

NEW BOUNDARIES OF URBAN GOVERNANCE: AN ANALYSIS OF PHILADELPHIA'S UNIVERSITY CITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

*Thomas J. Vicino**

I. INTRODUCTION

Formerly a “first suburb” of Philadelphia, University City is a neighborhood situated west of downtown Philadelphia.¹ It is today one of the most diverse areas of the metropolitan area in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, and socioeconomic status. University City is home to two major research universities, the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) and Drexel University (Drexel), which provide an immense economic base for the neighborhood in the scientific, medical, and technological sectors. The neighborhood features distinct historic housing, tree-lined streets, and a variety of restaurants and cafés. Additionally, the neighborhood provides many options for local shopping, museums, and theaters. Just as metropolitan Philadelphia's economy and socioeconomic structure grew more diverse,² so did University City's.

In 1997, the University City District (UCD) was created to address a declining neighborhood infrastructure and combat crimes such as

* Assistant Professor of Political Science and core faculty of the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs at Northeastern University, Boston, MA; Ph.D., University of Maryland; M.P.P., University of Maryland. This paper was prepared for the Symposium on Business Improvement Districts and Evolution of Urban Governance, Philadelphia, PA, January 2010. I would like to extend thanks to Matt Bergheiser and the staff of the University City District; Richardson Dilworth and the Drexel University Center for Public Policy; the editors of the *Drexel Law Review*; and to the Department of Political Science and School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs at Northeastern University for institutional support.

1. See generally CAROLYN ADAMS ET AL., PHILADELPHIA: NEIGHBORHOODS, DIVISION, AND CONFLICT IN A POSTINDUSTRIAL CITY (1991) (describing the development of Philadelphia and its neighborhoods); Nancy Green Leigh & Sugie Lee, *Philadelphia's Space In Between: Inner-Ring Suburb Evolution*, 1 OPOLIS 13 (2006) (creating a spatial model for cities, including “inner ring suburbs” and “outer ring suburbs,” and evaluating the Philadelphia region); BERNADETTE HANLON ET AL., CITIES AND SUBURBS: NEW METROPOLITAN REALITIES IN THE US 85-111 (2010) (modeling the intricacies of metropolitan areas).

2. See, e.g., Carolyn Adams, *The Philadelphia Experience*, 551 ANNALS AM. ACAD. POL. & SOC. SCI. 222-34 (1997).

theft and burglary.³ The UCD's developmental moment occurred when the neighborhood's anchor educational institutions—Penn, Drexel, and University of the Sciences—contributed to its creation. In 2001, the organization achieved its goal to be revenue positive, and today it is a mature and healthy organization.⁴ The UCD's founding board of directors⁵ charged the organization with the creation and implementation of a major capital improvement plan. The developmental pace continues as the UCD further implements its capital improvements. The UCD faces a crossroad as it begins to chart and plan for its second decade.⁶

In this Case Study, I analyze and evaluate the UCD's "developmental moment." Part II presents the context of the UCD and discusses the demographic characteristics, the challenges and opportunities, and the agency connections to other local institutions. Part III reviews the history of the development of the UCD. Part IV examines the developmental moment in the creation of the UCD. Part V looks at the current state of affairs. Part VI provides an overall evaluation of the UCD. Finally, Part VII offers concluding thoughts.

II. CONTEXTUALIZING THE UCD: A PORTRAIT OF WEST PHILADELPHIA

The demography of University City is diverse on multiple measures. Population growth has remained stagnant since the early 1990s.⁷ In 2008, the UCD included 46,876 people, or 3.2% of Phila-

3. See JOHN KROMER & LUCY KERMAN, WEST PHILADELPHIA INITIATIVES: A CASE STUDY IN URBAN REVITALIZATION 7, 21 (2004), available at http://www.community-wealth.org/_pdfs/articles-publications/anchors/report-kromer.pdf. The UCD is an area of 2.4 square miles that is located to the west of Center City just across the Schuylkill River. Specifically, the northern boundary is Spring Garden Street (to 40th Street); the southern boundaries are Civic Center Boulevard, University Avenue, and Woodland Avenue; the eastern boundaries are 29th Street and the Schuylkill River; and the western boundary is 50th Street. See UNIV. CITY DIST., THE UNIVERSITY CITY REPORT CARD 2009, at 4 (2009), available at http://www.universitycity.org/_files/docs/2009_ucd_reportcard.pdf [hereinafter UCD REPORT CARD 2009].

4. See UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 3.

5. The UCD's board of directors is composed of twenty-five members that represent local institutions in the neighborhood. For the current composition of the board, see *Administrative Staff & Board*, UCD, <http://www.universitycity.org/about/staff> (last visited Nov. 8, 2010).

6. A long history of socioeconomic and political conditions within Philadelphia have led to the creation of similar organizations. See, e.g., SAM BASS WARNER, JR., THE PRIVATE CITY: PHILADELPHIA IN THREE PERIODS OF ITS GROWTH 201-23 (2d ed. 1987).

