# RETHINKING THE POLITICS OF DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

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**ABSTRACT:** *In the political science literature, downtown redevelopment has long been seen as the project of a region's economic elites. But in recent years, large corporations, banks, and department stores have in many cases abandoned central business districts, and downtowns are now more likely to be developed as centers of entertainment and culture, or as residential districts. This article posits that changing downtown land uses are accompanied by changes in the downtown influence structure, with nonprofit sector and real estate industry leaders now dominating downtown business organizations.*

Those interested in both the physical and political changes reshaping the downtowns of large American cities can find themselves engaged in two parallel conversations. In the first, found among urbanists from many fields as well as in the popular press, we learn that much of the new (e.g., post-1980) development in American city centers has been focused on activities we might characterize as "consumption"—professional sports, cultural institutions, themed shopping districts, and housing are now taking over areas once dominated by banks, corporate headquarters, and department stores. Downtowns, we learn, are now developed and marketed as mixed districts in which retail, housing, and entertainment may even come to overshadow traditional central business district (CBD) functions.

The second is a conversation mostly among political scientists and political sociologists, who have been interested in the various stakeholders (elected officials and bureaucrats; corporate leaders and peak business associations; neighborhood organizations) who have sought to shape downtown. In this narrative, business elites with a financial and symbolic stake in the economic health of the central business district began mobilizing in many cities during the 1940s and 1950s to protect their investments, which were in many cases thought to be "sunk" and immobile—Richard King Mellon, the Pittsburgh financier who mobilized resources behind the redevelopment of downtown Pittsburgh in the 1940s, explained his commitment to his city as an outgrowth of his business interests: "We have a lot of property here. We can't very well move out the banks" (Fitzpatrick, 2000). Business leaders worked with entrepreneurial mayors and development officials, leveraging federal urban renewal funds to shore up downtowns. Although in some cities these downtown-focused coalitions were eventually challenged by neighborhood-based groups seeking a more equitable share of public investment dollars, the basic political science

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narrative—that downtown development is the project of the city and region's most powerful economic elites—has not been revised.

But if downtown is now less a seat of corporate power and more a "place to play" (Fainstein & Judd, 1999), do these assumptions still hold? If indeed the value and use of downtown land has changed over the past four decades, would not that suggest that the nature and relative strength of downtown development interests would have shifted as well? This article posits that in many U.S. cities, downtowns are no longer the region's economic heart, and they are therefore unlikely to generate the sort of political power assumed in earlier political science studies. I study the players in peak, downtown-focused business organizations as a way to understand who in the business community is most engaged in downtown development issues, and to generate hypotheses about how further research could shed light on the relationship between the geography and the politics of the American downtown.

## Narrative One: The New Downtown is Fun!

> Whether for a leisurely walk next to the Reedy River Falls or a night of music and fast-paced entertainment, Downtown Greenville is the place to go for fun just about any day of the week.

*From the Greenville, South Carolina website*[1]

> Downtown is a great place to attend family friendly events, dine at one of the 170 plus restaurants, visit over 30 attractions and over 200 retail and service establishments. With over 17 new restaurants and 22 new retail stores that have opened since 2003, you owe it to yourself to come see what all the "fun" is about. Have fun in downtown St. Louis.

*From the Downtown St. Louis Partnership website*[2]

Over the past two decades, much of the new development in American downtowns has been the construction of cultural facilities, convention centers, and sports venues. Often these projects have been undertaken with the goal of encouraging tourism, seen by many economic development officials as an important new growth industry (Judd et al., 2003). In addition, city officials and business leaders have better recognized the competitive advantages of central cities for functions like culture and night-time entertainment, as downtowns can offer amenities (access to mass transit, a dense and historically interesting built environment) with which sprawling suburbs cannot easily compete. Downtowns are now marketed as exciting areas in which to be enriched (by museums and concert halls) and entertained (by professional sporting events and themed restaurants). Downtown, we learn from promotion groups, is now officially "fun."

In many downtowns, moreover, market-rate housing has become a major part of the built environment.[3] The growing popularity of market-rate downtown housing is by now even reflected in census data, which show an increase in downtown populations, with more downtown residents who are college educated and who own their homes (Birch, 2005; Perlman, 1998).[4] The trend toward renovating industrial lofts into living space has been underway, at least in some cities, for several decades (Zukin, 1982). Now even office buildings have been repackaged for residential use, as apartments are seen as ways to rescue obsolete, class B office stock in cities like Denver, Tampa, St. Louis (Sharoff, 2001), and Los Angeles (Bergsman, 2004), where a recent study found continued increases in residential population, alongside decline in downtown employment (DiMassa, 2007).

New entertainment spaces and residential districts are often heralded (by city officials and by the local press, if not always by academics——see Fainstein & Judd, 1999; Hannigan, 1998) as signs of a downtown "revival" or "comeback." This narrative of revival, however, overshadows (and indeed, is often intended to overshadow) the key underlying trend found in many American metropolitan areas: downtown is no longer the center of the region's economic life. The traditional CBDs are no longer necessarily their region's largest office markets or their largest employment nodes. In most metropolitan areas, a majority of jobs are found well outside the traditional CBD (Glaeser & Kahn, 2001). And only a few downtowns continue to dominate their metro area office markets. In the cities studied by Lang (2003), traditional downtowns contained about one-third of the area's office space. He and other sources (see, for example, Center City District, 2006) note wide variation between more centralized MSAs (New York, Boston, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, and Chicago are examples) and the most decentralized areas (Las Vegas, Phoenix, Miami, and Houston) where CBDs may contain less than 20% of the region's office space (Center City District, 2006). Both Lang and the Center City District find that the downtown share of the office market is decreasing over time. For example, Philadelphia contained just 27% of its region's office space in 2005, which was down from 41% in 1993—a reflection of the much faster pace of growth in its suburbs (Center City District, 2006).

CBD office space had also, traditionally, been the most expensive in the region (indeed, urban economic theory's "bid-rent curve" assumes that the highest land values will always be at the center (Alonso, 1960)). That has also changed. Quite often, newer, peripheral office developments are pricier than the average center city building. The most expensive offices in Atlanta are found in the Buckhead neighborhood (within the city limits, but miles from the downtown); the Philadelphia region's costliest offices are on the suburban Main Line (Center City District, 2006).

And that's why we find office buildings converted into condominiums, banks renovated into theaters, and 50-acre football stadium/parking complexes usurping commercial districts: too few companies are compelled to be downtown, leaving space for more land-intensive and less profitable uses (Ford, 2003). The trend toward big-footprint projects like stadiums and conventions centers in downtowns, or of converting office buildings into loft apartments, may be framed by city boosters as signs of an urban resurgence, but in some fundamental way they indicate that a city's downtown has lost its function as the key economic hub and real estate powerhouse of the region.

## NARRATIVE 2: DOWNTOWN AS THE CENTER OF POWER

These changes in land use and economic geography would seem to presage fundamental changes in the urban political economy, but students of urban politics have not yet begun to grapple with their implications. Although there are political scientists who find new ways to write about downtown development (Fainstein, 1994; McGovern, 1998; Turner, 2002), the basic political science downtown development paradigm first developed decades earlier has not been questioned: the redevelopment of the city's center is seen as the project of the most essential regional economic stakeholders who will reap immediate material and longer-term symbolic advantages from a robust urban core. They work in coalition with elected officials and appointed redevelopment directors who gain clear political advantage from their association with the city's dominant economic interests. Much of the urban political science literature on downtown development has been an exploration of these stakeholders and their mutual interests in the physical redevelopment of the city's center (Dahl, 1961; Mollenkopf, 1983; Salisbury, 1964; Wolfinger, 1974; Stone, 1989).

