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Transit-Oriented Development and the Implications for Equitable Development: A Case Study of the Milwaukee Streetcar

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TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE MILWAUKEE STREETCAR

by

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ABSTRACT

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Many cities across the US have reintroduced the streetcar as an economic development tool, or as an image-branding and tourism-promoting amenity, while public transportation benefits are largely afterthoughts. The purpose of this research is to investigate the Milwaukee Streetcar as a transit-oriented development strategy, the distribution of benefits and burdens, and its implications for equitable development. Guided by semi-structured interviews and content/discourse analysis of planning/policy documents through an equity lens, this study analyzed Milwaukee's initial downtown streetcar routes against the potential extension lines into the more transit-dependent communities of Bronzeville and Walker's Point. The findings suggest that the initial routes and possible extension lines were engaged in very different political and planning processes, the latter of which employed explicit attention to equitable development. While certain tools have been identified to address concerns of displacement resulting from transit-oriented development, there continues to be several barriers to overcome to achieve equitable development.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DCD	Department of City Development
DNC	Democratic National Convention
DOT	Department of Transportation
e-TOD	Equitable Transit-Oriented Development
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GARE	Government Alliance on Race and Equity
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
MAM	Milwaukee Art Museum
MCTS	Milwaukee County Transit System
MLK	Martin Luther King
MMAC	Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
REIA	Racial Equity Impact Assessment
SOM	Spirit of Milwaukee
TID	Tax Incremental District
TIGER	Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery
TIF	Tax Incremental Financing
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
YPM	Young Professionals of Milwaukee

INTRODUCTION

Many cities across the United States are currently experiencing a resurgence of the modern streetcar. In the past—prior to the automobile-centric design of cities and the widespread suburbanization during the post-war era—streetcars were essential for daily urban life and the expansion of cities, which allowed people to live further away from the pollution and bustle of central urban areas. After the 1930s, President Roosevelt's New Deal—along with the rise of the personal automobile and other political interventions from automakers[1]—fostered the expansion of suburbs and highways, and rendered the streetcar technology obsolete. Since then, nearly all the 45,000-miles of streetcar lines in the United States have been abandoned or dismantled, and in Washington D.C., the last streetcar ran in 1962 (Smithsonian, n.d.). Currently, there are 32 cities operating streetcars in the United States, and an additional 76 cities are seriously considering or are in the actively planning stage of developing a streetcar system (APTA, 2019a, 2019b).

The rebirth of the modern streetcar offers alternative modes of transportation, but also promises the benefits of increased private investment and local economic development. Modern streetcar projects are hailed as catalysts for transit-oriented development (TOD), improved pedestrian environments and walkability, enhanced multi-modal transit services, as well as the enriched livability and quality of urban life in the corridors served (King & Fischer, 2016). This research area is significant because in many cases, the improved efficiency and accessibility of the transit network are secondary to the economic benefits derived from TOD (Brown, Nixon, & Ramos, 2015; Culver, 2017; King & Fischer, 2016; Lowe & Grengs, 2018). Thus, if transportation goals are not the main drivers of these modern streetcar projects, then the

[1] See St. Clair (1981) for a more detailed discussion of the organized campaign intent on eliminating viable public transit by GM and other automakers between 1935-1950.

questions become centered around how and where wealth is generated and distributed from TOD, and how to ensure and encourage development that is equitable and serves the needs of transit-dependent populations.

In 2018, Milwaukee's modern streetcar project began its operation with a 2.1-mile downtown loop, and is expected to begin service of its 0.4-mile lakefront extension and 0.3-mile Wisconsin Center extension in 2020, ahead of the Democratic National Convention. While these initial streetcar routes serve the central business district of downtown Milwaukee and the predominately affluent neighborhoods of the Lower Eastside and Historic Third Ward, there have been discussions about how to extend the streetcar to reach more transit-dependent communities and integrate it with the overall transportation network more effectively. With a focus of equitable-TOD (e-TOD) and anti-displacement, Milwaukee's Department of City Development devised plans for two possible streetcar extension lines to the more transit-dependent neighborhoods of Bronzeville and Walker's Point.