7. See PHILA. CITY PLANNING COMM'N, THE PLAN FOR WEST PHILADELPHIA 41 tbl.12 (1994), available at <http://www.philaplanning.org/cpdiv/WPPpartThree.pdf> (last visited Sept. 26, 2010).

delphia's total population of 1,461,294.⁸ There were 16,919 households, 71.8% of which were non-family households and 28.2% of which were family households.⁹ The average household size was 2.01 persons.¹⁰ Approximately 33% of the population was White, 43% Black, 18% Asian, and 4% Hispanic or Latino.¹¹

University City provides a substantial employment base for not only the neighborhood, but also for the city and region. In 2008, there were 63,971 jobs located in the UCD.¹² The two largest sectors were educational services (42%) and healthcare services (27%).¹³ There were also over 50,000 students who attended five institutions of higher education, with nearly 12,000 students living in on-campus housing.¹⁴ These higher education institutions employed over 20,000 individuals.¹⁵ There are many employment and educational opportunities in these sectors; however, residential household income is very low and poverty levels remain high. In 2008, the UCD's median household income was estimated at \$24,577,¹⁶ while Philadelphia's was \$37,090.¹⁷ The state's median household income was \$50,702.¹⁸ Moreover, poverty was endemic—35% of the area, or 12,310 residents, lived in poverty, and in some parts of the neighborhood two-thirds lived in poverty.¹⁹ These socioeconomic indicators represent the contrasts of University City's demographic structure.

The UCD faces several problems and challenges, as well as opportunities. The primary problem is crime, and the challenge is main-

8. See UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 9.

9. *Id.*

10. *Id.*

11. *Id.* at 8.

12. *Id.* at 12.

13. *Id.*

14. *Id.* at 15.

15. *Id.*

16. See *id.* at 8.

17. *State and County Quickfacts: Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania*, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/42/42101.html>.

18. *Id.*

19. *American FactFinder*, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, <http://factfinder.census.gov/> (select "Data Sets" hyperlink; then click "Census 2000" and follow "Detailed Tables" hyperlink under "Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF4) - Sample Data"; then click "geo within geo"; then select "Census Tract" under "Show me all"; then select "Place" under "Within"; then select Pennsylvania under "Select a state"; then select "Philadelphia city" under "Select a place"; then select census tracts 76-79, 86-89, and 91-92, and click "Add"; then click "Next"; then select "PCT142. Poverty Status"; then click "Add"; then click "Next"; then click "Show Result").

taining safety in the neighborhood.²⁰ On average, from 1998 to 2006, there were 10,864 recorded crimes in University City (excluding homicide and rape) classified as “serious incidents.”²¹ Among those crimes, 2497 were robberies and aggravated assaults—in other words, nearly 7 serious incidents against persons on a daily basis, or 53 serious crimes committed against every 1000 residents in University City.²² Similarly, there were 8367 crimes classified as serious crimes against personal property.²³ Among those crimes, over half of them (4391 incidents) were thefts—nearly 12 serious incidents against personal property on a daily basis, or 94 serious personal property crimes committed against every 1000 residents in University City.²⁴ Serious crime incidents against residents and personal property alike remain one of the neighborhood’s most pressing public problems.

The second challenge in University City is the large disparity in socioeconomic status among residents and employees. Poverty is remarkably high throughout the neighborhood. According to the 2000 Census, 35% of residents had incomes below the poverty level.²⁵ This level was nearly three times that of the nation and 12 percentage points higher than the City of Philadelphia.²⁶ Likewise, in 2000, the UCD’s median household income averaged \$24,534 among the ten tracts that comprise the district.²⁷ In contrast, the national

20. Ann Mintz, Response to *Philadelphia BID Director Survey*, Ctr. for Pub. Policy, Drexel Univ. (Aug. 24, 2009) [hereinafter Mintz, *Survey Response*].

21. These data are based on the University of Pennsylvania Cartographic Modeling Lab’s Neighborhood Information System for Zip Codes 19104, 19139, and 19143. *Philadelphia NIS CrimeBase*, U. PA. CARTOGRAPHIC MODELING LAB., <http://cml.upenn.edu/crimebase/cbsuser/arearequest.asp> (select “Zipcodes” under “Choose a geography” menu; then select “Option B, Select areas from a List”; highlight and add zipcodes 19104, 19139, 19143; then click “Create Neighborhood Summary”) (last visited Nov. 8, 2010) [hereinafter *CrimeBase*].

22. *Id.*

23. *Id.*

24. *Id.*

25. See *American FactFinder*, *supra* note 19 (follow instructions provided *supra* note 19).

26. See Table DP-3. *Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000*, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU 3, <http://censtats.census.gov/data/US/01000.pdf> (last visited Sept. 29, 2010); BROOKINGS INST. CTR. ON URBAN & METRO. POLICY, PHILADELPHIA IN FOCUS: A PROFILE FROM CENSUS 2000, at 59, available at http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2003/11_livingcities_Philadelphia/philadelphia2.pdf.