### The Peak Business Association: Downtown Development Catalyst

The peak downtown business association has been at the center of downtown development since emerging in the 1940s (Fogelson, 2001), and it has been the focus of much urban development literature. The best known and most successful of these organizations played a dominant role in shaping policies to redevelop their downtowns. Some (e.g., Central Atlanta Progress) did so with an explicitly downtown focus; others (Greater Philadelphia Movement, Allegheny Conference on Community Development) were regional organizations that gave priority to a downtown redevelopment agenda. To ensure their effectiveness, many of these organizations restricted membership to the most prominent businesses (in contrast to Chambers of Commerce that represent all businesses) and required the participation of a company's CEO.

In cities like Boston (Mollenkopf, 1983), San Francisco (McGovern, 1998; Mollenkopf, 1983); Atlanta (Stone, 1989), and Cleveland (Swanstrom, 1985) these groups shaped urban renewal policies and influenced local electoral politics, using these organizations as vehicles with which to "look more broadly, both in time and area," than other local interests were able to do (Stone, 1989, p. 21). The Bay Area Committee, formed in San Francisco in 1946, included the Chief Executives of 23 of the 27 regional Fortune 500 companies, as well as the heads of the four major banks and two newspapers (McGovern, 1998; Mollenkopf, 1983). In Pittsburgh, extensive infrastructure improvement and downtown redevelopment came about when a politically connected mayor, David Lawrence, joined forces with local business leadership, led by financier Richard King Mellon (Ferman, 1996; Sbragia, 1989). Redevelopment in downtown Milwaukee was spearheaded by the Greater Milwaukee Committee, whose membership, according to its 1955 annual report, "owned or managed businesses representing one-fourth of the city's total assessed value of business property" (Norman, 1989, p. 184). Either these business leaders literally invested in downtown, by dint of their ownership of its real estate, or they depended on getting customers/clients to come to downtown locations, or they would derive symbolic benefit from a robust downtown. In all the scholarly work on this topic, there is a stated or implied link between a business firm's concerns with profitability, its presence in or near a city's central business district, and its progrowth activism.

These peak organizations have been identified in the political science literature as central to the project of downtown development, both because they symbolized the collective interests of the most powerful economic actors, and because, by mobilizing this power into an organizational vehicle, they could have real impact on a city's electoral politics and on its redevelopment policies. They would seem, therefore, to be useful institutions to study if one wishes to see whether the private interests guiding downtown development have changed over the years. Are these economic interests still mobilized into peak organizations engaged in downtown development? If not, what do changes in private sector downtown leadership tell us about larger changes in the urban political economy?

## TRACKING DOWNTOWN CHANGES THROUGH PEAK ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP

To understand how urban business leadership has changed, and to suggest the implications of these changes for downtown politics, I have examined the leadership of three such peak organizations in earlier decades. These are the Greater Philadelphia Movement (GPM, formed in 1948), the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC, formed in 1956), and Central Atlanta Progress (CAP, formed in 1941, when it was called Central Atlanta Improvement Association). (See Appendix B for further discussion of the choice of cases.) I have sought to identify the companies represented on these boards (which I have labeled "leadership companies"), ascertain the sectors in which these companies operated, and discover whether those companies are still in operation (and still in operation in those cities). Although these companies hardly represent any kind of random sample of locally based companies, it is fair to say that these organizations generally have represented the largest, most politically active companies in the area (the Greater Baltimore Committee, for

**TABLE 1**

**Percentage of GPM (1960, 1965); GBC (1962), and CAP (1970) Members Still Active in Region in 2006**

| Peak Org. | No. of Firms in City | No. of Firms in Suburbs | No. of Firms Gone | No. of Whereabouts Unknown |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| GPM | 11 (31%) | 4 (11%) | 13 (37%) | 7 (19%) |
| GBC | 13 (15%) | 11 (13%) | 28 (31%) | 35 (41%) |
| CAP | 14 (56%) | 0 | 11 (44%) | 0 |

*Note.* Totals for all three groups: 38 (26%); 15 (10%); 52 (35%); 42 (29%).

example, specifically sought to engage the heads of the region's largest one hundred businesses). I have used the board of directors or members lists for the years available: 1960 and 1965 for GPM, 1962 for GBC, and 1970 for CAP (Appendix A includes a list of all the "leadership companies" studies; for a more extended explanation of these methods and their limitations, please see Appendix B).[5]

As Table 1 indicates, 26% of these "leadership companies" from the 1960–1970 period were still present in their region or city in 2006; 35% have either gone out of business, been bought out by another corporation headquartered elsewhere, or moved out of the region. It is quite likely that all or most of the 42 (29%) firms for which I could find no information are also defunct, so the percentage of firms represented on these boards that are no longer in the region is likely to be well over 50%. Atlanta has had the highest retention rate, which may reflect the fact that the board list is more recent, but could also speak to the greater economic success of Atlanta, which today has twice as many Fortune 500 headquarters as either Philadelphia or Baltimore, even though it has a smaller population than either of those cities.

The "leadership companies" have been broken down by sector in Table 2. "Other professional service" firms include advertising, accounting, and architecture/engineering. Finance and insurance includes all manner of banks, investment firms, and insurance agencies. The admittedly clumsy "miscellaneous corporate" category includes all those companies not described in any other category (these run the gamut from manufacturers to energy producers to communications and transportation firms to retail establishments).

**TABLE 2**

**Downtown Leadership, 1960–1970**

| | Atlanta, Baltimore, and Philadelphia | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Central Atlanta Progress, 1970 n = 25 | Greater Baltimore Committee, 1962 n = 87 | Greater Philadelphia Movement, 1960 and 1965 n = 36 |
| Real estate | 0 | 6 (7%) | 0 |
| Law | 1 (4%) | 2 (2%) | 8 (22%) |
| Other professional services | 1 (4%) | 9 (10%) | 2 (6%) |
| Finance and insurance | 10 (40%) | 31 (36%) | 7 (20%) |
| Miscellaneous corporate | 13 (50%) | 37 (43%) | 15 (42%) |
| Nonprofit and education | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Public | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other/cannot determine | 0 | 2 (2%) | 2 (6%) |

**TABLE 3**

**Stability of 1960–1970 Leadership Firms by Sector (of Firms Whose Sector Could be Determined), GPM, GBC, and CAP Combined**

| | In Region (City or Suburb), 2006 | Not in Region (Moved, Merged or Went Out of Business) | Fate Cannot be Determined |
|---|---|---|---|
| Real Estate ($n = 6$) | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Law ($n = 12$) | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Other prof. services ($n = 11$) | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| Finance and insurance ($n = 47$) | 14 | 17 | 16 |
| Misc Corporate ($n = 22$) | 10 | 9 | 3 |
| Manufacturing ($n = 28$) | 9 | 11 | 8 |
| Retail ($n = 13$) | 1 | 11 | 1 |

In Table 3, we see that some sectors have had a more stable presence than others. Law firms seem to be the most likely to have remained intact in their cities, especially in Philadelphia, where eight of the eleven companies from the GPM lists that are still active in Philadelphia are law firms.

In all three cities, the boards of the 1960s and 1970s were dominated by the insurance, banking, financial, and "miscellaneous corporate" sectors (Table 4 gives further break down of the dominant corporate sectors found in this category in each city).

