beyond just Floral Farms, resulting in the “Residents Bill of Rights for Equitable and Inclusive Planning” (CNSD 2021). The three pillars of the “Bill of Rights” are that all people in Dallas deserve the right to “Environmental Justice”, “Fair and Affordable Housing”, and community “Self-Determination” (CNSD 2021). These three pillars along with very specific policy recommendations, such as increased buffer zones between industry and residents and a permanent halt on city-led demolitions of historic homes, were presented at a press conference at Dallas City Hall by member organizations including Neighbors United/Vecinos Unidos in October 2021. See Figure 6.



Figure 6. Members of the Tenth Street Residential Association, a historic freedman town in Dallas, speaking at the Coalition press conference in October 2021.

Although the comprehensive plan does not include neighborhood-specific recommendations on zoning and land use, ForwardDallas could be a vehicle for current and future planning efforts that are neighborhood-led by institutionalizing the path for neighborhood-led plans to be adopted into City policy as they previously were. The Coalition’s advocacy has led to a series of “Listening Sessions” hosted by PUD to provide input on the future neighborhood planning policy, and PUD staff provided a briefing on the draft policy for feedback at the March “Comprehensive Land Use Planning Committee” meeting for public input. Given the timing, this report could be useful when considering future land use policies and practices in the context of environmental justice and Black and Latina/o neighborhoods in Dallas.

4. Media Coverage of Floral Farms & Shingle Mountain

The newspaper articles and interviews reviewed will be selected using keyword searches like “Shingle Mountain”, “Floral Farms” and “Neighborhood-Led Plan” in local, state and national news outlets. Because Shingle Mountain formed in 2018 and was removed in 2021, there is a clear timeline of relevance for the chronicling of the environmental issue. Similarly, the NSDP launched in 2019 and the planning process for Floral Farms formally ended in November 2020.

d. Limitations

My personal involvement in the campaign to remove Shingle Mountain could be a limitation in my objectivity regarding how the community in Floral Farms, and especially Marsha Jackson, were treated by the City of Dallas. Another limitation is the lack of documentation that the City of Dallas provides for the neighborhood-led planning process before

Floral Farms. This report reveals the importance of disseminating city plans and documenting how the city engages with communities and supports (or not) their neighborhood-led plans.

e. Hypothesis & Definitions

The hypothesis for this study is that neighborhood-led land use planning and community organizing play an essential role in the City planning process to improve equity, inclusion, and capacity. This assumes that the goal of the City is to increase equity, inclusion, and capacity for neighborhood leadership. This is a substantial assumption given that intention is hard to prove, and actions generally indicate more than policy on paper. Here are some of the key terms throughout the study defined:

- Neighborhood equity - decision making about an area that is led by residents with priority given to areas of greatest need. City planning poorly supports community-led plans' development, revision, and implementation, especially in low-income communities of color.
- Inclusion - policies, practices and procedures that consider the physical and linguistic needs of all people, regardless of their ethnicity, income, and race, to be able to participate fully in a project or process.
- City-Led Planning – planning processes that tend to be top down and driven by the staff of the City of Dallas.
- Neighborhood-led Planning – bottom-up, grassroots planning efforts driven by residents and neighborhood-based organizations, often with support from nonprofits or other academic institutions.

III. Literature Review

a. Overview

I approach my professional report from the perspective of advocacy planning, participatory planning, and the principles of environmental justice. Specifically, the perspective that the political system in the U.S. and in Dallas have been exclusionary to the meaningful involvement of communities of color, people with disabilities, elderly people, women, youth, non-English speakers and immigrant populations. It is because of my experience serving as a planner, facilitator, and community organizer in Floral Farms that this planning theory is used in my professional report. The variety of lived experiences of the residents in Floral Farms, and the shared vision the residents have for their families showed me the power of grassroots planning and how prioritizing the community's experience would lead to effective and equitable planning outcomes.

The planning theories that inform my professional report are advocacy planning and participatory planning. Both planning theories are detailed in this section. Participatory planning theory is based on the need to plan inclusively, with all community members involved in coming up with solutions through consensus decision making to plan their community. Participatory planning ensures that all voices, especially those that have been silenced or excluded from the planning process, get a seat at the decision-making table. This planning theory is the basis for the NSDP curriculum used to facilitate the planning process in Floral Farms because the planning process was primarily borne out of the environmental injustices the community was facing. The hypothesis for this report is informed by this theory in that planning outcomes are improved by increased participation, leading to greater participation in democratic processes in general. This increased trust and buy-in that comes with a highly participatory planning process is not to be

confused with general community engagement efforts that municipalities will often engage in.

The “Ladder of Citizen Participation” created by planning theorist Arnstein, illustrates the range from “manipulation” to “citizen control” when it comes to engagement in planning processes.

This theory demands a citizen control level of involvement in the process to be successful.

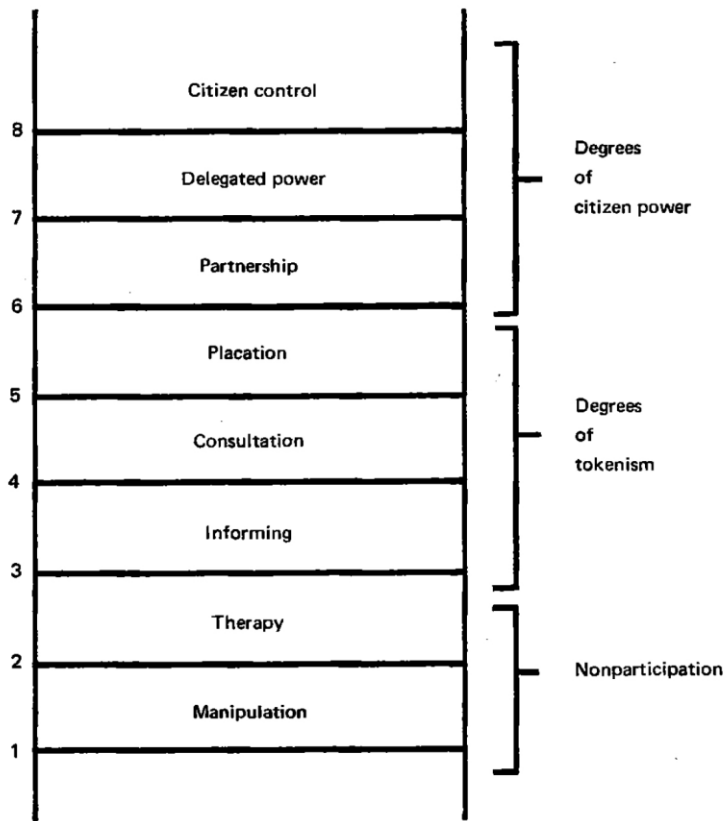


Figure 6. Shows Arnstein's “Ladder of Citizen Participation” which articulates the levels at which citizen involvement is sought and a tool to assess the role residents are asked to play by those in power versus when residents have full self-determination in their role in a process and therefore its outcomes.

Source: Arnstein 1969.



FIGURE 1 *French Student Poster. In English, I participate; you participate; he participates; we participate; you participate . . . They profit.*

Figure 7. A cartoon included in Arnstein's piece on the Ladder of Citizen participation.

Advocacy planning “is premised upon the inclusion of the different interests involved in the planning process itself” (Feld 2010, 2). This theory was created by Paul Davidoff in 1965 because he was concerned that planning decisions significantly impacting urban neighborhoods were made with little or no representation from the residents. He believed this was mostly because he felt the residents of the target area of the planning process usually were neither skilled in or knowledgeable about planning, and therefore were unable to participate effectively in the planning decision process (Feld 2010, 2). The need for the involvement of the planners in Floral Farms was because of the gap in knowledge on how to navigate the city bureaucracy and mitigate the issues the community was facing; therefore, advocacy planning is another relevant theory to the report.

Finally, the concepts of environmental justice and community engagement are also key themes in this report. Environmental justice is defined as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies” (EPA 1994). Environmental justice is relevant in that the impetus for this report stemmed from the environmental injustice, Shingle Mountain, and the remedy for the injustice will likely stem from the meaningful involvement of the impacted residents in preventing future environmental issues in their community. Community engagement is therefore part of addressing environmental injustices and must be meaningful in its breadth and depth to ensure the solutions lead to systemic change in environmental outcomes and community involvement.

b. Gap in the Literature

There is a large body of literature debating the role of the planner as a technical expert, facilitator, or advocate, and consequently the role of the community ranging from tokenistic to full self-determination in planning processes (Arnstein 1969, 216). There is also significant literature on the history of environmental justice, environmental racism, and land use policies in the U.S. since the beginning of the planning profession (Bullard 1983, 273). This debate and divergence in perspective on the role of the planner is fundamental to the research questions outlined in this paper, especially in the context of Communities of Color and low-income people and their relationship with City planning policies and practices.