27. *American FactFinder*, *supra* note 19 (select “Data Sets” hyperlink; then click “Census 2000”; and follow “Detailed Tables” hyperlink under “Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF4) - Sample Data”; then click “geo within geo”; then select “Census Tract” under “Show me all”; then select “Place” under “Within”; then select Pennsylvania under “Select a state”; then select “Philadelphia city” under “Select a place”; then select census tracts 76-79, 86-89, and 91-

median household income was \$41,994 and \$30,746 in the City of Philadelphia.²⁸ The low socioeconomic status of residents continues to be a challenge in University City.²⁹

The third challenge is a unique issue to neighborhoods with high concentrations of college students and employees of institutions of higher education. Approximately 50,000 students are enrolled in these institutions and an additional 20,000 employees work for them.³⁰ The neighborhood serves as the primary location for the region's most advanced medical center and ancillary hospitals. The concentration of these resources is both a blessing and a curse.³¹ For example, in the most recent recession, major universities experienced marked losses in their endowments.³² Such economic impacts have led to a variety of consequences, including large tuition and fee increases, hiring and salary freezes, fewer services, and stalled or canceled institutional infrastructure projects.³³ Thus, University City is especially prone to economic downturns and their impacts on the "eds and meds."

While BID's offer net contributions to urban public life, they also present trade-offs over issues of public accountability and socioeconomic equality.³⁴ The UCD is no exception. To meet its challenges, the UCD has substantial resources, including a 2009 budget of \$9.5 million—and University City presents many opportunities.³⁵ Also,

92, and click "Add"; then click "Next"; then select "PCT89. Median Household Income"; then click "Add"; then click "Next"; then click "Show Result").

28. See Table DP-3, *supra* note 26; BROOKINGS INST., *supra* note 26, at 57.

29. The author acknowledges that the large student population in University City may partially contribute to the general trends in the data about socioeconomic status. There are approximately 50,000 students, with 12,000 students in university or fraternity/sorority-related housing. UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 15. Double counting is discouraged, and the Bureau adheres to the principle of counting a person where he or she spends the most time. In Census 2010, the Bureau will survey all students and "address canvas" accordingly. See U.S. Census Bureau, *Counting College & University Residence Halls*, UNITED STATES CENSUS 2010, http://2010.census.gov/campus/pdf/GroupQuarters_CensusOnCampus.pdf (last visited Nov. 8, 2010).

30. UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 15.

31. See generally Carolyn Adams, *The Meds and Eds in Urban Economic Development*, 25 J. URB. AFF. 571 (2003) (discussing how medical and higher education institutions anchor neighborhoods, and noting that local and state policymakers in Philadelphia are shifting subsidy support away from these "centerpieces of urban economies").

32. See Goldie Blumenstyk, *Market Collapse Weighs Heavily on Endowments*, CHRON. HIGHER EDUC., Jan. 27, 2009.

33. See *id.*

34. See Richard Briffault, *A Government for Our Time? Business Improvement Districts and Urban Governance*, 99 COLUM. L. REV. 365, 475-77 (1999).

35. See UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 58.

there are a variety of opportunities with which it can confront its challenges. The anchor institutions provide phenomenal sources of cultural, social, and economic diversity. Lastly, the diverse neighborhood landscape provides many amenities for residents and potential residents. The housing stock, the green space, and the built environment allow the UCD to capitalize on these assets.

The UCD maintains a strong organizational structure to confront the problems and challenges of the neighborhood. The UCD generally connects with other organizations in the city such as Mt. Airy USA and Main Street Programs.³⁶ However, the UCD's development and success are partially based on its neighboring BID, the Center City District (CCD).³⁷ Formed in 1990, the CCD was the first BID in Philadelphia.³⁸ The UCD was modeled on the success of the CCD and works closely with the Philadelphia Police Department, the Streets and Commerce Departments, and the Main Streets Program.³⁹

In short, the context of the University City neighborhood is multifaceted. As one official summarized, "The resulting social dynamic is complex, exemplifying both the exciting diversity of 21st century America and deep-rooted societal challenges."⁴⁰

III. HISTORY OF THE UCD: NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIPS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION

The history of the UCD spans nearly fifteen years. Former Penn president Judith Rodin built strong relationships with community leaders and elected officials after a series of crimes raised awareness about public safety issues in University City during the 1990s.⁴¹ This focused public attention and spurred conversations about making the neighborhood safer and cleaner. Then, according to Paul Steinke, "Penn took the lead in forming the coalition that started the

36. See Mintz, *Survey Response*, *supra* note 20.

37. For information about the history and accomplishments of the nearby CCD, see CTR. CITY DIST., 2008-2012 PLAN & BUDGET FOR THE CENTER CITY DISTRICT 1 (2007), available at http://www.centercityphila.org/docs/2008_12planandbudget.pdf.