The purpose of this study is to examine TOD and its implications for equitable development in the modern streetcar resurgence era. From an investigation of the Milwaukee Streetcar as a case study, this research will unpack the thinking surrounding the streetcar with a comparison between the planning processes of the initial routes and potential extension lines, evaluate the distribution of the benefits and burdens associated with TOD, and explore its implications for equitable development. In other words, to what extent does the Milwaukee Streetcar as a TOD strategy contribute to or detract from the challenges associated with equity, community development, and the growing inequality in Milwaukee?

In the next section, the literature review will explain neoliberal urban development strategies and why they are significant for this research. The methodology section reveals the

research design of this study, which will be drawing on qualitative content and discourse analysis of newspaper articles and planning and policy documents, and supplemented by semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders. The following section will examine the case study of Milwaukee in greater detail, including the historical context of the Milwaukee Streetcar. Next, the discussion section will contain a deeper analysis of the major findings from the previous section, and its implications for equitable development. Finally, concluding remarks will be made on the limitations of this research and recommendations for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Neoliberal Urban Restructuring: Entrepreneurial Cities

Theoretical frameworks of urban political scientists have evolved over time to account for structural and economic changes in the distribution of power and urban governance. Within contemporary urban studies scholarship, it is generally accepted that the broad pattern of urban restructuring in recent decades has been informed by "neoliberalism" as the key logic that is continuously and "profoundly shaping the ideological and operational parameters of urbanization" (Culver, 2017; Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2013, p. 1091). Understood as both an ideology and a set of structural changes, neoliberalism created a permanent fiscal crisis for municipalities since the 1980s—due to federal government cutbacks and rollbacks, welfare reform, decentralization, privatization, and deregulation of the market in response to population shifts and the globalization of the economy. Furthermore, intergovernmental reforms have dramatically reshaped the roles, functions, and jurisdictional powers of local government—which exacerbated the challenges associated with the allocation and distribution of resources and

services within their limited capacities—and forced municipal managers to develop strategic and innovative strategies to secure and expand its tax-base and attract capital investment.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the effects of globalization became more visible and theories of structuralism—which argue that private enterprises find themselves in a privileged political position due to the mobility of capital—evolved to account for the shift of urban governance. Harvey (1989) characterized these transformations of urban governance as a shift from "managerialism" to a mode of "entrepreneurialism" with the speculative investment of public funds to generate economic growth (MacLeod, 2011). The decentralization of the government prompted municipalities to form public-private partnerships (PPPs) with a diverse set of actors (e.g., the private sector, non-profits, community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, etc.) to facilitate the general provision of services with greater flexibility without bureaucratic oversight, and in effect, reinforced an ever-increasing influence of competitive market logics over urban development (Culver, 2017; Harvey, 2005; MacLeod, 2011; Theodore & Peck, 2011). Hence, the neoliberalization of urban governance entailed a decades-long shift from the welfare-state ideal that was dedicated to serving the "public good" and addressing social needs, to an "entrepreneurial paradigm in spatial development" wherein cities compete within and across multiple geographical scales—from the global to the regional and down to the local level—for urban economic development (Culver, 2017; MacLeod, 2011; Theodore, Peck, & Brenner, 2011).

Thus, municipal governments have been entwined with the evolution of the neoliberal paradigm, which favors unfettered entrepreneurialism, unencumbered free markets, individual property rights over collective action, and enforces ideological "market-rule" on all aspects of society (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). In effect, "Neoliberalism holds that the social good will be

maximized by maximizing the reach and frequency of market transactions, and it seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market" (Harvey, 2005, p. 3). Departed from the city's previously defined managerial role that embraced distributive and allocation focused strategies, in its entrepreneurial role municipalities have progressively embraced pro-growth development strategies, which emphasize the notion that intensive growth and development patterns have collective benefits to the local citizenry at large (e.g., strengthening the local tax base, creating jobs, meeting the local housing demand, etc.), and prioritize individual benefits and advantages (e.g., tax abatements, tax incremental financing districts, direct loans, zoning code changes, etc.) to private interests and developers (Harvey, 1989; Harris, 2015). The market-driven entrepreneurial logic of the neoliberal paradigm, however, ignores the distinction between use-values and exchange-values, and the concerns that the benefits derived from the pursuit of exchange-values by intensive development are unevenly distributed across the urban landscape (Harris, 2015; Logan & Molotch, 1987). Rather, traditional supply-side strategies function to move business activity and capital across geographic locations, and tend to mitigate job and tax-base benefits for location-specific communities within a region (Harris, 2015; Reese, 1998).