On the other hand, the "miscellaneous corporate" category has shown larger decline. First, industrial producers and energy firms had been part of the downtown leadership in earlier decades—both Philadelphia and Baltimore groups had included representatives from major regional subsidiaries of companies like Bethlehem Steel and General Electric, and local companies like Sun Oil. Although a few industrial producers remain in these regions (examples include Black and Decker in Baltimore), the decline in industrial employment since 1970, both nationally and in urban areas, has been documented (Harrison & Bluestone, 1982).

But some of the other companies in the "miscellaneous corporate" category represent sectors that, to both scholars and practitioners of an earlier era, seemed particularly place-bound. Local utilities and newspapers had played an important role in downtown growth coalitions (Logan & Molotch, 1987), their deep interest in promoting the local economic base clearly linked to the nature of their business. But even these companies have become less tied to central cities. First, both industries have been able to adjust to the realities of a more dispersed metropolitan region, and have developed their suburban client bases, becoming less dependent on downtown business. Moreover, deregulation, mergers, and acquisitions have changed the nature of both industries. Today, many utilities are part of regional conglomerates with less focus on particular

**TABLE 4**

**Most Frequently Represented Sectors in the "Miscellaneous Corporate Category," CAP, GBC, and GPM Boards, 1960–1970**

| | Atlanta | Baltimore | Philadelphia |
|---|---|---|---|
| Retail (department stores) | 4 | 7 | 2 |
| Energy/Utilities/Communication (local phone companies) | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Manufacturing | 3 | 23 | 10 |

central cities. Newspapers, similarly, are likely to be controlled by one of several national chains such as the McClatchy Company (which owns newspapers in 30 markets) or Gannett. Thus, the conditions in downtown Atlanta, or Philadelphia, or Chicago are simply not as significant a business factor for them as they had once been. Others in this category include transportation and communication companies, which have been affected by industry-wide sea changes since 1970. Local Bell Telephone companies have disappeared, as have regional rail lines such as Philadelphia's Reading or Baltimore's Western Maryland Rail.

The most strikingly transformed sector in this "miscellaneous corporate category" is retail, and specifically the once iconic downtown flagship department store. The presidents of these stores were often extremely active in shaping downtown development coalitions (Cohen, 2007), and heavily engaged in civic affairs, sponsoring parades in cities like New York and Detroit, and underwriting the costs of a museum in Newark. Their often large, elaborate downtown buildings were seen as emblematic of the identity of a city's center (Isenberg, 2004). Today, the list of remaining downtown flagship department stores is short indeed. Where a downtown houses a department store it is most likely part of a national chain such as Cincinnati-based Federated Department Stores, which over the years has bought up such downtown fixtures as Macy's, Bloomingdale's, and A&S (New York City); Rich's (Atlanta), Filene's (Boston), Marshall Field (Chicago), Goldsmith's (Memphis), Burdine's (Miami), and Strawbridge's (Philadelphia). As a result of this industry reshuffling, only one of the retailers whose heads had sat on these leadership boards is still in operation (Haverty's Furniture in Atlanta). The decline of the downtown department store is felt in the city's economy, in its downtown power structure, and in its built environment—in some cases flagship stores have simply been demolished (as was Hudson's in downtown Detroit, to the consternation of preservationists—see McGraw, 2002) or reused, as is the case of Muse's seven-story downtown Atlanta store, now loft apartments.

"Leadership companies" in the area of banking and insurance have been similarly depleted in our case study cities. The heads of local banks had been among the most eager participants of urban-renewal era downtown coalitions. These institutions surely seemed to be exceptionally place-bound. Federal regulations made it difficult for banks to operate beyond their local areas, so their fate seemed to be intertwined with the local economy and the value of local real estate. But deregulation has led to a consolidation in the banking industry, as those banks that managed to remain solvent have frequently been bought up by one of five or six national banking giants (Dymski, 1999). Whereas in the 1960s cities like Philadelphia and Baltimore would have been home to some eight or ten substantial, locally controlled banks, today such cities may have no locally controlled banks at all. Richard King Mellon's claim that he cannot "just move our banks," it turns out, was not completely accurate.

The local implications of these industry-wide changes can be found when we look at the fate of leadership companies in this sector. Of the financial institutions represented on the 1960–1970 boards, just 14 of the 47 are still active in their regions. These include a few insurance companies (although some are now part of larger "groups" based in New York or Europe) and a few financial service firms that have remained active. T. Rowe Price and Legg Mason, for example, are two large financial service groups that have remained headquartered in Baltimore. The banks represented on leadership boards, however, have been far less stable. The Greater Philadelphia Movement had six bank presidents on its board in 1960, representing the major local banks of that decade. By 2000 not one of those banks existed. In Baltimore, two of the banks whose presidents served on the Greater Baltimore Committee board in 1962 are still headquartered in Baltimore. The remaining six that could be traced have been bought up by banks in Atlanta, Buffalo, and Charlotte. Atlanta has been the beneficiary of some of this merger activity, as the Atlanta-based Suntrust has emerged as a national leader. Nonetheless, five other local banks have since been absorbed into either Bank of America or Wachovia, and another has been closed. In some cases, too, bank buildings are now put to uses that suggest the new function of the central city built environment: architecturally significant bank buildings in Philadelphia now house the Ritz-Carlton and Loews hotels; San Diego's First National Bank building has been converted to condominiums, and the former Western National and Eutaw Savings Banks in Baltimore now house the France-Merrick Performing Arts Center.

In sum, we see that the most economically dominant companies that had once spearheaded downtown redevelopment in Atlanta, Baltimore, and Philadelphia in the 1960s are largely gone (Holloway & Wheeler, 1991; Hodos, 2002). Apparently, the "place-based" economic interests whose downtown "sunk costs" made them appear as permanent fixtures of the downtown landscape a few decades ago were not as permanent as they had seemed. The literature focused on the urban renewal era could not have anticipated just how many core members of the downtown-based business groups would flee.

Of course, the loss of these particular firms in these particular industries need not suggest the economic decline of the central city—after all, these firms could well have been replaced by other firms in newly dominant industries, in which case the political base of downtown could, despite these changes, remain intact. But there are several reasons to suggest that this has not been the case.

## DOWNTOWN LEADERSHIP TODAY

If so many of the firms that had been engaged in downtown development and advocacy have disappeared, is there still a "downtown business interest" articulated in city politics? There is, but I would argue it represents different segments of the business community, and, perhaps related to these sectoral shifts, it organizes itself differently. Today's downtown coalitions are geographically narrower, represented by groups focused only on the downtown (although in some cases their board membership may overlap with the boards of regional groups). At the same time, they have extended their constituency to include nonprofit executives and public officials, very few of which could be found on the boards of 1960–1970.

These contrasts can best be seen by comparing downtown leadership boards of the earlier era with those active today. Ideally, I would have liked to accomplish this by comparing the board figures for GPM, GBC, and CAP from the 1960s–1970s, to those of 2006. I have indeed done this in the case of Atlanta. But in the cases of Philadelphia and Baltimore, a methodological problem emerged, one that is in itself very revealing of the political shifts in downtown leadership. Many of the peak business organizations identified with downtown advocacy in the 1950s and 1960s have either disappeared, or have shifted their focus to broader, regional issues like economic competitiveness, transportation, and education. Meanwhile, downtown-specific organizations have been created in many cities, and these have taken up the downtown-focused agenda first advocated by these earlier business groups. So, for example, the Greater Philadelphia Movement merged, transformed, emerged as Greater Philadelphia First in the 1980s, which in 2003 merged into the regional Chamber of Commerce (ironically, perhaps, as the group had originally formed with the goal of distinguishing the downtown-based corporate and banking concerns from those of regional industrialists—see Adams et al., 1991). By then, it had become largely focused on regional issues, such as encouraging foreign investment and regional cooperation (Hodos, 2002), with no focus on downtown development. But GPM had, in the late 1950s, spun off the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, intended to help implement the ambitious Society Hill urban renewal plan. The OPDC had ultimately extended its reach to the traditional CBD, renaming itself the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation. The CPDC is thus the real successor to the downtown mission of the Greater Philadelphia Movement.