38. *Id.*

39. Mintz, *Survey Response*, *supra* note 20.

40. *Id.*

41. See Penn's *New Good-Neighbor Policy*, PHILA. BUS. J., Mar. 12, 1999, at 3.

UCD.”⁴² The UCD was created in response to a recognized crisis in the neighborhood.⁴³

The UCD was created as a special services district (SSD).⁴⁴ Unlike BIDs in Philadelphia, which are funded through mandatory property taxes, the UCD depends solely on voluntary contributions.⁴⁵ While the UCD is not formally a BID, its mission, organizational structure, and tasks function as a BID.⁴⁶ A similar example is the New Haven SSD in Connecticut.⁴⁷ Given the UCD’s status, the City of Philadelphia does not appoint the organization’s board members; rather, current board members elect incoming members. The UCD’s board is comprised of members from various sectors. Many board members came from other nonprofit institutions. A previous study estimates that 48% of the board members are from other nonprofit organizations, 24% of members are residents of University City, 20% are from small businesses in the neighborhood, and 8% are from public organizations.⁴⁸

Given the unique organizational status of the UCD, formal city council approval was not required; thus, there was not a formal chief legislative sponsor. Leaders from nonprofit institutions in the neighborhood created the UCD. These included leaders from the three largest institutions of higher education: Penn, Drexel, and University of the Sciences. The West Philadelphia Partnership,⁴⁹ envisioning an organization that could oversee the revitalization of at least a section of West Philadelphia, also joined the coalition to support the creation of the UCD. Amtrak, the United States Postal Service (USPS), surrounding public hospitals, and other public organizations also participated. These organizations contributed financially, and their leaders served on the Board of Directors for the

42. *Id.*

43. See Mintz, *Survey Response*, *supra* note 20.

44. UNIV. CITY DIST., UNIVERSITY CITY DISTRICT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT 2 (2008) [hereinafter STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT]. The UCD’s official status is a charitable “nonprofit,” and it is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization. See *id.*

45. *Id.* at 7.

46. SSDs function as a type of a BID. They have a more limited scope in function, service area, and revenue stream than larger BIDs.

47. See John P. Elwood, *Rethinking Government Participation in Urban Renewal: Neighborhood Revitalization in New Haven*, 12 YALE L. & POL’Y REV. 138, 138-83 (1994).

48. Göktuğ Morçöl & Patricia Patrick, *Business Improvement Districts in Pennsylvania: Implications for Democratic Metropolitan Governance*, 29 INT’L J. PUB. ADMIN. 137, 140 tbl.1 (2006).

49. The West Philadelphia Partnership is a community development organization (CDC). See Sheldon Hackney, *The University and Its Community: Past and Present*, 488 ANNALS AM. ACAD. POL. & SOC. SCI. 135, 142 (Nov. 1986).

UCD.⁵⁰ Since there were few businesses (commercial opportunities were not yet fully realized in University City), the private sector constituency had a limited role in the UCD's founding.⁵¹ Support for the creation of the organization was strong across these sectors, and there was no distinct opposition.

Several individuals were uniquely instrumental in the creation and shaping of the UCD. Most notably, John Fry, then an executive vice president at Penn charged with implementing the university's West Philadelphia initiatives, played a critical early role in charting the course of the UCD.⁵² Fry was credited with the vision to create the structure of the organization. Fry reached out to neighbors to form a network of partners in the neighborhood.⁵³ Fry defined the organization's initial focus on safety and cleanliness. Judith Rodin, Penn's president during the 1990s, committed the necessary funds as seed grants to get the organization mobilized and provided the institutional support to revitalize a disenfranchised urban neighborhood.⁵⁴ Drexel's then-President Constantine "Taki" Papadakis was also an early supporter and financial contributor to the UCD and a supporter of its mission.⁵⁵ Penn hired Jack Shannon, a former deputy director of commerce for the City of Philadelphia, and charged him with managing and coordinating the university's economic development in the neighborhood.⁵⁶ Shannon was credited with the foresight to purchase dilapidated houses, rehabilitate them, and then coordinate their resale with local residents and other private developers.⁵⁷

50. See UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 59.

51. Campus Apartments, Inc. and INTECH Construction, Inc. are two notable exceptions. Both are UCD partners, provide financial support annually, participate in a UCD summer job program, and have representatives on the UCD board of directors. *Id.* at 46, 50, 57, 59.

52. Before joining the University of Pennsylvania, John Fry served as president of Franklin & Marshall College. Fry became president of Drexel University in 2010. See *Fry Named President of Drexel University; Sue Washburn '73 to Chair Search Committee*, THE DIPLOMAT (Mar. 11, 2010), <http://thediplomat.fandm.edu/article/506>.

53. These neighbors included local residents as well as institutions in the public and non-profit sectors. See *An Interview with John Fry*, DAILY PENNSYLVANIAN (Mar. 5, 2002) <http://www.dailypennsylvanian.com/node/26039>.

54. See Judith Rodin, *The 21st Century Urban University: New Roles for Practice and Research*, 71 J. AM. PLAN. ASS'N. 237, 239-42 (2005).

55. On April 5, 2009, Papadakis died unexpectedly from an illness. See *Constantine Papadakis 1946-2009*, DREXEL U., <http://www.drexel.edu/papadakis/memorial/default.asp> (last visited Nov. 8, 2010).

56. See DAVID J. MAURRASSE, BEYOND THE CAMPUS: HOW COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FORM PARTNERSHIPS WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES 33 (2001).