There is a dearth of planning literature documenting the relationship between the role of city planners and the prevalence of environmental injustices that have occurred for decades in low income and communities of color, and how adjusting the role of the planner to support grassroots planning efforts, can lead to better planning outcomes and increased civic trust in

Communities of Color. The pivot away from rational top-down planning to more collaborative planning is well documented through John Friedmans' transactive planning and John Foresters' communicative planning theories. However, there are few examples or case studies in the literature highlighting city-planner driven initiatives that proactively promote a citizen-control model of planning.. There is an acknowledgement of the harm that top-down rational planning practices caused in cities, which remain today and is demonstrated through analysis of the inequities redlined communities still face. However, planning techniques that are catered to the history of a community (i.e. a citizen control model in neighborhoods dealing with environmental injustices versus a more rational planning model for neighborhoods not dealing with racial injustices), are not widely demonstrated by city planning departments.

This is likely due to the often contradictory goals of city planners and communities dealing with environmental injustices. Logan and Molotch describe the shared belief by business and the state, that indefinite growth is good for society, because they are a part of the “growth machine” which ensures continued profit for some at the expense of safe and healthy neighborhoods for all. This directly positions private profit over public health interests and could be a major factor for why city planners, who are often complicit in the “growth machine”, could not advocate for a citizen control model of planning in the context of environmental injustices. The pro-growth mentality is so entrenched in the U.S., according to Logan and Molotch, that advocating otherwise is seen as contrary to the natural forces of the market. The purpose of this literature review is to understand the extent to which the connection between the planner as facilitator and the community as leader has led to more equitable planning outcomes in Communities of Color and ultimately for less equity issues in planning.

c. Environmental Injustices in Communities of Color & Planning

The scope of ‘environment’ in the context of environmental justice has broadened to include beyond just physical space but also the political, social, and cultural environments we attach our identities to (Agyeman et al 2006, 323). Because of this, planning has always influenced environmental justice outcomes, and environmental justice therefore should be accounted for in planning more equitably, inclusively, and sustainably (Agyeman et al 2006, 326). Increasingly, because of zoning and local land use policies resulting in many environmental justice issues, planners are playing a role in addressing existing patterns of environmental injustices, while also mitigating future disasters (Agyeman et al 2006, 334).

This is necessary due to the long and well documented history of zoning and land use policy being used to segregate people racially, and concentrate hazardous toxic uses in low-income areas or Communities of Color that persists today (Bullard 1983, 273). This is also necessary for many cities to integrate sustainability and racial equity into their policies for better social, economic, and environmental outcomes in general. These goals align with the concept of ‘just sustainability’, that is “the need to ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner, whilst living within the limits of supporting ecosystems” (Agyeman et al. 2003, 36).

Despite being created to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the public, zoning has often only further hardened the line between who gets the benefit of public protections and who does not (Bullard 2008, 371). In most American cities, there is a clear correlation between areas that have been redlined and areas that have high industrial land uses (Rothstein 2017, 50). Although it is disputed whether public policies pertaining to zoning and land use planning are inherently discriminatory regarding distribution of noxious land uses in poorer communities and Communities of Color, there is a clear correlation that leads to

substantial inequities in health outcomes. For example, Communities of Color that were redlined in the 1930s today show a higher pollution burden than neighborhoods that were not redlined (Lane 2022, A).

Dr. Robert Bullard is known as the “Father of Environmental Justice” because of his work in the 1980s observing the correlation between people of color in Houston and the placement of municipal waste facilities (Bullard 1987, 217). Only one out of the ten facilities are in a white neighborhood (Bullard 1987, 217). Dr. Bullard argues that cities are designed with Communities of Color designated as “sacrifice” or “garbage” zones, where the people and the contents in their neighborhoods are disposable, out of sight, out of mind. Dr. Bullard began his work in Houston, but quickly became involved in addressing numerous other environmental justice fights across the U.S., including in West Dallas with the lead smelters (Bullard 1990, 592).

The trends that Dr. Bullard identified in Houston exist in many American cities, including Dallas. Mike Daniel and Laura Beshara, two prominent civil rights attorneys in Dallas who have represented Black and Latina/o neighborhoods for decades on environmental justice and fair housing issues, created maps illustrating the distribution of industrial zoning by race in Dallas (DBPC 2020). According to their research, “there is only one instance of a single-family zoned neighborhood next to heavy industrial zoning in a White neighborhood” compared to the “numerous locations of City of Dallas single-family zoning districts located next to heavy industrial zoning districts” in Black and Latina/o neighborhoods (DBPC 2020). Therefore, there is a correlation between Communities of Color and proximity or adjacency to industrial zoning districts in the City of Dallas. The map of the City of Dallas in Figure 8 highlights the distribution of industrial zoning by race by census tract, with the green areas indicating majority

white residents and the red areas indicating majority non-white residents. The blue and red shaded areas are the sections with either Industrial Research (IR) or Industrial Manufacturing (IM), the two heaviest industrial zoning districts (DBPC 2020).

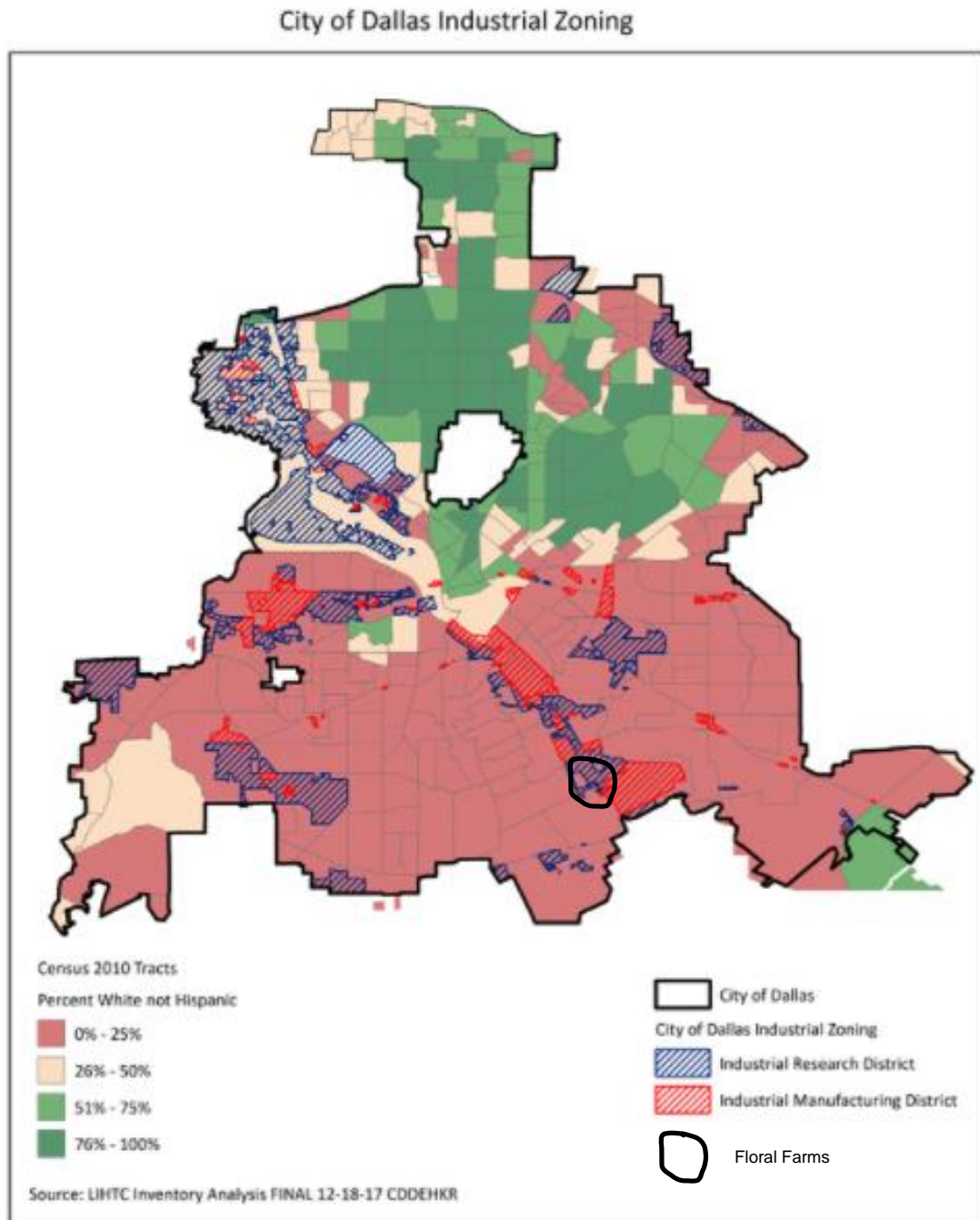


Figure 8. Distribution of industrial zoning by race across the City of Dallas. Source: DBPC (2020).