**TABLE 5**

**Downtown Leadership, 2006**

| | Atlanta, Baltimore, Philadelphia | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Central Atlanta Progress/Atlanta Downtown Improvement District $n = 72$ | Downtown Partnership of Baltimore/Downtown Management District $n = 64$ | Center City District/Central Philadelphia Development Corporation $n = 56$ |
| Real estate | 18 (25%) | 16 (25%) | 15 (27%) |
| Law | 8 (11%) | 12 (19%) | 9 (16%) |
| Other professional services | 7 (10%) | 4 (6%) | 9 (16%) |
| Finance and insurance | 4 (6%) | 11 (17%) | 8 (16%) |
| Miscellaneous corporate | 28 (39%) | 4 (6%) | 5 (9%) |
| Nonprofit and education | 10 (14%) | 9 (14%) | 3 (5%) |
| Public | 6 (8%) | 8 (13%) | 1 (2%) |
| Other/cannot determine | 2 (3%) | 0 | 2 (4%) |

The Greater Baltimore Committee has remained active, but has dropped its downtown agenda, and today has a purely regional focus. The organization's website notes its historical role in spurring downtown development, but today: "The GBC's mission is to improve the business climate of the Baltimore region by organizing its corporate and civic leadership to develop solutions to the problems that affect the region's competitiveness and viability." Its current priorities are development of biotechnology industries; support for regional transportation; and support for minority business development.[6] Meanwhile, downtown businesses have created the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore to attend to their specific concerns. Although this organization has no "genetic" ties to the Greater Baltimore Committee, it would be the logical place to look for a picture of business leadership in the downtown. In other cities as well, older organizations that had included downtown development as part of a broader agenda have seemed to move in a regional direction while dedicated downtown groups have taken up the central city revitalization banner.[7]

Business leadership concerned with the downtown has thus, at least in some cities, shifted its organizational vehicle from corporate-based, peak business organizations that included citywide and regional interests to organizations more narrowly engaged in the development and maintenance of the CBD. Upon closer observation, it is clear that the business sectors represented by these organizations, and their organizational goals, have changed as well. Table 5 shows the sectoral breakdown of downtown group board members in 2006. Whereas the older organizations were dominated by corporations (including manufacturers and retailers), banks and insurance companies (see Table 2), board membership for the contemporary groups includes scant corporate representation. Atlanta is the exception to this trend; CAP's board still includes such local institutions as Coca-Cola, Delta Airlines, Turner Broadcasting, and BellSouth. Nonetheless, even in Atlanta many of these corporations seem to have lost some of their downtown Atlanta focus, sending vice presidents rather than CEOs to represent them. The local press has frequently commented on the diminished clout of CAP, noting its failure to see its favored projects through, and bemoaning the decline of civic leadership in the downtown (Salter & Scott, 1991; Saporta, 2000; Saporta, 2003). This is consistent with other literature, which suggests that as corporations stretch their geographic presence, they may become less engaged, economically or politically, in their headquarters city. As Kanter notes, "large businesses supplying global customers have weaker ties to specific regions" (2000, p.166), and most certainly have a reduced interest in the fate of the region's downtown.

In place of banks, corporations, and department stores, we see greater representation of the public and nonprofit sectors. The older boards had no public participation, and the only nonprofit representation was in Philadelphia, where both a construction union and the University of Pennsylvania were part of the leadership coalition. Today, in contrast, most downtown groups include several public representatives *ex officio*, suggesting a more formalized cooperation between private and public interests in downtown development and management.

We also see an increase in nonprofit representation, which includes universities, nonprofit hospitals, and cultural institutions. This suggests the greater importance of large nonprofits as economic actors: Universities and their medical centers are the largest private employers in Philadelphia, New Haven, and the San Francisco Bay Area (Strom, 2005; Wallack, 2005)—and unlike those Mellon-owned banks, they really *cannot* move. Major cultural institutions are increasingly embraced by downtown business leaders as key actors in economic development efforts, and there is now enormous ideological and organizational overlap between downtown booster groups, tourism promoters, and cultural advocates (Strom, 2003).

The dominant business sector on downtown boards today is the real estate industry. On all of today's boards, real estate interests (which include developers and leasing agents) represent approximately a quarter of all representatives. This percentage actually undervalues the importance of real estate to these organizations, however, as many of the law firms and "other professional service" firms (which include a number of architectural firms) are very closely tied to the real estate industry. The combined representation of real estate, nonprofit, and public sectors—three sectors virtually absent from the earlier boards—now comprises about half of the board in Atlanta (47%) and Baltimore (52%), and over a third in Philadelphia (35%). The constituency working for CBD development, at least as represented on peak business association boards, has clearly changed in ways that reflect the changing value and function of the downtown as productive economic space.

Today's downtown groups also rely on organizational and financial structures that were not found among urban renewal-era groups: the self-financed Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), which are state-enabled special assessment districts in which property owners pay toward the provision of enhanced public services in their district.[8] Today, nearly every downtown development group manages or has a dotted-line relationship to a BID; many downtown BIDS were formed at the urging of downtown organizations and their constituent businesses, no doubt, in some cases as a way to ensure a sufficient income stream to support the organization (Briffault, 1999). These groups, then, function largely as service organizations, collecting fees from local property owners in exchange for providing services, the most common of which include maintenance, façade and street improvements, and marketing (Mitchell, 2001).[9] BIDs and their services have become a key part of the mobilization of downtown interests, because these organizations can then keep a constituency together around the appeal of a service organization; with the special assessment powers they experience limited "free rider" problems (Briffault, 1999; Mitchell, 2001).

One does find variation among downtown groups and BIDs, with better-established organizations led by strong boards and/or experienced and knowledgeable directors playing roles beyond simple service provision.[10] The Center City group in Philadelphia does a great deal of research and planning (see their website, http://www.centercityphila.org/ for examples of their reports); the Downtown Seattle Association has been active in addressing the problems of affordable housing and homelessness in that city's downtown (Harrell, 2004; Slobodzian, 2005). In Charlotte the Center City Partners board, which unlike many downtown boards still includes many top corporate leaders, functions almost as the downtown planning and marketing arm of both the city and the corporate sectors; plans commissioned by the organization have in several instances been adopted as the official plan of the city. But most downtown groups today are no longer the vehicles of the region's top employers, so they have come to rely more on the skills of their staff (the directors of the downtown groups in both Philadelphia and Seattle have been with their organizations many years, and are well-known and respected figures in political, business, and academic circles), and more generally the professionalization of downtown promotion and management.[11]

## THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW DOWNTOWN

### How and Why the New Downtown Coalition is Different

It is clear that the economic base of the downtown leadership has changed, and it is safe to say that downtown is no longer a primary focus of the largest regional economic interests. What is less clear is whether that has an impact on the ability of downtown interests to shape the city's development agenda. Does it matter that the remaining downtown growth interests are developers, brokers, university presidents, and city officials rather than bankers and manufacturers? I would hypothesize that it does, but I admit this hypothesis requires considerably more testing. In theory at least, the significant presence of nonprofit and public officials surely gives these groups a different agenda than their all-private sector predecessors would have had. Although it would be naïve to claim that public officials and nonprofit leaders always engage in urban redevelopment with democratic and eleemosynary goals, it is clear that such leaders are responsible to different constituencies than are their private sector counterparts (Strom, 2005). For public and nonprofit officials, maximizing economic returns is only one of many goals. Nonprofit organizations are responsible to boards of trustees who may place a higher priority on issues like organizational prestige. Public officials need to garner votes from a broad, geographically dispersed constituency, but also care about the reputation of their cities among investors and other political leaders. Certainly, many public officials support the efforts of BIDs to provide enhanced services without dipping into public coffers, although some government leaders may share the concerns of critics who wonder whether this form of privatization has negative consequences for democratic governance (Briffault, 1999). At any rate, the inclusion of public officials on these leadership boards represents a number of trends in the maturation of various "public-private partnership models" (Friedan & Sagalyn, 1989) but it can surely suggest at least some loss of preeminence on the part of the private sector downtown leadership, which can no longer depend on an active cadre of CEOs, and must invite public officials to be part of their decision-making processes in order to gain attention and support.