57. See Samuel Hughes, *The West Philadelphia Story*, PA. GAZETTE, Nov. 1997, at 18, 20.

Various milestones were important in the history of the organization's creation. After the initial creation, a permanent, full-time staff was established and the board recruited an executive director, Paul Steinke.⁵⁸ Steinke had served successfully as a general manager at the city's largest business improvement district, the CCD.⁵⁹ He recruited additional UCD staff and formed the basic office structure. Within five years, the UCD achieved an independent revenue stream—a critical success for the sustainability of the organization. This revenue stream was based entirely on voluntary contributions from nonprofit institutions and private businesses in the neighborhood.⁶⁰ During this period, Steinke helped the organization grow beyond the initial funding commitments from Penn and Drexel.⁶¹ These two milestones impacted the developmental moment of the organization and will now be explored.

IV. URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN WEST PHILADELPHIA: THE CREATION OF THE UCD

In 1997, the UCD was forced to overcome many long-established perceptions and realities about life in and around West Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Police Department bombed a series of row houses on May 13, 1985, to capture members of the group MOVE,⁶² resulting in the death of eleven residents, including five children, and the destruction of sixty-one houses.⁶³ The infamous bombing and the long-term resultant structural damage and disinvestment on Osage Avenue remain a fresh memory for many residents—it is one of the symbols of Philadelphia's urban decay.⁶⁴ Later, during the 1990s, graffiti, looting, trash, and crime continued to grow worse.⁶⁵

The neighborhood's slow deterioration since the city's pinnacle around the middle of the twentieth century was the result of many

58. See *Special Services: Digging into a New District*, PA. CURRENT, Jan. 28, 1998, available at <http://www.upenn.edu/pennnews/current/1998/012898/Steinke.html>.

59. *Id.*

60. *Id.*

61. *Id.*

62. The MOVE Organization is a black liberation group founded by leader John Africa in Philadelphia. The organization's history played an important role in the urban development of Philadelphia. See HIZKIAS ASSEFA & PAUL WAHRHAFTIG, THE MOVE CRISIS IN PHILADELPHIA: EXTREMIST GROUPS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION 3-18 (1990).

63. See, e.g., Martha T. Moore, *1985 Bombing in Philadelphia Still Unsettled*, USA TODAY, May 11, 2005, at A4.

64. See *id.*

65. See KROMER & KERMAN, *supra* note 3, at 8.

interrelated factors that stemmed from inequalities along race and class divisions, as well as public policies that supported neighborhood disinvestment and suburbanization.⁶⁶ Commenting on the condition of University City in the 1990s, Penn President Judith Rodin declared, “[T]his is a crucial moment to act. Urban universities need to figure out a way to enhance and revive and reaffirm urbanism as a critical feature of American life We are all stakeholders in the future of Philadelphia. And it’s critical.”⁶⁷

Rodin’s call to action included the support of Penn, and later Drexel, for the development of the UCD. The new district’s mission was to “build effective partnerships to maintain a clean and safe environment and to promote, plan and advocate for University City’s diverse, urban community.”⁶⁸ University officers at Penn and Drexel crafted a vision for a district that could harness public and private resources to make University City a regional hub for technology, research, higher education, and health care, while also capitalizing on the neighborhood’s historic housing stock, its vibrant commercial and cultural base, and its public transportation network. To complement the district’s mission and vision, Rodin and Penn Provost Stanley Chodorow earmarked university funds to establish *The Urban Agenda – Penn in Philadelphia* as one of the university’s primary academic priorities.⁶⁹ Lastly, the *West Philadelphia Initiative* was implemented.⁷⁰ Penn’s *West Philadelphia Initiative* was an initiative that began in the Office of the President.⁷¹ The initiative stated what Penn was *not* going to do:

- [Penn] would never again expand [its] campus to the west or north into residential neighborhoods. [Penn] would expand to [the] east, which was made up entirely of abandoned buildings and commercial real estate.

66. See generally THOMAS SUGRUE, *THE ORIGINS OF THE URBAN CRISIS: RACE AND INEQUALITY IN POSTWAR DETROIT* 259–71 (1996) (chronicling the rise and fall of Detroit after World War II); ROBERT A. BEAUREGARD, *WHEN AMERICA BECAME SUBURBAN* 1–69 (2006) (describing the simultaneous rise of suburbs and decline of industrial cities in America after World War II); JON C. TEAFORD, *THE METROPOLITAN REVOLUTION: THE RISE OF POST-URBAN AMERICA* 5–30 (2006) (providing a broad national view of metropolitan development in America since World War II); Thomas J. Vicino, *The Political History of a Postwar Suburban Society Revisited*, 6 HIST. COMPASS 364, 364–88 (2008) (charting public policies leading to the rise of a suburban society in America).