The zoning that created the conditions for today's land use in Dallas, as well as many other major cities in the U.S. was based on segregating people by race and concentrating hazardous uses in Communities of Color (Whittemore, 2016, 17). These land use policies perpetuate environmental injustices and will continue to do so until the zoning is changed, and Communities of Color have more control over the outcomes in land use and zoning in their neighborhoods.

d. Community Organizing and Neighborhood-Led Planning

This section reviews successful case studies of grassroots neighborhood-led plans created through partnerships of residents, community organizers, anchor institutions such as universities or community-based organizations. Neighborhood-led plans have served as a tool to advocate for neighborhood inclusion in the planning process and to elevate resident concerns, perspectives, and needs. The motivations that led the development of grassroots planning projects vary from a lack of city resources, city staff support or public trust in the city's planning process. A gap in the literature is an analysis of the ways that the community led planning process spurs greater collaboration with cities by changing the political landscape for planning. This exposes another gap in the literature, which is the connection between community organizing and power building being necessary to close the power gap between communities that have been excluded from planning processes in the past, and lead to more equitable outcomes in land use planning. This causes friction with the political power structure that can help resolve the neighborhoods' issues, but often doesn't lead to city support until that power is taken and even then, the City may not be supportive leading to resentment and retaliation.

One of the earliest examples of modern community organizing and potentially grassroots neighborhood planning, was led by Saul Alinsky in Chicago's "Back of the Yard" neighborhood in the 1930s. Saul Alinsky began his involvement with Back of the Yards neighborhood issues after conducting research as a sociology student at the University of Chicago, shadowing the Chicago Mob to understand how they organized and governed themselves. This neighborhood was mostly immigrant families from eastern Europe who were living in poverty and environmentally dangerous conditions due to their proximity to the meatpacking facilities and slaughterhouses. Alinsky helped organize the "Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council" to bring together the disparate immigrant communities to advocate for better, safer, and healthier conditions in their neighborhood. This became a successful model for several other community organizing efforts across neighborhoods in the U.S. (Miller 2010). The motto of the association was "we the people will work out our own destiny". This is similar to the slogan of the Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination in Dallas: "no plans for us, without us".

The success of the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Association was built on the broad grassroots constituency in the neighborhood brought together based on their common interests for the betterment of the neighborhood, ultimately building grassroots power that resulted in political change (BYNC 2022). The organization remains today and provides community services, social events, and advocates for economic development (BYNC 2022). Although Saul Alinsky is not often recognized in the planning community as an early contributor to participatory planning, there are parallels in his advocacy and organizing efforts in Chicago and other neighborhoods that resulted in planning outcomes led by often marginalized communities.

There is frequent overlap between the role of the community organizer and the role of the researcher, as they both seek "to stimulate people rather than impose on them, emphasize process

over product” and ultimately “not focus only on solutions to problems but also on human development” (Stoecker 1999, 213). The same way that success is defined for the organizer, when the constituency is self-sufficient, success for participatory planning is if the residents lead, control and own the process, which requires accepting the community as having unique expertise and putting the decision-making authority in the hands of the community (Kamath et al 2015, 57). Community organizing, participatory planning and community-based research are all connected and necessary to support each other. Each represents a threat to formal processes often led by cities and the private sector because they build power in people who have been excluded intentionally or implicitly in determining their own fate. The following case studies illustrate examples of the Alinsky principles of community organizing playing out in participatory research and planning situations connected to environmental justice issues in the U.S.

D. 1) Case Study: New Orleans 9th Ward Neighborhood 2005

In response to Hurricane Katrina, leaders from the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) a national organization dedicated to advocating “for low and moderate-income families by working on neighborhood safety, voter registration, health care, affordable housing, and other social issues” contacted planners and designers from “Pratt Institute and Cornell University for technical assistance” (Reardon 2008, 58). The leaders with ACORN represented the eastside neighborhoods of New Orleans, who were described as “too damaged and at risk for future storm damage to merit public and private reinvestment” by the initial assessments post Katrina by the City of New Orleans (Reardon 2008, 58).

It was because of this, that the neighborhood leaders sought out “social justice-oriented faculty from planning and design schools” to establish partnerships to conduct a “careful assessment of post-Hurricane Katrina physical conditions” to counter the assessment initially

done which would have functionally made their communities permanently unviable (Reardon 2008, 58). This case study, like Shingle Mountain, was the result of an environmental crisis, leading to a grassroots call for planning solutions in collaboration with social justice minded planners and designers. The planning partnership was established in July 2006 and the scope was to “prepare a comprehensive recovery plan for the 10 historic neighborhoods that make up this area” and included “technical assistance to residents committed to implementing” the plan (Reardon 2008, 58).

After the initial contact was made by the ACORN representatives to the Cornell planning department, students led an effort to “obtain departmental funds to launch the New Orleans Planning Initiative” which amassed \$100,000, 46 students and 4 faculty members to use a 2-credit course as the starting point for the collaboration (Reardon 2008, 62). During the course, the students raised funds to go to New Orleans and do home rehabilitation while building relationships with residents, and to clarify the communities’ priorities and goals. This helped the students articulate the needs of the community better, increasing capacity for the partnership project through a “Rebuild New Orleans Policy Conference” in Baton Rouge. This conference led to several other universities getting involved and taking on the role as planner/facilitator in different neighborhoods on the eastside (Reardon 2008, 61).

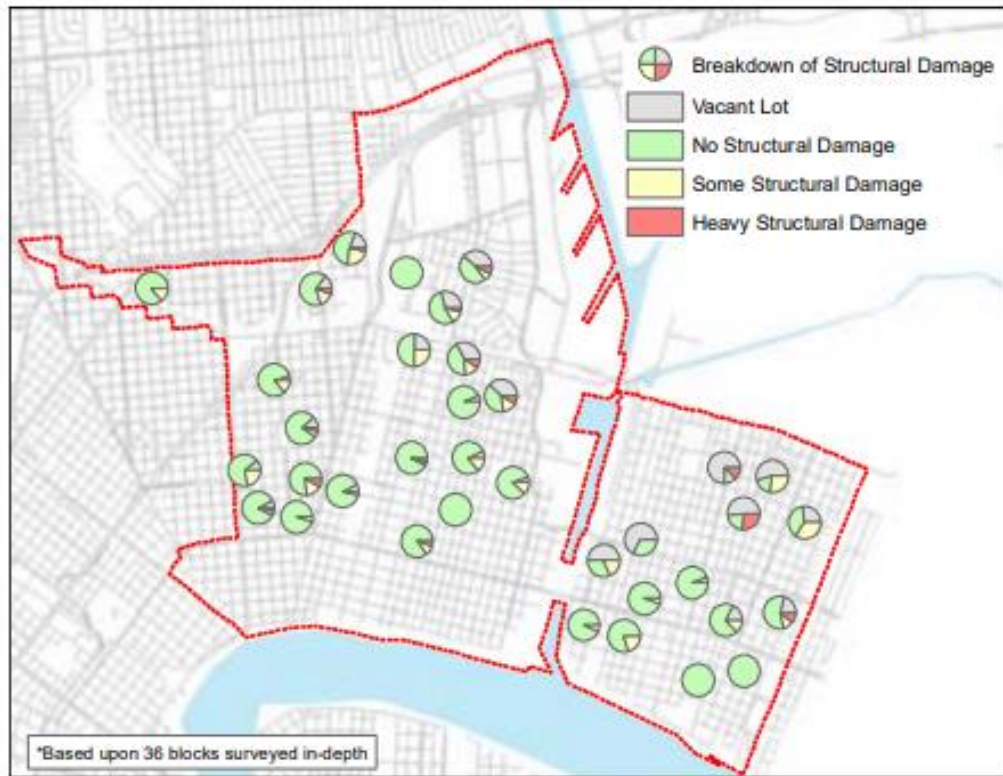


Figure 9. Shows the analysis created through the “People’s Plan for Overcoming the Hurricane Katrina Blues” of the structural damage in the 9th Ward to counter the narrative by the City and Urban Land Institute that the 9th ward was too damaged for repair.