I would further argue that the replacement of corporate and banking CEOs with real estate developers and managers has altered the position of these downtown associations as well. First, the real estate industry is less central to a region's economic base and its promoters are therefore in a weaker institutional position to operate as insiders in a progrowth regime. Does this mean that real estate developers and owners have no economic significance or political clout? Of course not. Real estate interests can, and in some cities do play a prominent role as campaign funders, and their political largesse can give individual real estate developers excellent access to decision makers. Studies of downtown development have highlighted the centrality of the property development process, which can shape many aspects of a city's center (Fainstein, 1994). At the very least, real estate development has a huge symbolic resonance, for it is the reshaping of the physical built environment—the ribbon cutting ceremonies, the "cranes on the skyline" (Healey & Barrett, 1990) that give political leaders the opportunity to claim credit for positive change. David Harvey notes the importance of the continued construction and destruction of the built environment as part of capitalist reproduction, and points to what he calls the "speculator-developer" as playing a key "coordinating and stabilizing function" in this process (Harvey, 1985, p. 68).

But real estate remains, in Harvey's analysis, a secondary circuit of capital, auxiliary to primary production. Real estate is reactive—its value reflects the eagerness of other sorts of economic actors to locate in a particular place. If city boosters can persuade major corporations to locate in their center, *some* developer will be happy to take advantage of this opportunity.[12] In more concrete terms, real estate is not an export industry;[13] it does not have a large employment base (construction of course is an important part of the job market but construction jobs are largely sub, or sub-sub-contracted, so there is no direct line between a developer and this workforce). Individual developers may use tools such as campaign contributions to open access channels to public decision makers, but cities are not generally in competition for the favors of specific developers the way they are for car makers, pharmaceutical firms, or even football franchises. Indeed, Friedland and Palmer's analysis might suggest that the high level of engagement of real estate interests in activities such as campaign fund-raising indicates their lack of structural power—the most central economic actors, those with the power of exit, need not exert time and energy in these efforts to influence decision makers (Friedland & Palmer, 1984). That real estate now appears to be such a dominant industry in some cities may say more about the dearth of other productive activities than it does about the potential of real estate alone to generate significant economic activity.

My claim here is not that real estate developers—or for that matter, the directors of nonprofit hospitals and universities—wield no influence in the politics of downtown development. Rather, I would maintain that they have influence over a narrower set of issues, with power that is more tactical (e.g., they can draw on it to fight particular, site-specific battles) than structural (e.g., capable of setting a political agenda). Real estate dominated groups, for better or worse, may also have a less ambitious civic agenda. Real estate owners and developers are probably not going to make significant material and symbolic investments of the kind made by companies like GM (in Detroit) or Prudential (in Newark)—it is not in their self-interest or part of their corporate culture to do so. But they also are less likely to play a prominent role trying to shape significant civic or political debates—when real estate is one's primary business, the key question is whether resources will be devoted to block X or block Y, and there may be less of an identification with and commitment to a larger civic agenda.

I further hypothesize that the proliferation of the "business improvement district" model as a way of mobilizing resources around downtown development suggests that this new coalition has different kinds of collective active issues than did earlier groups, which were more reliant on voluntary activities (donations of money and the involvement of corporate CEOs) than on mandated contributions such as those underwriting BID budgets. The creation of BIDs that focus on services and festivals recognizes the survival needs of organizations that can not count on a base of major employers to sustain them; rather, they rely on material incentives and seek alliances with public and nonprofit officials.

These hypotheses, however, require further testing, as there is surprisingly little research on the local organization of downtown real estate interests.[14] There is also little scholarly research about peak business associations in the post–urban renewal period; a better understanding of the factors behind the shifting missions and leaderships of groups like the Greater Baltimore Committee or the Allegheny Conference for Community Development would provide additional insight into the changing balance of power in downtown governance. Using organizational and newspaper archives and interviews, for example, a researcher could learn when and why such organizations abandoned downtown issues. These methods could also reveal any clear relationships between the sectoral representation on organizational boards and the agendas pursued by these organizations. Additional research could be done on various companies represented on downtown association boards to learn from them first-hand how they view the political roles of their organizations.

## IS "DOWNTOWN VERSUS THE NEIGHBORHOODS" STILL A KEY POLITICAL CLEAVAGE?

Urban political scientists, on the one hand have long been interested in powerful downtown elites; on the other hand, they have shown a great deal of interest in the challenges to these groups, often represented by neighborhood associations adept at utilizing both the electoral arena and other means of protest (DeLeon, 1992; Ferman, 1996; Mollenkopf, 1983). In some cities, would-be mayors successfully attacked downtown development policies, and indeed made their pledges to redirect resources from the central business district to struggling neighborhoods central to their election campaigns. Pete Flaherty, for example, was elected mayor of Pittsburgh in 1969 with the backing of a newly mobilized neighborhood movement (Ferman, 1996); San Francisco voters used the ballot box to challenge downtown interests both by electing sympathetic mayors and councils, and by passing voter initiatives that limited downtown development (DeLeon, 1992; McGovern, 1998). In 1983, Boston voters eliminated mayoral candidates known for their support of downtown development and sent two neighborhood activists, Mel King and Ray Flynn, to compete in a run-off. Flynn, who went on to be elected mayor, reflected, "In 1983, there was a feeling that the downtown interests didn't respect the neighborhoods of Boston. . . . That's how Mel King and I got nominated in 1983. We represented fighters. People knew we were two tough neighborhood guys who were going to stand up to the powerful interests of the city and fight for the neighborhoods" (Nolan, 1993). Some of the political conflicts between populist Dennis Kucinich's supporters and Cleveland's business community reflected this dynamic as well (Swanstrom, 1985).

Is "downtown vs. the neighborhoods" still a key cleavage in U.S. urban politics? I hypothesize that opposition to downtown development is less likely to be the point around which today's urban populist groups mobilize than would have been the case a few decades earlier. To support this hypothesis I have only anecdotal (and admittedly slim anecdotal) evidence. Former Boston Mayor Flynn noted that it was no longer a feature of electoral politics in his city (Nolan, 1993), and interviews with elected officials in Seattle suggested a similar dampening of tensions. In recent elections in Newark, Cleveland, and New York, just to name a few cities, the lines of cleavage did not seem to run between defenders and detractors of downtown development. Of course, there will always been political conflict over the spatial distribution of public resources, but I would argue that in most cities "downtown" is no longer seen as the enemy of those who advocate investment in their own residential neighborhoods.