67. See Hughes, *supra* note 57, at 20.

68. See STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT, *supra* note 44.

69. See Hughes, *supra* note 57, at 20.

70. See *id.*

71. See KROMER & KERMAN, *supra* note 3, at 9.

- [Penn] would not act unilaterally. Instead, [Penn] would candidly discuss what [it] could do with the community, and [it] would operate with transparency.
- [Penn] would not promise long-term financial assistance. Instead, [Penn] would invest heavily in the short-term to leverage these investments by stimulating major longer-term investments by the private and public sectors.⁷²

As part of the initiative, Penn provided financial support to the UCD to carry out these commitments jointly.⁷³ The initiative was to aid in the redevelopment of the University City neighborhood, through a variety of measures: (1) make the neighborhood clean, safe, and attractive, with a variety of new interventions; (2) stimulate the housing market; (3) encourage retail development by attracting new shops, restaurants, and cultural venues that were neighborhood friendly; (4) spur economic development by directing university contracts and purchases to local businesses; and (5) improve the public schools.⁷⁴

In 2001, the UCD Board of Directors appointed Eric T. Goldstein as the new executive director.⁷⁵ Then, in 2005, the board appointed another executive director, Lewis Wendell.⁷⁶ In 2009, Matthew Bergheiser was appointed as the most recent executive director.⁷⁷ The tenure of the UCD's top leader has been approximately three years. The previous leaders left the organization satisfied with their progress and the future course of the UCD. Each left to pursue new challenges and interests.⁷⁸

72. Rodin, *supra* note 54, at 240. The initiative's commitments were formulated based upon a long history of Penn's growth and development in the University City neighborhood, which was not always welcomed by neighborhood residents. *See id.* at 239.

73. In 2009, Penn provided \$2.4 million to the UCD as part of this initiative. *Penn's Local Commitment*, PENN, <http://www.upenn.edu/campus/westphilly/> (last visited Nov. 8, 2010).

74. *See* STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT, *supra* note 44.

75. *See UCD Executive Director: Mr. Goldstein*, 48 U. PA. ALMANAC 6, Oct. 2, 2001, available at <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/v48/n06/Goldstein.html>.

76. *See Lewis Wendell: University City District Executive Director*, 51 U. PA. ALMANAC 25, Mar. 22, 2005, available at <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v51/n25/lw.html>.

77. *See UCD: Matthew Bergheiser*, 56 U. PA. ALMANAC 2, Sept. 8, 2009, available at <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v56/n02/bergheiser.html>.

78. Lewis Wendell departed to pursue family and other interests in New York. *See* Nicole Contosta, *Lewis Wendell, UCD's Third Executive Director, To Leave in June*, U. CITY REV., Nov. 26, 2008, at 1, 5, available at <http://ucreview.com/lewis-wendell-ucds-third-executive-director-to-leave-in-june-p1114-1.htm>. Eric T. Goldstein departed to pursue "other professional challenges." *See University City District Head Resigning*, PHILA. BUS. J., Aug. 23, 2004.

Two challenges stand out in the implementation of the UCD's mission: making University City clean and safe, and finding enough revenue sources to become a sustainable organization. Eric Goldstein, the UCD's second executive director, commented that the "[UCD is] first and foremost clean and safe, and you can't do anything with a neighborhood that isn't clean and safe."⁷⁹ The UCD identified four areas of concentration—cleaning, safety, marketing, and neighborhood initiatives—upon which the organization has remained focused. In terms of revenue, the UCD budget has grown from \$4.3 million in 2001 to over \$9.5 million in 2009⁸⁰ through vigorous fundraising and successful grant applications. Yet revenue remains an annual challenge since the UCD does not have the power to tax.

The UCD carries out numerous evaluations to benchmark neighborhood improvements. The results are reported annually in the *UCD Report Card*,⁸¹ and quarterly through *The Quest Newsletter*.⁸² Electronic updates are provided to neighborhood stakeholders such as residents and local businesses via email through *University City ENews*.⁸³ The UCD provides visitors and residents with basic information about programs and services through additional publications such as the *University City Visitor's Guide*, *UCD Program Brochure*, and the *University City International Dining Guide*.⁸⁴

V. CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

Out of the total UCD 2009 budget of \$9,589,348,⁸⁵ the organization allocated over one-third (35.5%, or \$3,404,219) for infrastructure programs such as streetscapes, landscapes, and public art; 17.2%, or \$1,649,368, for maintenance; and 16.4%, or \$1,572,653, for security and public safety initiatives, including private security patrol and

79. See Natalie Kostelni, *University City Touts Its Assets*, PHILA. BUS. J., June 25, 2004.

80. See UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 58.

81. This is an annual publication that provides measureable results on a variety of social, economic, and well-being metrics. Since 2005, the annual *Report Card* has provided the results of the UCD's collection and analysis of economic and demographic data in the neighborhood. See generally *id.* (noting that residents have access to trends in population, employment and labor force, commercial development, housing, transportation, and arts and entertainment).

82. *Id.* at 54.

83. See *University City Community Enews*, UCD, <http://www.universitycity.org/publications/university-city-email-newsletter> (last visited Nov. 8, 2010).

84. UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 54.

85. *Id.* at 58.

surveillance equipment.⁸⁶ Smaller budget items assisted the UCD in carrying out marketing, shuttle service for students, administration, and payroll.⁸⁷ Grants accounted for approximately 44.7% of the budget, and board member contributions provided an additional 40.6%.⁸⁸ The UCD has 12 full-time and 3 part-time administrative staff, 41 “safety ambassadors,” 27 public space maintenance staff, and approximately 500 volunteers.⁸⁹

In the Philadelphia BID Director Survey, the UCD (consistent with its mission) ranked aesthetics (including litter clean-up, sanitation, graffiti abatement, and public art) and public safety as most important; business creation and retention, and collaboration with civic and community groups as moderately important; and community development and entertainment activities of little importance.⁹⁰ According to the UCD, marketing and image development are considered a high priority.⁹¹

As the UCD approaches the midpoint of its second decade with a steady flow of capital, it has started to focus on capital projects, including a Commercial Corridor Program along Baltimore and Lancaster Avenues, the Market Street Streetscape Program to improve the Avenue of Technology, public transportation improvements, “gateways” for entries in neighborhoods, lighting for the entire district, greening efforts for the entire district, and public art.⁹² These projects are driven primarily to carry out the organization’s principal mission of keeping the district clean and safe.⁹³ The most western parts of the district continue to be in marginal condition, while the eastern parts of the district are considered stable.⁹⁴

86. *Id.*

87. *Id.*

88. *Id.*

89. Mintz, *Survey Response*, *supra* note 20.

90. *Id.*

91. *Id.*

92. See UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 51. The Commercial Corridor Program seeks “to increase the vitality of our commercial corridors by improving the retail mix and encouraging businesses to locate in our neighborhood shopping districts.” *Id.* at 50. Accordingly, a corridor manager for the UCD “oversees activities related to business recruitment and retention, physical improvements to façades and the public realm, and community outreach.” *Id.*

93. See *id.* at 3, 50.

94. See Mintz, *Survey Response*, *supra* note 20.

VI. EVALUATION: INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Based on the history and context of the UCD, strong planning and leadership had the greatest influence on the organization's developmental moments. In the course of its development, the UCD stayed on message and focused all efforts on a simple and clear mission: clean and safe.⁹⁵ According to the Philadelphia BID Director Survey, "The most important critical success factors were having a strong plan in place that was developed with significant, meaningful community involvement"⁹⁶ This allowed the organization to direct resources to attract new sources of revenue and to fundraise as needed.

Since the university leaders and other early supporters were able to form the UCD as a special services district, there was significant buy-in from their constituents. Unlike the neighboring CCD, whose revenue depended on the taxation of constituents, the UCD was developed on the model of a charitable nonprofit organization. In contrast to the CCD, the UCD is unable to levy a mandatory assessment fee or tax on residents, firms, or nonprofits based on its organizational status. As a result, the organization depends on donations, fundraising efforts, and grants to operate the UCD.⁹⁷ This lack of a permanent funding stream may eventually serve as constraint for the organization's development.

Penn, Drexel, and University of the Sciences have served as anchors and stabilizing forces in University City. Their leaders' consistent support to transform University City into a cleaner and safer neighborhood was key to the UCD's creation and growth. In particular, Rodin's vision for a fully transformed neighborhood set the agenda and created an open environment to allow others in the community to support the UCD initiatives.⁹⁸ Rodin's successor, Amy Gutmann, has maintained Penn's commitment.⁹⁹ Similarly, Drexel's President Papadakis shared the vision of economic development.¹⁰⁰ The untimely, sudden death of Papadakis left an opening in the university's chief leader, and on March 10, 2010, the univer-

95. *Id.*

96. *Id.*

97. *Id.*

98. See Rodin, *supra* note 54, at 242-45.

99. See *The Penn Compact: Engaging Locally*, PENN, <http://www.upenn.edu/president/penn-compact/engaging-locally> (last visited Nov. 8, 2010).

100. See *Papadakis Pushed Drexel to New Heights*, PHILA. BUS. J., Apr. 10, 2009, at 32.

sity appointed John Fry as the new president.¹⁰¹ The Board of Trustees of Drexel commented, "As Drexel's 14th president, Fry will oversee a university that underwent transformational growth under the presidency of the late Papadakis."¹⁰² Additionally, it noted, "At Penn, Fry built a coalition of non-profit, business, neighborhood and governmental support for a multi-pronged strategy to address the key challenges facing the University City neighborhood of West Philadelphia. In a comparatively short period of time, residential property values went up significantly, the crime rate declined dramatically, and hundreds of millions of dollars were invested in commercial infrastructure and economic development."¹⁰³ Based on these observations, Drexel's leadership believes that Fry will maintain the enthusiasm and support for the UCD and University City's future.

Various factors could have changed the course of the UCD. The district could have modeled its organization on the CCD, which would have created a permanent revenue stream, although it may have stifled the growth of local business. Another factor was that the neighborhood's socioeconomic condition was in significantly worse condition than the CCD. The creation of an SSD provided an outlet for neighborhood investment in University City. Alternatively, without the UCD, residents and institutions in University City may have been left to confront issues of urban disinvestment without support. Had the leaders of the universities not collaborated and developed a unified strategy, today's UCD might be different.