Neoliberal Urban Restructuring: The City as a Growth Machine

As an alternative to the over-deterministic structuralism theorizations of the urban political economy, Molotch (1976) argued that the essence of government and the key function of any locality is rooted in growth, and hence, coined the phrase "the city as a growth machine." Molotch contextualized the political economy of the growth machine around "members of politically mobilized local elites" (p. 310) that have invested interests in local development and use public authority and private power to enhance their local business interests. Thus, instead of

a clear departure from structuralism, growth machine theory combines human agency and human-interests with market-forces that strive for the accumulation of wealth and power as the key drivers of urban growth patterns, since at least the nineteenth-century. Logan and Molotch (1987) identified such actors as "place-entrepreneurs" who capitalize on the exchange-values of urban land-use markets: either through rent-collection, buying and selling land based on market trends, and/or "actively involved in changing the environment of development to profit from the rearrangement of place" (Farahani, 2017). Growth machine theory suggests that growth is considered a public good and beneficial for all, yet Molotch (1993) and Purcell (2000) highlight the sparse evidence that growth stimulates the acquisition of the growth machine's acclaimed outcomes.

Economic development strategies of growth machine dynamics have garnered enormous expenditures of federal, state, and municipal tax dollars at the local level that advanced these private-interests over the years, yet existing empirical evidence provides no substantive proof that such economic development incentives and subsidies promote or cause economic growth (Harris, 2015; Krumholz, 1999; Sagar, 2011). Furthermore, Judd and Swanstrom (2010) show how U.S. federal aid was historically crucial for enabling municipalities to extend welfare services into the 1980s, until the Reagan Administration halved several aid programs, and therein effectively entreated municipal governments into the neoliberal entrepreneurial agenda (MacLeod, 2011). Such constraints on local growth machine initiatives inspired place-entrepreneurs to enlist a range of influential actors to achieve its agenda by forming what Logan and Molotch (1987) termed a "growth coalition:"

> Coalition partners can range from local and metropolitan capital in construction, finance and banking; professional practices in law, architecture, design and planning; city politicians keen to acquire sponsorship; other indirect beneficiaries of developments like local media and utility corporations; and 'auxiliary players' with compelling local

> attachments including universities, theatres, professional sports clubs, small retailers and labor and community groups. (MacLeod, 2011, p. 2634)

The wide social base of the growth coalition not only instills ideological hegemony, but also the political legitimacy and unifying consensus behind citywide growth and urban development as a public good, and thereby effectively positioned the electorally- or politically-appointed beyond the purview of public accountability (Jonas & Wilson, 1999; Logan & Molotch, 1987; MacLeod, 2011).

Neoliberal Urban Restructuring: Urban Regime Theory

A closely related but alternative perspective to analyze how municipalities have responded to neoliberal urban restructuring was conceptualized by Stone's (1989, 1993, 2005) "urban regime theory." Since the 1960s, the increased mobility of capital and businesses required cities to adopt entrepreneurial strategies and reposition themselves to create a climate of business retention and spur urban development. In attempt to bypass the "economic determinism" foundation of growth coalition theory (i.e., elite power over the economic landscape), urban regime theory seeks to examine and explain the alliances between elected officials and individual actors that make urban governance possible. The study of urban regimes analyzes who cooperates and how their cooperation is achieved through informal arrangements across institutional sectors and actors, with an emphasis on political leadership and the policy formulation of urban development and political action. Urban regime theory also includes an examination of how that cooperation is maintained when confronted with an ongoing process of social change, influxes of new actors, and potential breakdowns through conflicts or indifference. In urban regime theory, different cities behave differently under similar economic conditions, and regimes differ based on their responses to the tensions between politics and

markets. Local variations of each individual case can turn out to be quite unique from city to city, thus, giving the rise to the framework of urban regime theory.