If indeed this claim is true, there could be many explanations, including the successes of some earlier challengers to downtown who succeeded in implementing growth caps and linkage policies. But I would also argue that downtown simply is not the sort of target it once was. As at least in some cities, downtown has lost corporate headquarters, office space, and symbolic clout, perhaps it has seemed less threatening to neighborhood advocates as well. Moreover, today's downtown groups are busy with activities it is hard to dislike—who is against clean streets, better lighting, and farmers' markets? Indeed, in interviews, some downtown organization leaders explicitly talked about the importance of their food fairs and art walks as effective ways to broaden political support for downtown investment (see endnote 11). New downtown developments are in many cases, as well, championed by a new set of supporters—cultural leaders, university administrators—and are marketed not as buttoned-down business centers but as hip, edgy spaces. Downtown groups are intent on reshaping and marketing downtown as a place to see a ball game, grab a beer, or live in trendy, artist-inspired lofts. As central city areas gain residential population, they themselves become "neighborhoods."

This is an admittedly hard hypothesis to test rigorously. One could choose cities that had manifested downtown versus neighborhood cleavages and study selected elections over time to see if these issues remained salient. Finer-grained case studies of those cities in which electoral politics had once pitted the interests of downtown business against the interests of neighborhood residents could reveal some shifts in electoral rhetoric around development issues, and that such research could help further the goal of better understanding the politics of the new downtown.

In conclusion, American central business districts have undergone dramatic changes in function over the past four decades, and it should be expected that these functional changes would be accompanied by changes in political organization and influence. In an earlier era, the downtown was usually the region's largest employment node and home to its key retailing and financial activities. Regional business leaders saw a healthy downtown as crucial to the success of their enterprises, and they worked, often through peak business organizations, to push for downtown revitalization alongside other business concerns. Today, many of the key business institutions, once at the heart of the downtown coalition, are gone. Downtowns are now less dominant as either economic centers or as the basis of political power. While corporate interests in many cities still work toward downtown improvements, this cause is less central to their mission, and less connected to a broader regional business agenda. Those most concerned with downtown are now real estate interests, who seek allies among nonprofit organizations and forge connections to cultural institutions.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:** The author wishes to thank the anonymous reviews, which offered very detailed and insightful critiques of this article.

## APPENDIX A

**Complete Listing of Firms Represented on Boards of GPM and CAP; Complete List of Member Firms for GBC**

| Greater Baltimore Committee, 1962 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Name | Sector | Still in Region? City? | Current Status |
| A.S. Abell Company | Misc. corporate | City | Owned Baltimore Sun; sold to Times Mirror in 1986, which was sold to the Tribune Company in 2000. The Baltimore Sun is still published in Baltimore. |
| American Sugar Refining Co | Misc. corporate/industrial | Region | NJ based company with plants in many places |
| Armco Steel Corporation | Misc. corporate/ Industrial | Unknown | |
| Arundel Corporation | Misc. corporate/industrial | Yes—distribution facilities | Sold to Florida Rock Industries in Jacksonville |
| Baker Watts and Co. | Finance | City | Now Ferris Baker Watts |
| Baltimore & Annapolis Railroad | Misc. corporate/ transportation | No | Regional bus and rail service no longer in operation |
| Baltimore Box Company | Misc. corporate/industrial | Unknown | |
| Baltimore Federal Savings and Loan | Finance | Unknown | |
| Baltimore Life Insurance | Insurance | City | |
| Baltimore News-Post & Sunday American | Misc. corporate | No | Ceased publication in 1986 |
| Bendix Radio Division | Misc. corporate/Industrial | Unknown | Sold to NJ based Allied Corp in 1985, which then merged with Honeywell |
| Bethlehem Steel | Misc. corporate/ industrial | No | Company sold |
| Black and Decker | Misc. corporate/Industrial | Region | Tool manufacturer started as hardware and machine shop in Baltimore, and opened plant in Towson in 1917; still maintains headquarters there |
| Alex Brown & Sons | Finance | City | Merged with Frankfurt-based Deutsche Bank in 1999 |
| C&P Telephone | Misc. corporate/communications | Region | Local telephone provider, now part of Verizon |
| Calwood Realty | Real estate | Unknown | |
| Harry T. Campbell and sons | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | No longer in operation; land holdings developed into mall and planned community by associated Nottingham Properties. |
| Central Savings Bank | Finance | Unknown | |
| Cochran, Stephenson and Wing | Prof. services/architecture | Unknown | |
| Commercial Credit Co. | Finance | No | Taken over by company that eventually became Primerica and moved to New York |

(*Continued*)

**APPENDIX A**

**Continued**

| Greater Baltimore Committee, 1962 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Name | Sector | Still in Region? City? | Current Status |
| Consolidated Engineering | Prof. services | Unknown | Sold to Norwalk, CT-based Emcor |
| Davison Chemical Company | Misc. corporate/industrial | Unknown | Division of WR Grace |
| H.B. Davis | Misc. corporate/Industrial | Unknown | Subsidiary of Kansas City-based Seidlitz Paint |
| Equitable Trust Company | Finance | No | Bought by MNC in 1989, which became part of Bank of America in 1993 |
| Eutaw Savings Bank | Finance | No | Bank building now part of theater complex |
| Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland | Insurance | Unknown | Taken over by two Swiss firms in 1980 |
| Finance Company of America | Finance | Unknown | Finance Company of America |
| First National Bank | Finance | No | Became Allfirst, then acquired by Buffalo-based M&T Bank in 2003 |
| Fisher, Nes, Cambell | Prof. services/architecture | Unknown | |
| Robert Garrett and sons | Finance | Unknown | |
| General Electric | Misc. corporate/industrial | Unknown | Generation, Transmission and Auxiliaries Sales Division had been in the Baltimore region |
| Edwin Glidden | Prof. services/architecture | Unknown | |
| Glidden Company | Misc. corporate/Industrial | Unknown | Now part of ICI Paints |
| Gorn Brothers | Unknown | Unknown | |
| Isaac Hamburger and sons | Misc. corporate/Retail | No | Store closed; site part of Inner Harbor hotel |
| Hecht Company | Misc. corporate/Retail | No | Downtown store closed in 1988; building has been renovated as condomiums |
| Hochschild, Kohn & Company | Misc. corporate/Retail | No | Downtown store closed in 1977 |
| Humble Oil | Misc corporate | Unknown | Regional division of Texas-based Humble, which later became part of Esso (then Exxon) |
| Hutzler Brothers | Misc. corporate/Retail | No | Downtown store closed in 1980, entire chain in 1990 |
| EH Koester Bakery Company | Misc. corporate/industrial | Unknown | |
| Koppers Company | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | |
| John C. Legg & Co | Finance | Yes | Precursor to Legg and Mason |
| Lord Baltimore Press | Misc. corporate | No | Publishing house acquired in 1950s by International Paper; disbanded in 1972 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Loyola Federal Savings and Loan | Finance | No | Acquired in 1966 by Richmond-based Crestar, which was acquired in 2000 by Atlanta-based Suntrust |
| Manekin & co | Real estate | Region | |
| Martin Marietta | Misc. corporate/Industrial | Region | Merged with Lockheed in 1995; headquartered in Bethesda, MD. Airfield near city sold to state in 1975 for regional airport. |
| Maryland Drydock | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | Closed in 1980s |
| Maryland Life Insurance Company of Baltimore | Insurance | Unknown | |
| Maryland National Bank | Finance | No | Acquired in 1993 by Nationsbank (later Bank of America) |
| McCormick and Company | Misc. corporate/Industrial | Region | |
| Mercantile Safe Deposit Trust | Finance | City | Now part of Mercantile Bankshares, a regional bank holding company |
| Joseph Meyerhoff Corp. | Real estate | Unknown | |
| Miles and Stockbridge | Law | City | |
| Montgomery Ward | Misc. corporate/retail | No | Catalogue company had maintained one of 7 regional warehouses in Baltimore, which was closed in 1985. Site is now an office complex. |
| Monumental Life Insurance | Insurance | City | Part of Netherlands-based Aegon group |
| National Brewing Company | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | Brewers of "Colt 45" beer and owners of Baltimore Colts. Brewery closed in 1980; complex to be turned into "Brewer's Hill", with retail, offices and loft-apartments |
| New Amsterdam Casualty Company | Insurance | Unknown | Merged with Hartford-based Security Insurance in 1966, which was since acquired by Royal and Sun Alliance in London |
| Noxzema Chemical Company | Misc. corporate/industrial | Region | Sold to Cincinnati-based Proctor and Gamble in 1989; still produces in region |
| O'Brien Corporation | Unknown | Unknown | |
| Pennsylvania Railroad (Chesapeake region) | Misc. corporate | No | Company went bankrupt; lines split between Conrail and Amtrak in the 1970s |
| Peterson, Howell & Heather | Finance | Region | Commercial leasing company |