Similarly, if the leaders of the universities had made different choices, the outcome would likely have been worse. The presidents of Penn and Drexel set the agenda for the UCD and made it the key administrative issue for their constituents. Constituents included students, staff, faculty, neighborhood residents, and the regional population.¹⁰⁴ These institutions serve a diverse set of constituents, and not all of them have an immediate vested interest in the renewal of University City. For instance, commuter students leave at night; patients are temporary guests; and sightseers rarely stay for an extended period. Therefore, the burden to reinvest in the neighbor-

101. See *John A. Fry Named Drexel University's 14th President*, DREXEL U. (Mar. 10, 2010), <http://www.drexel.edu/fry/release.asp>.

102. *Id.*

103. *Id.*

104. See UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 8-9 (describing the demographic composition of the UCD).

hood rested squarely on the institutions that made University City their home.

The rationale to create improvement districts is a response to a decentralized and fragmented system of local government. In this case, the City of Philadelphia's limited resources were not focused on neighborhood renewal. Cities like Philadelphia may have a "unitary interest" to invest in their downtowns, which might create more economic development to sustain an entire city.¹⁰⁵ The gains from downtown investment might then improve the status of the entire city. However, at times, this comes at the expense of a city's outlying, and often disenfranchised, neighborhoods. In the context of Philadelphia's UCD, the creation, growth, and development of this improvement district is a response to the city's unitary interest.¹⁰⁶

VII. CONCLUSION: PROSPECTS AND CROSSROADS IN UNIVERSITY CITY

In 1997, the UCD was created as an SSD to confront the social, economic, and physical condition of Philadelphia's neighborhood located west of Center City. The developmental moment occurred when civic leaders in University Center joined together to support the creation of the district. The presidents and executive staff of Penn, Drexel, and University of the Sciences were joined by Amtrak and the USPS, as well as residents, to create a dialogue for the district's birth. These leaders also set the agenda and created a welcoming environment for residents and other constituents to join in the renewal of the neighborhood.

The UCD established its primary mission as becoming safe and clean. All of its activities and projects supported this mission. The neighborhood's institutions of higher education played a critical role in the first five years of the UCD by providing financial support. As the UCD approaches the midpoint of its second decade, its organizational structure is well-established. This has enabled the organiza-

105. See generally PAUL E. PETERSON, CITY LIMITS 19-38 (1981) (discussing cities' economic and status interests and their effect on local government policies).

106. See Morçöl & Patrick, *supra* note 48, at 162 (effectively concluding that Pennsylvania's BIDs "have become important actors in the increasingly complex governance processes in metropolitan areas. They were enabled by the state and created by municipal governments in response to problems such as economic decline and increasing crime rates in urban areas, but they are not tools to implement governmental policies. They can be more appropriately conceptualized as participants in metropolitan governance.").

tion to begin major capital improvements projects focused on the programmatic areas related to marketing and communications, neighborhood initiatives, public safety, and public space maintenance. The UCD has achieved its goals and remains mission-focused as a quasi-public organization in form and function.

TABLE 1: Profile of Higher Education Enrollments and Employees¹⁰⁷

Institution	Employees	Total Enrollment	On Campus Housing
University of Pennsylvania	16,108	24,107	7103
Drexel University ¹⁰⁸	3499	21,537	3847
University of the Sciences in Philadelphia	678	3000	825
Lincoln University Urban Center	n/a	600	n/a
The Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College	81	472	93
Community College of Philadelphia, West Campus	n/a	1331	0
TOTAL	20,366	51,047	11,868

107. See UCD REPORT CARD 2009, *supra* note 3, at 15.

108. Drexel University's total enrollment includes 1831 students on co-op experience and 3622 distance learning students. *Id.* at 14.

TABLE 2: Crime (All Serious Incidents) in University City, 1998–2006¹⁰⁹

Type of Crime	Number	Per Capita ¹¹⁰
All Serious Incidents ¹ (excluding rape and homicide)	10,864	232
All Serious Incidents against Persons (Robberies, Aggravated Assault)	2497	53
Robberies	1234	26
Aggravated Assault	1263	27
All Serious Property Incidents (Burglary, Theft, Auto Theft)	8367	178
Burglaries	1222	26
All Thefts	4391	94
Thefts from Auto	1368	29

TABLE 3: UCD Budget, 2009¹¹¹

Activity	Percent	Amount (\$)
Infrastructure Programs	35.5	3,404,219
Maintenance	17.2	1,649,368
Security and Public Safety	16.4	1,572,653
Other (LUCY Shuttle)	9.0	863,041
Administration and Overhead	8.7	834,273
Staff	7.5	719,201
Marketing	5.7	546,593
TOTAL	100.0	9,589,348

109. These data are based on the University of Pennsylvania Cartographic Modeling Lab's Neighborhood Information System for ZIP codes 19104, 19139, and 19143. See *CrimeBase*, *supra* note 21.

110. Per capita is based on the number of all serious incidents against persons per 1000 residents. This is computed as the number of incidents multiplied by the total population of the UCD, and then it is divided by 1000.

111. See Mintz, *Survey Response*, *supra* note 20, at 5.