Meanwhile, the Cornell university students continued to develop project displays on the priority issues initially identified (stormwater management, street system, affordable housing etc.), and presented them back to residents and elected officials in New Orleans in Spring 2006 (Reardon 2008, 62). Their ideas were received positively and enthusiastically from the residents and led to a summer internship program for 10 students to continue developing the concepts, funded by ACORN (Reardon 2008, 62). Every step of the research, planning and policy development was resident driven and supported through technical assistance by the students and faculty. During the summer, the City’s intentions to develop a comprehensive recovery plan became clear, and in response ACORN requested the students prepare a “formal proposal for comprehensive planning services” to be considered in the City’s Request for Qualifications

(Reardon 2008, 62). To meet the scope of the RFQ, the students broadened their capacity by creating a “new community-university partnership” called the “ACORN Housing/University Collaborative”, which included several other universities (Reardon 2008, 62). The new collaborative made it as a finalist and presented their focus on “community organizing, neighborhood planning, civil engineering, affordable housing credentials, and the track record of the newly established network” (Reardon 2008, 62).

The Collaborative was selected as “one of five organizations” serving as “senior consultants” within the City’s comprehensive planning process, however, were immediately concerned with the short timeline for creating infrastructure plans for yet-to-be-assigned neighborhoods, and the lack of consideration needed to be given to the existing challenges confronting many eastside neighborhoods before Katrina (Reardon 2008, 64). The team felt that any plan that did not fully integrate comprehensive community engagement and account for the existing environmental, economic and social challenges of the neighborhoods “would be doomed to fail” (Reardon 2008, 64). Residents and elected officials overwhelmingly selected the Collaborative as the consultants along with other technical assistance from the private sector, and the planning process began at the end of the summer.

As the research, scoping and staging for the project was underway, the collaborative was informed of an alleged ethics violation due to the “community partner’s ownership of [some] properties placed them in the position of functioning as both planners and developers” (Reardon 2008, 67). This was a shock to the group and believed to be irrelevant given that the “community partner had not yet received title to any tax-adjudicated properties within the study area” (Reardon 2008, 67). Because of the relationships made between residents and students, regardless of the RFQ, they sought to continue the project because they “viewed the question of

the nations' willingness to rebuild New Orleans and its poorest neighborhoods as a litmus test of society's commitment to racial justice and equality" (Reardon 2008, 67). The team continued the scope of work and drafted recommendations which "contradict many of the key assertions of the Urban Land Institute and Bring New Orleans Back Commission reports that suggested the Ninth Ward's housing stock was damaged beyond repair and that few residents wished to return" (Reardon 2008, 69). The collaborative planned to release their recommendations prior to the City's planning consultants releasing theirs in January 2007, which they did as the "People's Plan for Overcoming the Hurricane Katrina Blues" (ACORN Housing/University Consortium 2007).

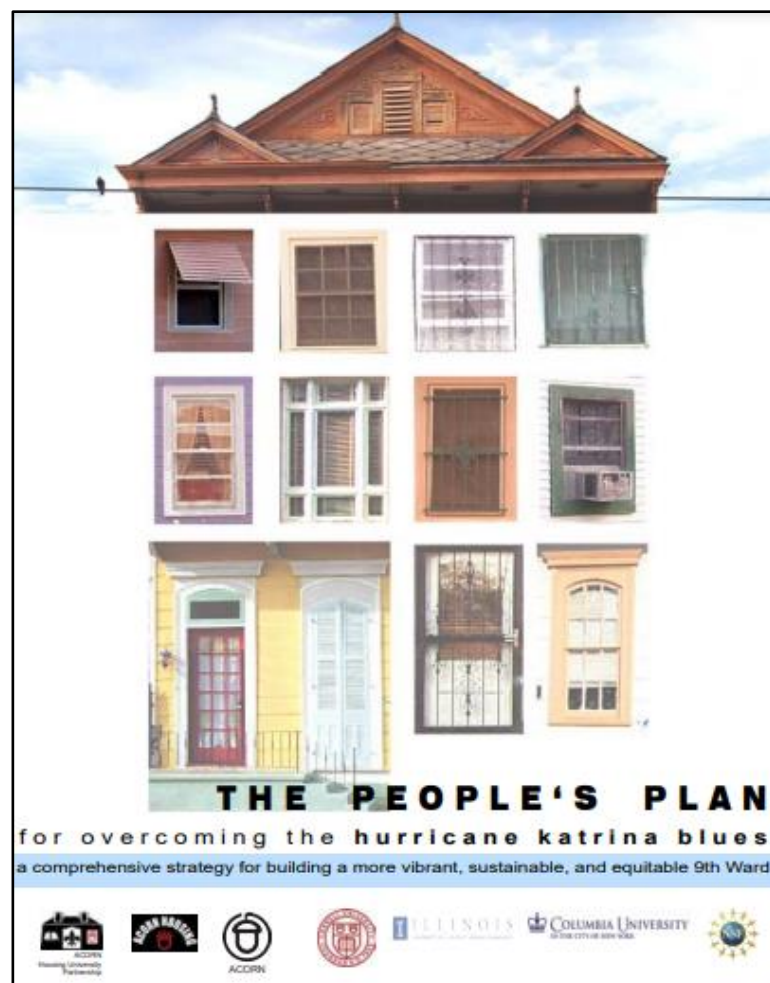


Figure 10. Is the cover page for the People's Plan which was drafted by the collaborative grassroots project and then adopted by the City of New Orleans.

The People's Plan articulated in a 170-page recovery plan the vision and recommendations of residents and researchers not just to restore but to transform the conditions of the Ninth Ward (Reardon 2008, 70). This plan was presented in New Orleans to professional planners, civic leaders, elected officials, and the press and shortly after presented to over 100 Ninth Ward residents. They were met with significant support, in stark contrast to the "ambivalent and sometimes hostile reception of most of the plans" by the city (Reardon 2008, 70). So much support that members of the collaborative were encouraged to "petition the City Council and City Plan Commission to incorporate" the plan into the soon to be adopted comprehensive plan being prepared by the city (Reardon 2008, 70). The City Council passed a "unanimous resolution" to incorporate the main elements of the People's Plan into their comprehensive plan (Reardon 2008, 71). This led to the designation of neighborhoods in the eastside as reinvestment zones, where public investment would be concentrated. The collaborative and its affiliates continued to work with the residents on implementing aspects of the plan.

The process was neighborhood-led and neighborhood-approved and led to the increase in capacity of poor peoples' organizations to influence the public and private investment decisions that determine quality of life. The meaningful involvement of people in determining the outcomes of their neighborhood or community has many benefits to civic engagement and democracy beyond planning. Research on participatory planning has proven time and time again that "US citizens are extremely interested in participating in making decisions that affect the quality of lives in their communities and neighborhoods" (Al-Kodemany 2001, 111). There are tangible benefits of participatory planning to both planners, architects or designers, and

community members contributing their expert knowledge as the user of the neighborhood or potential project. The effort draws together a “collective IQ instead of one person’s IQ”, and through “shared ownership in solutions to community problems” (Al-Kodemany 2001, 111). The process can help “cultivate greater capacity, stronger sense of commitment, user satisfaction, realistic expectations, and builds trust” and is “necessary for effective and appropriate solutions to community design and planning problems” because it meets the needs of the user (Al-Kodemany 2001, 111).

D. 2) Case Study: Richmond California, 2012

Similar to the People’s Plan drafted by the collaboration in New Orleans, the Richmond Equitable Development Initiative (REDI), was created with a “constellation of community organizations and regional experts” and “successfully incorporated” recommendations into the General Plan approved by their City Council (Rein 2012, 7). This group formed to address the inequities entrenched in Richmond, a majority non-white and lower income city, such as the Chevron refinery, which is a large source of pollution and a minimal employer of Richmond residents (Rein 2012, 7). Beyond just the refinery, there was also the “diesel truck traffic from the Port of Richmond, the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe railroad, and the 350 other industrial polluters that surround the city” (Rein 2012, 8). REDI formed in 2003 to “reverse the trend toward inequitable development” and started with Urban Habitat and recruited other organizations including the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, Communities for a Better Environment, and more to “represent a cross-section of Richmond today” and leverage the 2006 General plan to institutionalize equitable development (Rein 2012, 8).



Figure 11. The Coalition spoke out during the planning process.

The coalition launched their campaign with a “six weeklong Leadership Institute for grassroots groups” where “interactive exercises” available in English, Spanish, Mien and Lao, “helped equip the community to engage with the General Plan” (Rein 2012, 9). The exercises included plotting “their daily activities”, shared their visions for the future, and learned some planning lingo through popular education and fun activities such as “Richmond Jeopardy” (Rein 2012, 9). REDI also planned an institute targeted at elected officials and city staff, which was well attended and supported the facilitation of dialogue between decision makers and the public (Rein 2012, 9).



Figure 12. A child participating in the leadership camp for the general plan.