(*Continued*)

**APPENDIX A**

**Continued**

| Greater Baltimore Committee, 1962 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Name | Sector | Still in Region? City? | Current Status |
| Provident Savings Bank | Finance | City | Provident Savings Bank |
| Ramsay, Scarlett & Company | Misc. corporate/transportation | City | Ramsay, Scarlett & Company |
| Riall Jackson | Insurance | Unknown | |
| Riggs-Warfield-Roloson | Insurance | Unknown | Riggs-Warfield-Roloson |
| Rogers, Taliaferro, Kostritsky, Lamb | Prof. services/architecture | City | |
| Roland Park company | Real estate | Unknown | |
| James W. Rouse and Co. | Real estate | No | Merged with Chicago-based General Growth Properties in 2004 |
| Sears Roebuck | Misc. corporate/retail | Unknown | |
| Southern Hotel | Misc. corporate/hotel | No | Building demolished in 1990s |
| Charles H. Steffey, Inc. | Real estate | Region | |
| Stein Bros and Boyce | Finance | Unknown | |
| Stewart & Company | Misc. corporate/retail | No | Closed downtown store in 1978, sold remaining stores to Caldor, which closed in 1999 |
| Sun Life Insurance | Insurance | Unknown | Bought by AIG group |
| T. Rowe Price | Finance | City | |
| Taylor and Fisher | Prof. services/architecture | Unknown | |
| Title Guarantee Company | Insurance | Unknown | |
| Tongue, Brooks and Co. | Insurance | Unknown | |
| Union Trust Co. of Maryland | Finance | No | Bought up by First Union (now Wachovia) in 1997 |
| United States Fidelity and Guaranty | Insurance | City | Part of St. Paul Traveller's Group since 1998 |
| Van Sant Dugdale | Prof. services/advertising | Unknown | |
| Weaver Brothers | Finance/insurance | Region | |
| Western Electric | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | Manufacturing arm of AT&T. Plant closed in 1980s and sold for development of office/industrial park |
| Western Maryland Railway | Misc. corporate/transportation | No | Eventually became part of CSX, most lines abandoned |
| Westinghouse Electric | Misc. corporate/industrial | Region | Pittsburgh-based company once had several divisions in the region; now has just a small nuclear facility in Rockville. |
| Wright, Robertson and Dowell | Law | City | Now Wright, Constable and Skeen |

**APPENDIX A**

**Continued**

| Greater Philadelphia Movement, 1960, 1965 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Name | Sector | Still in City? In Region? | Current Status |
| American Stores Company (Acme) | Misc. corporate/retail | No | Sold to Salt Lake City based chain in 1979, now owned by Supervalu, in Eden Prairie, MN |
| Atlantic Refining Company | Misc. corporate | City | Sold to Sunoco in 1988; Sunoco still headquartered in Philadelphia |
| N.W. Ayer & Son | Prof. services/advertising | No | One of first ad firms in country; moved to New York City in 1973 |
| Ballard, Spahr | Law | City | |
| Barnes, Dechert | Law | City | |
| Bell Telephone of PA | Misc. corporate | No | Now part of Verizon (based in New York City) |
| Campbell Soup | Misc. corporate/industrial | Region | |
| Dilworth, Paxson | Law | City | |
| Drinker, Biddle & Heath | Law | City | |
| Duane, Morris & Hecksher | Law | City | |
| Electric Storage Battery | Misc. corporate/Industrial | Region | Now called EnerSys |
| Fidelity-Philadelphia Trust Company | Finance | Unknown | |
| First Pennsylvania Banking & Trust Company | Finance | No | Merged with Core States in 1990 (which is now part of Wachovia) |
| Fox, Rothschild | Law | City | |
| Girard Trust Corn Exchange Bank | Finance | No | Merged with Pittsburgh-based Mellon Bank. Building is currently a Ritz-Carlton Hotel. |
| Heintz Manufacturing Company | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | |
| Local #19 Sheet Metal Workers | Union | Unknown | |
| Metal Edge Industries | Misc. corporate/industrial | Region | Packing material – located outside Philadelphia |
| Muskogee corporation | Unknown | Unknown | |
| John J. Nesbitt, Inc. | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | Made commercial heating systems. Company sold and put in bankruptcy several times, and operations relocated. |

(*Continued*)

**APPENDIX A**

**Continued**

| Greater Philadelphia Movement, 1960, 1965 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Name | Sector | Still in City? In Region? | Current Status |
| Peat, Marwick | Prof. services/accounting | Unknown | Merged to become KPMG |
| Philadelphia National Bank | Finance | Unknown | |
| Philadelphia Steel and Iron Company | Misc. corporate/industrial | Unknown | |
| Philco | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | Made transistors; bought by Ford Motors in 1961 |
| Penn Mutual Life | Insurance | Region | Located in suburbs |
| Philadelphia Saving Fund Society | Finance | No | Renamed Meritor after FDIC reorganization; Seized by FDIC in 1992, sold to Pittsburgh-based Mellon bank. Building is now a Loew's Hotel. |
| The Reading Company | Misc. corporate | No | Merged with Conrail, 1976; disposed of real estate holdings until disbanding in 2000 |
| Rohm and Haas | Misc corporate/industrial | City | |
| Schnader, Harrison | Law | City | |
| Scott Paper | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | After reorganization by "Chainsaw" Al Dunlap, company moved to Boca Raton in 1995, and merged with Kimberly-Clark |
| John B. Stetson | Misc. corporate/industrial | No | Made and sold famous hats – no longer located in Philadelphia |
| University of Pennsylvania | Education | City | |
| John Wanamaker, Inc. | Misc. corporate/retail | No | Sold in 1986. Philadelphia Flagship store now a Lord & Taylor |
| Western Saving Fund Society of Philadelphia | Finance | No | Assets turned over to Meritor Bank by FDIC after failure in 1982; Meritor taken over by Mellon |
| Robert C. White Company | Unknown | Unknown | |
| Wolf, Block | Law | City | |

(*Continued*)