The plan was initially intended to be completed in 2007, but the first draft was not

completed until 2009 and included some but not all the recommendations REDI had made (Rein 2012, 9). In response, REDI drafted detailed public comments to the City Plan Commission, which were disregarded, and led to a change in tactics to individually lobby City Council members and testifying at public meetings (Rein 2012, 9). The draft which was presented to the public in 2011 included significant changes that reflected the interests of Chevron, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Council of Industries, not the residents (Rein 2012, 11). However, due to the organizing and advocating of the coalition, the final draft of the plan included the “strong, specific language REDI recommended” and went to the City Council for final approval (Rein 2012, 12).

The success of this plan at City Council hinged on the victory of the progressive bloc “that provided a solid base of support for REDI”, leaving the coalition in need of just one swing vote (Rein 2012, 11). They were successful despite the lobbying efforts of Chevron and the Chamber of Commerce, and the General Plan was passed with the REDI recommendations. These recommendations have now become the basis for many policies, laws and programs to improve the environmental and economic injustices residents face in Richmond.

In both New Orleans and Richmond, a broad coalition of neighborhood advocates used their unique experiences living on the frontline of environmental injustices to come up with land use policy solutions that would improve their health, housing, economic opportunity, and quality of life. By using community organizing to exert public pressure on elected officials and city staff, the community was able to integrate their recommendations in the General Plan, despite significant business opposition. Although the reception of the residents’ recommendations was mixed by elected officials and city staff, ultimately public pressure led to the changes being implemented. Popular education, participatory planning and community organizing all

contributed to this successful case study.

D. 3) Distrust in Government and the Role of the City Planner

The role of the neighborhood in the context of grassroots planning is clear, however the role of City planners in the context of helping or hindering grassroots efforts is less clear. City planners can help restore trust or increase distrust between low-income communities of color and city planners depending on their role in the implementation of the grassroots plan by the city or through city-led planning efforts they lead. There is sometimes resistance and apathy toward public participation in planning and design among both planners/designers and citizens/users. For the designers, there can be the “fear of losing control of the design process to those with less technical skills” and for the citizens there can be a “sense of futility” due to past experiences when their input was not valued or taken seriously (Al-Kodemany 2001, 111). This causes an “us v. them” which is contradictory to collaborative planning with residents and city planners (Al-Kodemany 2001, 111).

In the example with Hurricane Katrina and the 9th Ward, the neighborhood initially didn't trust the City's analysis, therefore they conducted their own, which the city ultimately adopted. This is how community plans fill the gap of equity planning, especially among low-income Communities of Color. That is an example of attempts by city planners to restore trust with the community in city government, but also only came after significant community organizing, participatory planning and power building that led to the adoption of their recommendations being supported. This is the same with Richmond and the General Plan. Without both grassroots efforts, there would not have been equitable development or investment in either the Ninth Ward or Richmond, leading to further racial and environmental injustices being perpetuated.

The question remains, however, about whether true partnership is the goal of the city when engaging communities through participatory planning. Some feel that “the biggest problem we face in theorizing planning is our ambivalence about power” (Friedman 1998, 249). The act of planning through a neighborhood-first perspective requires the creation of community leadership and increased capacity for political power and civic engagement, by directly confronting and addressing power. The reality that “if planners do not learn how to take action in political settings, they risk failing to make constructive change” is very clear in planning with low-income Communities of Color (Grengs 2002, 165).

e. Summary

The main findings from the literature review and case studies of neighborhood-led planning efforts in New Orleans, and Richmond, are:

1. That neighborhood-led plans are generally created in response to an injustice caused by a city plan or policy.
2. That the vehicle to enacting or institutionalizing the neighborhood-led plan is through a city’s planning or other policy creating process.
3. That education and organizing are effective tools to bring people often not included in planning processes together, to successfully create and advocate for their neighborhood plan.
4. That city involvement in the plan development process is minimal and consequently leads to more ownership, investment and trust in the planning document created by the residents.
5. That the neighborhood-led planning process led to more inclusive and equitable outcomes that uphold the principles of environmental justice.

These findings help address the main research question by illuminating the political, social, and environmental conditions that are similar across the different times and locations for the case studies, and how lessons could be learned and applied in Dallas from these case studies. The outcomes of the New Orleans and Richmond case studies could be models for how Dallas could ultimately work with community groups interested in promoting environmental justice in their neighborhood both through the comprehensive plan update and in neighborhood-led planning. This again raises the question of, what is the City of Dallas' goal? Is it to have planning processes that are transparent, inclusive and lead to equitable outcomes? Or is to minimize disruption in city planning processes and maximize control of all planning processes including neighborhood-led planning?

IV. Analysis

a. Overview

This section outlines the analysis conducted based on the results found to answer the research questions. To address research questions 1) how can community-led planning fill the gap in reconstructing trust from low income and Black and Brown communities in planning?, I initially analyzed the current distribution of adopted community-led plans in Dallas and the demographic characteristics of the communities. To address research question two, 2) how do misguided planning processes trigger the environmental injustices faced by the community of Floral Farms?, I compared the vision statements and goals of the adopted community-led plans with the vision statement and goals of the Floral Farms plan. I also compared the process for the plan creation and whether the planning process was conducted in the two primary languages spoken by residents, English and Spanish, and the process by which the plans were adopted into policy. The comparisons of both the purpose and the process of the adopted neighborhood-led plans compared to the Floral Farms neighborhood-led plans are summarized in Table 4.

b. Research Question 1: Neighborhood-Led Plans in the City of Dallas

There are only three adopted neighborhood-led land use plans in the City of Dallas (City of Dallas 2020). The map below illustrates the location of the three adopted neighborhood-led land use plans and their percentage of population in poverty based on the census tract data within the plan boundaries. Figure 13 illustrates the lack of adopted neighborhood-led land use plans in the Southern Sector of the City of Dallas, where there is a higher concentration of people in poverty based on U.S. Census Bureau data. None of the neighborhood-led plans adopted in North Dallas are provided online in Spanish, and there is no indication that the plan development process was bilingual. Therefore, it might not be inclusive for Spanish speakers within those plan

areas. This contrasts with the Floral Farms plan, which was fully bilingual throughout the process and all the aspects of the final plan draft (NSDP 2020).

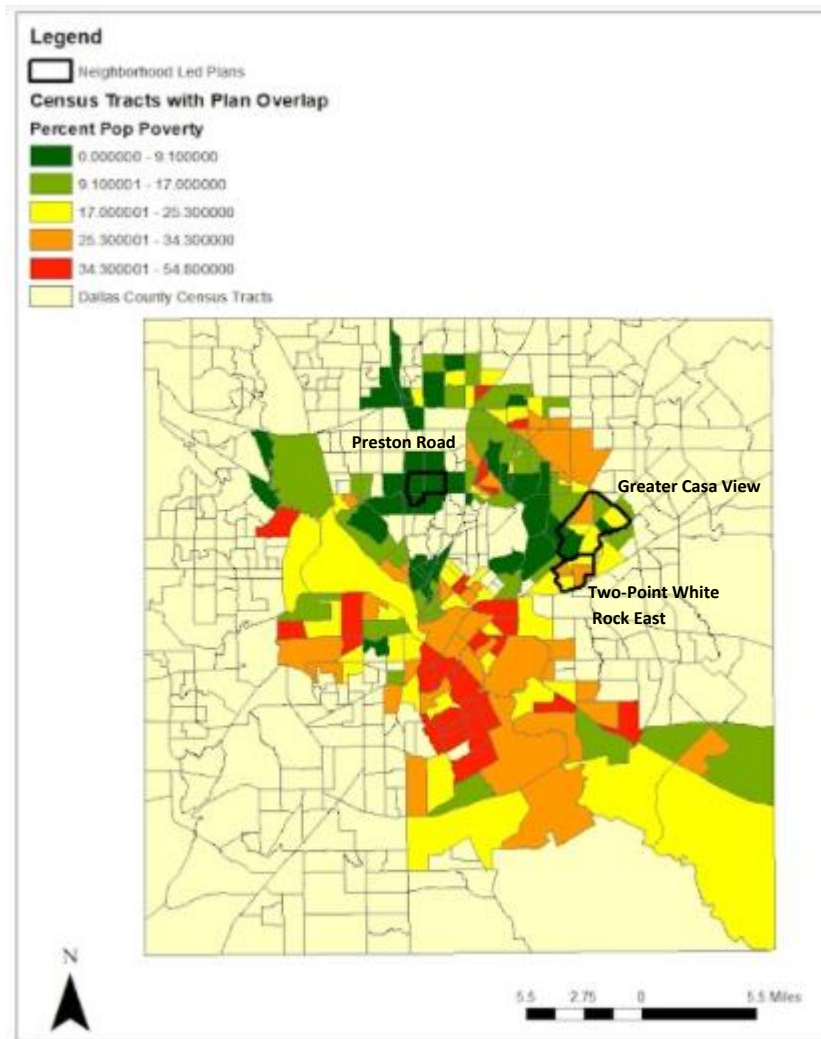


Figure 13. Shows the distribution of neighborhood-led plans and the percentage of population in poverty within those plan boundaries.

There are 30 city-led area plans adopted by the City of Dallas. As Figure 14 shows, there are very few city-led adopted land use plans in Oak Cliff and Pleasant Grove, and most of the land use plans appear to be concentrated along the Trinity River Corridor with the center being Downtown Dallas.

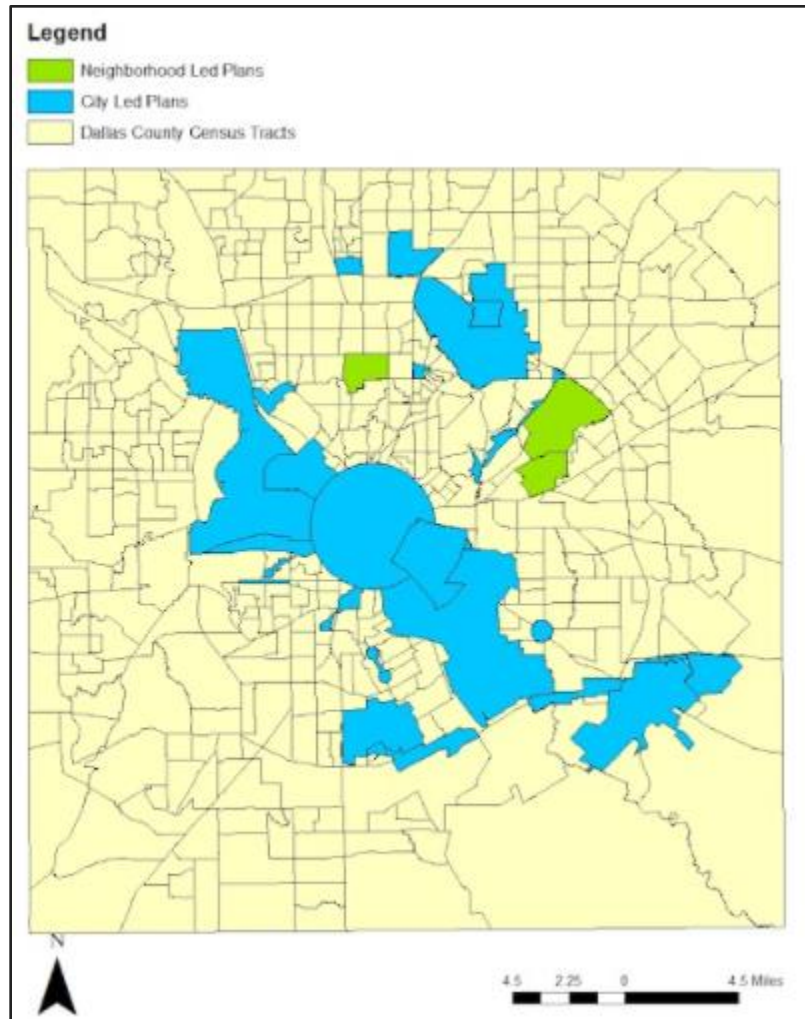


Figure 14. This map shows the distribution of the city-led plans and the neighborhood-led plans.

c. Research Question 2: Comparison of Cause for Initiation of Neighborhood-Led Plans

This report examines the three adopted neighborhood-led plans in the City of Dallas, in addition to the non-adopted Floral Farms plan, including:

1. Two-Point White Rock East (2013)
2. Greater Casa View Area Plan (2016)
3. Northwest Highway and Preston Road Area Plan (2017)

These plans include communities located in the North of the Trinity River that house wealthier populations than residents of Floral Farms. See Figure 13.

Table 3 outlines the main findings of this investigation. It summarizes the vision statements for the neighborhood plans, the background on the plans' inception, the racial demographics of the populations within the plan boundaries, the EPA Environmental Justice screen score, and whether the plan is translated in Spanish or if the process was inclusive of Spanish speakers. This information is deduced from the review of the plan documents that are provided online on the City of Dallas PUD website. The EPA EJ Screen Score is “an environmental justice mapping and screening tool that provides EPA with a nationally consistent dataset and approach for combining environmental and demographic indicators” (EPA 2022). The higher the EJ screen score, the greater the correlation between census tracts with majority non-white populations and proximity to environmental hazards. A score of 50% percentile would mean that there are less people of color living next to environmental hazards compared to an area with a score of 75%.

The contents of Table 3 allow for the comparison of the planning documents' documented purpose and includes key demographic information about the populations within the plan boundaries which could connect or inform the stated purpose of the plans. This information helps answer my research questions by comparing similarities and differences with the purpose, demographics, and inclusivity of the three adopted neighborhood-led plans and the unadopted Floral Farms neighborhood-led plan.

Table 3. Shows the comparison between adopted neighborhood-led plans and the Floral Farms neighborhood-led plan regarding their purpose, demographic composition (from the year the plan was adopted) and language accessibility for Spanish speakers.

Neighborhood	Purpose of the community-led plan (as stated in the plan documents)	Motivation for the plan to be initiated	Racial Demographics of the communities (ACS Census Tract Data)	US EPA EJScreen Score	Spanish Translation
Two-Point White Rock East (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address neglect and high crime changing demographics for this area greater cultural, ethnic, and age diversity 	Spun off from “Ferguson Road Initiative” (a non-profit community revitalization organization) and a council appointed committee leading the planning process.	15% White 38% Black 43% Hispanic	Multiple census tracts so between 50% - 90% for EJ indexes	No indication
Greater Casa View (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify development opportunities, streetscape and greenspace, Harry Stone Recreation Center, and gateways and identity Central theme of connecting the Casa View to the rest of the city 	To leverage the Neighborhood Plus program and previously scheduled ForwardDallas comprehensive plan update.	48% White 13% Black 59% Hispanic	Multiple census tracts so between 50% - 90% for EJ indexes	No indication
Northwest Highway and Preston Road Area Plan (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both residential and commercial property owners share serious concerns about traffic congestion, parking problems, and aging and inadequate City infrastructure. Need for a common vision for how Preston Center and the surrounding neighborhoods should evolve over time to maintain and enhance the vitality of the area. 	Initiated after the City of Dallas authorized a resolution supporting a Regional Transportation Council Sustainable Development Program grant of \$250,000 for a plan in this area.	93% White 0.3% Black 16% Hispanic	Less than 50% for EJ indexes	No indication
Floral Farms (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To remain a safe, agricultural community without threat of further industrial encroachment 	Initiated because of Shingle Mountain highlighting the industrial adjacency	1% White 87% Black 12% Hispanic	Above 75% for all EJ indexes	Fully bilingual process and plan available

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety, health and wellbeing first and envisions a uniquely agricultural community • Protect our culture and way of life 	<p>issues in Floral Farms and multiple attempts to permit concrete batch plants and other industrial uses in the community.</p>			
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There are major differences in the motivations for each of the neighborhood-led plans to be initiated. For the adopted neighborhood-led plans, they each seemed intent on leveraging existing or upcoming city policies or funding opportunities to benefit their communities. Two Point White Rock East clearly articulated that it was a neighborhood-led initiative, however, the council person appointed the steering committee who stewarded the planning process, and during the multi-year planning project they only hosted three public meetings. The plan was initiated as an extension of initiatives underway by a local revitalization nonprofit the “Ferguson Road Initiative”. The Greater Casa View Area Plan was also initiated to leverage the new Neighborhood Plus program created by the city, in anticipation of the ForwardDallas comprehensive land use plan update. The update did not happen, but the plan was incorporated as an amendment to ForwardDallas. Similarly, the Preston Road plan seemed more council-driven than resident-driven because it began with \$250,000 in funding being approved by the City Council for the creation of the plan and appeared to have a significant level of city involvement, with the document beginning with a letter from the councilwoman for the area.

These motivations for initiating the neighborhood-led plans in North Dallas are significantly different than the motivation for initiating the neighborhood-led plan in Floral Farms. Each of the adopted plans in North Dallas framed the efforts as a opportunity to manage growth, promote neighborhood vitality and increase quality of life. The goals of the Floral Farms plan also seek to do those three things, however, because it was initiated out of a national

embarrassment like Shingle Mountain, the perception of the plan as being borne of a crisis and therefore not centered on positive opportunity, likely impacted the reception of the plan by the city.