**APPENDIX A**

**Continued**

| Central Atlanta Progress, 1970 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Name | Sector | Still in City or Region? | Current Status |
| Allston, Miller and Gaines | Law | City | Merged with other firms |
| Atlanta Federal Savings and Loan | Finance | No | After series of mergers, now part of Wachovia |
| Atlanta Gas Light Company | Misc. corporate | City | Became part of AGL, an Atlanta-based utility holding company |
| Atlanta Newspapers, Inc. | Misc. corporate | City | Owners of Atlanta Journal-Constitution |
| Atlantic Steel Company | Misc. corporate /industrial | No | Operations shut down in 1980s; property now developed as Atlantic Station, mixed use new neighborhood |
| Citizens and Southern National Bank | Finance | No | Now part of Bank of America |
| Citizens Trust Company | Finance | City | |
| Cox Broadcasting | Misc. corporate | City | Now part of Cox Communications |
| Davisons | Misc. corporate /retail | No | Bought up by Macy's in 1984; downtown store closed in 2003 |
| Federal Reserve Bank | Finance | City | |
| Finch, Alexander, Barnes | Prof. services/architecture | City | Now Paul Rosser FABRAP |
| First National Bank | Finance | No | Bought by Wachovia in 1985 |
| Fulton National Bank | Finance | No | Taken over by Nationsbank (now Bank of America) |
| Georgia Power | Misc. corporate | City | Now part of Atlanta-based Southern Corporation, umbrella corporation for local utilities |
| Gulf Oil Corporation | Misc. corporate | No | Company since split up and sold |
| Haverty Furniture | Misc. corporate /retail | City | |
| Life Insurance Company of Georgia | Insurance | City | Purchased by Dutch-owned ING, which made Atlanta their North American headquarters |
| Muse's | Misc. corporate/retail | No | Closed in 1990s |
| Mutual Federal Savings | Finance | No | Bank closed in 1990s |
| National Bank of Georgia | Finance | No | Part of Wachovia after 1980s merger |
| National Service Industries | Misc. corporate/industrial | City | Manufacturer of textiles and packaging |
| Rich's | Misc. corporate/retail | No | Sold to Federated Department Stores in 1975; downtown store closed in 1991 |
| Southern Bell Telephone | Misc. corporate | City | Merged with another regional Bell to become Bell South, with headquarters in Atlanta |
| Trust Company of Georgia | Finance | City | Became part of Suntrust, which is headquartered in Atlanta |
| JM Tull Industries | Misc. corporate/ industrial | City | Bought out by Ryerson Corporation in 1986, with headquarters in Chicago. Still maintains service center in Atlanta. |

## APPENDIX B

Finding historical data on nonprofit organizations is far more challenging than I would have anticipated, and my choice of cases was very much constrained by the availability of such data. Originally I had identified six peak business organizations that were active in the 1960s and still active in some form at present. In addition to the three studied here, I also sought information on the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, the Downtown Alliance in New York City, and the Greater Milwaukee Committee. The ACCD staff kindly provided me with a list of board members from 1960, but this list included no business affiliations. Likewise, the board list provided to me by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund archives, which has recently received the historical papers of the Downtown Alliance, did not include business affiliations. The staff at the Greater Milwaukee Committee insisted that the names of board members past and present were confidential, and at any rate their small staff did not know the whereabouts of their past records. I was therefore unable to carry out analysis of the boards of these three organizations.

The records of the Greater Philadelphia Movement are housed at the Urban Archives of the Temple University Library, where I was able to uncover board lists with business affiliations for 1960 and 1965. I chose to merge these lists to conduct the analysis; for the most part the board membership was very stable in these years, and only five firms on the 1965 board were not also represented on the 1960 board. The records of CAP are housed at the Atlanta Historical Society, whose research staff could only find a complete board list, with affiliations, for the year 1970. The staff of the Greater Baltimore Committee kindly sent me their membership lists for their founding year (1956) and for 1962. I chose to use the 1962 list to provide greater chronological consistency with the other organizations. The 1962 membership list, at any rate, was nearly identical to the 1956 list.

Contemporary board lists for Central Atlanta Progress and the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District; Downtown Partnership of Baltimore and the Downtown Management District; and Central Philadelphia Development Corporation and the Center City District are all found on these organizations' websites; I downloaded the data in March 2006, and have continued to rely on the numbers from that date. I combined the board lists for the each downtown association with its "BID," counting those who serve on both boards just once.

To place each company in an industrial sector, and to further learn the fate of each company, I relied on several sources. First, I searched for each company name using Google, which often led me to company websites, Wikipedia listings, or online historical archives that allowed me to assess the line of business for each company and learn its present location. Where such web searches were insufficient, I did further searches using newspaper archives identified through Lexis Nexis and Access World News. Finally, I used Hoover's Company Records, a business directory, to find information on companies not found through the other sources.

## ENDNOTES

1 http://www.greatergreenville.com/development/dt_fun.asp.

2 http://www.downtownstl.org/.

3 In some cities, downtown housing development benefits from an array of producer subsidies, so "market rate" is not an entirely accurate term. Most new downtown housing is not, however, "assisted" housing, with consumer subsidies and restrictions on residents incomes.

4 The extent of the downtown residential "boom" should not be exaggerated—Birch notes that, in the 45 cities she studies, the net gain in downtown population between 1970 and 2000 has totaled 35,000, while during the same period the suburban parts of these metro areas have gained 13 million residents. But these aggregate numbers

obscure the significant downtown residential gains in some cities, where entire new residential districts have been established in downtown areas.

5 Of course, these represent "snapshots" of business leadership in each city at two points in time; this method does not reveal the timing of these transformations. This research also cannot shed light on the causes of these changes; for the most part, cities and their downtown leadership have been shaped by national and global factors (deregulation; outsourcing of industrial jobs) well beyond the control of local leadership.

6 From the Greater Baltimore Committee statement of priorities, found on their website (www.gbc.org), accessed March 2006.

7 For example, the Allegheny Conference for Community Development, which had spearheaded the redevelopment of Pittsburgh's "Golden Triangle" through urban renewal programs, is now part of a larger regional alliance with no downtown program focus, while since 1994 a Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership has taken up the task of promoting the downtown.

8 BIDS are not only found in downtowns, but in outlying business areas as well. A 1999 survey found 404 BIDS in 43 states (although some states use other terms for them). Mitchell, 2001; Morçöl & Zimmerman, 2006.

9 Mitchell (2001) also finds many groups reporting involvement in "advocacy," but here advocacy is meant to describe activities working to link public and private sector actors engaged in downtown, rather than a broader involvement in political affairs.

10 Some of these observations are drawn from interviews with heads and board members of downtown organizations in Philadelphia, Seattle, Charlotte, and Detroit between 1999 and 2002 conducted by the author for an earlier research project. Several of those interviewed specifically talked about the decline of CEO board representation, and the strategies they employ to remain effective despite the diminished prominence of their board representation.

11 There is a professional organization, the International Downtown Association, to which most downtown organizations belong. See Gendron (2006) for more on this organization's significance.

12 Although, as Healey and Barrett (1990) note, this process is not unproblematic.

13 A few cities, such as New York or London, have such a concentration of very large real estate interests (developers, architects, financiers) that they do, indeed, export real estate services. In cities that are first-order tourism or second home/retirement magnets, real estate could also be seen as an export industry, as the end users of real estate products spend money earned somewhere else. In these cases, real estate is a more dominant economic sector, and prominent real estate capitalists may also have a more central role in political and civic life.

14 There are some interesting histories of the national real estate industry—see Weiss (1987); as well as local case studies that address the importance of real estate lobby groups in the policymaking process—see Gotham (2002)—but these do not really ask how and why individual property owners and developers organize to effect change in the central business district.

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