The White Rock and Greater Casa View plan shared the clear articulation that resident-led stewardship of the community's vision was necessary to improve safety, infrastructure, and guide City investment into their neighborhoods. The Northwest Highway plan was more of a multi-stakeholder approach to land use conflicts between developers seeking zoning changes and residents fighting them, leading to the need for a proactive land use vision to avoid continued conflicts and lack of development. The demographic characteristics of the neighborhood were most clearly articulated in the White Rock East plan, graphically displayed in Casa View and not at all included in the Preston Road study.

In all three documents, there were acknowledgements given to the City of Dallas staff or council people for their role in supporting the initiatives, but also clarity that private or pro bono planners had facilitated the processes, driven by resident participation. All the plan boundaries were drafted with the participating organizations, and the majority of the land within the boundaries had many neighborhood associations or organizations covering the area. Incompatible zoning and mismatches in land use causing health concerns were not included in the reasons for initiating the plans.

The neighborhood-led plans approach race differently. The White Rock East plan included a breakdown of racial demographic information for the area within the plan boundaries using census data. The Casa View plan does not provide a written table or breakdown of the racial composition of the area but includes visual comparisons of 2010 census data and 2015 American Community Survey data to show the ways that racial composition in the area is

changing. The Preston Road plan does not mention race or demographic information for the area at all. The Floral Farms plan includes the racial composition of the neighborhood and plan boundaries and specifically references racial justice as a big part of the plans' goals. The term 'justice' does not appear once in the three adopted area plans but appears once in the Floral Farms plan. The term 'zoning' comes up 84 times in the Two Point White Rock East Plan, 43 times in the Preston Road Plan, 42 times in the Floral Farms Plan and 0 times in the Casa View Plan.

d. Neighborhood-Led Plan Adoption Process

The City of Dallas Planning and Urban Design Department produced outreach materials on neighborhood planning in 2019 and distributed it widely through community outreach and engagement (City of Dallas 2019). According to the introduction section of the document, "this guide will help you create a neighborhood plan that can guide change and address housing, jobs, and other neighborhood issues" (City of Dallas 2019). This document was promoted at several community meetings in 2019 and was one of the reasons for many neighborhoods being interested and open to drafting their own plans. Whilst this booklet provides details on how to create a neighborhood plan, there is little clarity on the adoption process with the City of Dallas to turn the plan into policy. Prior to completing the Floral Farms neighborhood-led plan, we spoke with the people who led the planning processes in Casa View and Two-Point White Rock East to understand how the adoption process for their neighborhood plans occurred. The following checklist was created and provided to us by the resident involved with the Casa View area planning effort. See Figure 15. The reason she created this checklist was because she felt the city did not make the pathway clear to other neighborhoods, who may want to leverage the

process for their communities. She made it clear that it was not an official City of Dallas document.

So, you want to start a neighborhood-led area plan? Summary Checklist

- Form an Advisory Committee** – create a group of diverse opinions that can help steer the direction of your group. If possible, include representatives from real estate, planning, design and schools and businesses in your area.
- Connect with your local Plan Commissioner and Councilperson** – build a rapport with them and visit with them regularly so they can help guide the process.
- Have a Public Neighborhood Meeting (or several)** – neighborhood input is a conversation, not a one-time checkbox. Start with a neighborhood meeting to understand the issues, then develop a response of what you think you heard, then have another meeting to verify your findings. Repeat, as necessary for your specific plan
- Begin to develop a book of some kind** – start a document where you can begin to house all of your findings. Set up a shared cloud storage location (Google Drive, Dropbox, OneDrive) where your committee can easily work together. Your book should include the following:
 - **Context** – who are you and why do you care, what are the neighborhood boundaries, what are the issues you are trying to solve
 - **Maps, maps and more maps!** – demographic studies, zoning maps, DCAD property ownership maps. Each section of your book should be supported by plenty of maps to help illustrate your point.
 - **Documentation of Public Input** – pictures and dates of your public meetings, attendance and key items discussed or findings is extremely important and should be directing your path as you go.
- Meet with Urban Design Committee** – once you have a book/show started, meet with UDC to start to get feedback early on. They typically meet regularly and your Plan Commissioner should be able to help get you on their docket for review.
- Present to City Plan Commission** – once you’ve met with UDC a couple of times and have their blessing, it’s time to present to CPC!



Figure 15. Shows the process for neighborhood-led planning as articulated by a participant with the Greater Casa View Area Plan. (Source: NSDP 2021).

The Floral Farms plan was generated using the curriculum created by the NSDP, which is outlined in the “Our Process” handout (NSDP 2020). This curriculum was created by the Inclusive Communities Project, Downwinders at Risk and Southern Sector Rising, with the specific focus being on separating people from polluters and promoting a grassroots vision that reflects the values of the neighborhood. Because of this, unlike City-led planning processes which generally involve a convening of all stakeholders including city staff, businesses, developers, and residents, this curriculum focused on creating a neighborhood driven vision that is then shared with the broader stakeholders for input. The former Director of Planning and Urban Design at the City of Dallas later criticized this decision to not include the city citing that they could not validate the process (Dallas Morning News 2021). Floral Farms followed all the steps that the person involved in the Casa View plan outlined in the checklist above, however, when we approached the City Planning Department to work with the Urban Design Committee, we were told that the committee had been dissolved and that there was no next step.

The change in process from the path to adoption for the previously adopted neighborhood-led plans to the lack of process presented to Floral Farms, caused significant concern and confusion amongst the residents and the planners involved. The lack of process continued to be exposed from December 2020 to April 2021 until staff reiterated at a City Plan Commission briefing in April 2021 that there would not be a policy path for neighborhood-led plans (City Plan Commission 2021). This perceived injustice of the Floral Farms neighborhood-led plan being treated differently due to the high-profile environmental justice issues the community raised, led to the formation of the Coalition for Neighborhood-Self Determination

which is a city-wide coalition of neighborhood-based organizations (Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination 2021).

The Coalition launched the “Bill of Rights” for “Equitable and Inclusive Planning” that highlighted the specific need for the path to policy for neighborhood-led plans to be restored. It is because of this advocacy that under the leadership of the new PUD Director, a policy for neighborhood-led plans is being created with significant input and guidance from the Coalition and other community members.

e. Summary

The key elements from the analysis section are detailed in this summary. There are only three adopted neighborhood-led plans, and all of them are in higher income neighborhoods than Floral Farms. There are also very few city-led plans in Oak Cliff and Pleasant Grove compared to downtown Dallas, sections of North Dallas, and the Trinity River Corridor area. The impetus for initiating the three adopted neighborhood-led plans all had to do generally with quality of life and preserving or enhancing the character of the neighborhoods. This contrasts with Floral Farms, which specifically cited health and safety as a cause for the initiation of the neighborhood-led plan. Similarly, race and justice were not central to the three adopted neighborhood-led plans but were clearly integrated throughout the Floral Farms plan. Finally, the process for neighborhood plan adoption clearly changed from the previous pathway used by the three adopted plans, and the lack of policy post Floral Farms attempted to initiate adoption.

V. Findings

a. Overview

The findings from this research are presented in three different sections: observations on neighborhood-led planning in Dallas, demographic characteristics of the neighborhoods and the inclusion of demographic information in the neighborhood-led plans, and the discrepancy in the adoption process pre- and post- Floral Farms. In general, Floral Farms was treated differently than the three adopted neighborhood-led plans in North Dallas. The small number of neighborhood-led plan indicates potential obstacles to successfully create neighborhood-led plans in general, and the fact there are none in Southern Dallas could mean this is especially true in lower income communities of color. The community of Floral Farms overcame significant challenges simply by developing a neighborhood-led plan and despite following the city's process of developing a neighborhood plan, the city rejected it. In other words, even when communities commit to the planning process dictated by the city, the Floral Farms case study indicates that the city finds ways to reject plans developed by low-income communities of color.

b. Observations on Neighborhood-Led Planning in Dallas

There are substantially more adopted City-led plans (30 to date), than neighborhood-led plans (3). Of those three adopted neighborhood-led plans, none of them documented their process as being bilingual English Spanish or in the final planning document, and none of them were in the Southern sector of Dallas. The impetus for doing a neighborhood-led plan varied across the three adopted plans and the Floral Farms plan, however, a central theme was the need to improve the quality of life in their neighborhood, and they felt that they were best equipped to identify the issues and articulate potential solutions.

Floral Farms was the only neighborhood-led plan that specifically identified negative health impacts caused by land use incompatibility as a need for the neighborhood-led planning process to be initiated. The potential cause for the difference in impetus for the Floral Farms plan being around health compared to the other plans is the reality that environmental injustices caused by past zoning decisions which lead to negative health outcomes mostly occur in lower income Black and Brown neighborhoods. Therefore, the need to focus on zoning recommendations out of the land use planning process will likely fall on environmental justice neighborhoods, adding an additional burden to neighborhoods seeking to resolve land use compatibility issues through neighborhood-led plans.

c. Demographics of Neighborhood-Led Plan Areas

There were discrepancies between the demographic data at the census tract level from the U.S. Census Bureau and the actual composition of the Floral Farms community based on the knowledge gained through the planning process. Specifically, the census tract that includes Floral Farms also includes Joppa, which is a historic African American Freedman's Town. Because of this, the population of the area seemed majority African American. However, there are five residential streets in Floral Farms, and through the planning process we were able to meet almost all of the homeowners or renters, and they were mostly Spanish-speaking Mexican American people or migrants from other Latin American countries.

The population demographics outlined in the Casa View plan showed most of the residents are non-White people. However, based on the pictures of the planning meetings or public sessions, it was unclear if the participants, and potentially those leading the planning process, were racially representative of the area. This is for future analysis, but there is likely a

disproportionate representation of older, more White and more affluent residents participating in the planning process, despite the community being majority younger and non-White.

d. Discrepancies in the Adoption Process

Before Floral Farms sought support in moving their neighborhood-led plan forward, there was a process for plan adoption that had successfully been utilized by Casa View, White Rock East and Preston Road. The process they went through was vague, which can sometimes work in a neighborhood's favor or not. Regardless of the merits of the previous process, there was a pathway, and when Floral Farms sought to use that same pathway, it was made unavailable to them. This caused concerns about equity and inclusion of Black and Brown neighborhoods being treated differently than neighborhoods in North Dallas for leveraging the same process.

Simultaneously, it slowed down the much-needed change in zoning in Floral Farms, leaving the residents locked in an ongoing battle against industrial development, often which was approved by the city. This perpetuated the lack of trust and commitment to support the public health of residents in Floral Farms and showed how city planners can cause and perpetuate mistrust and harm caused by land use and zoning decisions.

For a full year, there was no clarity on whether the pathway would be restored. It wasn't until the Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination formed, advocating for the restoration of the policy, and contributing to a change in leadership in the Planning and Urban Design Department, that the Planning and Urban Design department agreed to restore the pathway. The exact language and process for the new neighborhood-led planning policy is not clear, however, the Coalition is deeply involved in crafting that process based on the experience of Floral Farms and the Neighborhood Self-Defense Project curriculum. The Floral Farms neighborhood-led plan will be honored through the Authorized Hearing process for rezoning the community and

incorporated into ForwardDallas, the City of Dallas Comprehensive Land Use Plan update.

VI. Implications for Planning

There are several implications for future planning based on the findings from my research. There are three major implications that are detailed individually below.

a. “No Plans for Us Without Us”

This is the slogan of the Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination. To trust a plans’ outcomes, people who have dealt with environmental or racial injustices in their communities must lead the planning processes. More equitable and inclusive processes will lead to more equitable and inclusive outcomes. Cities can and should see grassroots organizations as resources to fill the gap in planning areas within cities, increase trust by fostering true collaboration, and allowing for nonprofit planners or advocacy groups to help facilitate these processes.

Because of the prevalence of environmental injustices in Communities of Color across the U.S., and the increase in development and displacement happening in many U.S. cities, the need to support frontline residents in making land use and zoning decisions in their communities is critical. This is especially true with the racial justice reckoning caused by the murder of George-Floyd in 2020 and the greater awareness around the relationship between race, income, and public health outcomes demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic. People impacted by land use and zoning decisions, must be at the front of decision making and policy solution creation.

b. Planning as Community Organizing

Neighborhood-led planning can be a tool to increase civic engagement through community organizing. This leads to better outcomes for planners and the city by increasing participation in the democratic process. Cities should make resources available for neighborhood organizations and advocacy groups to support community organizing efforts, especially when they connect with planning outcomes.

c. The Racist Legacy of Zoning and Land Use is Perpetuated Without Intervention

Because most American cities were planned with racial segregation and the concentration of industrial land uses adjacent to Communities of Color as central land use and zoning policies, environmental injustices will be perpetuated without proactive intervention. In Dallas, one potential intervention is the Neighborhood Self-Defense Project, along with the policy agenda being pushed by the Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination. Cities can be more proactive and inclusive than Dallas and collaborate with neighborhood organizations that have been redlined or dumped on for generations instead of reacting to a crisis like Shingle Mountain which led to these community organizing and planning outcomes.

VII. Conclusion

This report outlines how the Shingle Mountain environmental justice crisis in Southern Dallas illuminated the environmental injustices that the community of Floral Farms has endured partly due to misguided planning and the neglect of the city of Dallas. The study demonstrates the ability of grassroots, community-led land use planning to both increase civic engagement in Black and Latina/o communities, and lead to more equitable planning outcomes through the inclusive planning process used by the NSDP. The plan that Floral Farms created is now a model that other neighborhoods are using to articulate their community's goals to be adopted as part of the ForwardDallas comprehensive land use plan update. The resistance of PUD's previous Director to ensuring neighborhood-led plans are able to become policy led to the creation of the Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination. The process created by the NSDP and used in Floral Farms for their neighborhood-led plan is the model that the Coalition for Neighborhood-Self Determination has advocated PUD use when restoring the pathway for neighborhood-led plans in their updated policy (under the leadership of the new Director).

This report recommends that the City of Dallas PUD and other city planning departments embrace neighborhood-led planning as a tool to build trust in Black and Latina/o communities, proactively seek to prevent environmental injustices by addressing chronic industrial adjacency issues through zoning changes and land use policy updates, and recognize the value of community organizing as a tool to educate constituents and improve planning outcomes by being more inclusive of all communities and stakeholders. The city must stop finding ways to reject plans developed by low-income communities of color, as this will perpetuate environmental injustices and racial inequities. The Floral Farms case study highlights the existing inequities in the planning processes in Dallas today, and hopefully this report

provides a roadmap for preventing the next Shingle Mountain by supporting neighborhood-led planning and promoting environmental justice-oriented policies.

VIII. Future Research

The specific origins of the Shingle Mountain crisis and an assessment of the policy changes made by the City of Dallas to prevent the next Shingle Mountain are outside of the scope of this report. However, future research into the circumstances that led to Shingle Mountain, would be helpful to create proactive strategies to prevent the next one. The Mayor of the City of Dallas included doing this research in his priorities for 2022 (Dallas Morning News 2021).

Additional research into the implementation success of neighborhood-led plans compared to City-led plans would also be helpful to quantify the differences in personal investment in the outcomes of plans when residents are more involved in the plan development process. In general, greater resident involvement leads to more ownership, and so neighborhood-led plans theoretically could be more implementable than city-led plans because of the resident support. This is relevant because often City Staff will use the argument that a plan is not ‘implementable’ without city staff involvement.

A comparison between the NSDP planning process or neighborhood-led plans in general with city-led planning processes would be helpful to understand the origin of some of the equity and inclusion concerns in city-led processes that have arisen. Although it is outside of the scope of this research project, the table below indicates a cursory comparative analysis of the planning processes used by the NSDP compared to City-Led plans. The NSDP curriculum outlines the planning process and methodology, whereas City-led plans do not have a standard process and are therefore varied. The most recent City-led plan that is currently underway and is a good comparison is the West Oak Cliff Area Plan in Dallas city council district 1. It was only because of the advocacy efforts of the West Oak Cliff Coalition that the city’s timeline for the plan was

extended, the meetings and materials were made available in Spanish, and neighborhoods previously without associations were allowed to participate on the steering committee.

Table 4. A comparison of some of the procedural differences between the Neighborhood Self-Defense Project curriculum and the City-Led planning process.

	NSDP	City-Led
Bilingual meetings	Yes	Until 2021, no
Bilingual outreach materials	Yes	Until 2021, no
Bilingual plan documents	Yes	No
Every home within boundary informed about planning process	Yes	No
Every home within boundary repeatedly notified about all meetings and opportunities for input	Yes	No
Meetings scheduled in collaboration with neighborhood leadership	Yes	Unknown
Multiple meeting options for the same meeting provided	Yes	Until 2021, no
Timeline determined by the residents in the plan boundaries	Yes	No
Community involvement throughout the implementation of the plan	Yes	Unknown
Planning process used as a tool to organize neighborhoods without associations	Yes	No
Task Force selected or approved by City representative or elected official	No	Yes
Involvement of City Staff throughout the entire process	No	Yes
Support from the City Council person to initiate the plan	Not necessarily	Yes

Finally, The City of Dallas PUD released their draft neighborhood-led planning policy for community input on March 8th, 2022, to the Comprehensive Land Use Planning Committee.

The Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination is reviewing their proposed policy and coming up with a counter proposal that removes barriers to potential participation in the process. Future research on how the policy is ultimately crafted and the consequent reception of the policy by the community will be important.

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