Stone depicted urban regimes as having four core elements: (1) the capacity to do something; (2) a set of actors who do it; (3) a relationship among the actors that enables them to work together; and (4) the durability of these arrangements to last over some period of years (Stone, 1989; Thomas, 1998). Developing this, Stone (1993) argued that urban regimes inevitably—despite conflicts among partners—coalesce into agenda-setting, resource mobilization, and coalition building. Coalitions can range from "development regimes" (pro-growth), "middle-class progressive regimes" (slow-growth), "maintenance regimes" (service-delivery), or "lower-class opportunity expansion regimes" (intergovernmental), depending on its composition and unique historical context (Stone, 1993). In doing so, Stone offered researchers variations to the patterns of urban governance beyond growth politics (MacLeod, 2011; Wood, 2004).

From a structuralism standpoint, there is little independence for citizens and policymakers to operate outside the confines of global capitalism. However, there are always choices for how local political regimes react to marketplace conditions and its citizenry, respectively. Likewise, Wong (1988) argues that urban policymaking can result from political choice as well as economic consideration. In this same vein, Stone advanced Abrams' (1982) contention that structures are relationships, and relationships are socially fabricated: real, but not fixed, and subject to purposive modification. Structur*ing* then—rather than a fixed structure—is the appropriate way to consider urban regimes, for Stone. For example, regime continuity is dependent on the capacity to adapt or reinforce existing structures amidst the ever-present possibility of change in the contentious political environment. For instance, growth machine

theory discounts the interests of the community and emphasizes the need for cooperation with the business-class above all else. From an urban regime perspective, however, the demands of the community and their voting power hold elected officials publically accountable, and thus, hold some degree of power within urban politics. The interests of the business elites and the interests of the community are often polarized, but it is the duty of city officials to establish an equilibrium between the two sides.

Urban regime theory, thus, departs from the division of labor between the state and the market, and focuses attention on the themes of power and governing capability. Instead of exercising social control with "power over" (whether from pluralist coalition power or elitist command power), urban regime theorists describe power as "power to" achieve a governing capacity of social production, and argue that it is highly unlikely for any one group to exercise absolute control over the urban landscape (MacLeod, 2011; Stone, 1989). Instead, Stone argued that informal arrangements between governing bodies and private interests necessarily function together to make and carry out governing decisions (Stone, 1989). Stone's social production model highlights mutually beneficial interdependence within the political economic model by investigating who is empowering groups and drawing them into the regime, rather than exerting power over them.

However, Gendron (2006) alleged that power-to and power-over are intertwined, and not mutually independent. For Gendron, public-private partnerships are not necessarily voluntary, but rather are a form of coerced "shared power" employed to dominate and control the opposition. Revisiting his earlier analysis, Stone (2005) too admitted that cooperation is not the norm and acknowledged that "in the US especially, business enjoys ready-made advantages as a willing and able participant in priority agendas" (Stone, p. 315). Harvey (1989) illustrated this

favorable business climate by emphasizing how business elites with access to financial (and other) resources are placed in a privileged position to exert influence on regime agendas, and often resulting in relaxed planning regulations, low-interest loans, tax abatements, and even direct subsidies to private investors and developers (MacLeod, 2011). In fact, both perspectives—growth coalitions and urban regimes—begin with the premise that local governments do not have the capacity to act or govern on their own. The major difference between the two is that growth coalition theory begins with the private sector and analyzes how those actors influence government, whereas regime theory starts with the government and examines how elected officials find coalition partners in the private sector.

Neoliberal Urban Development Strategies: Public-Private Partnerships

In either case, public-private partnerships (PPPs) were fostered in the 1980s, by the Thatcher and Reagan Administrations respectively, as the main strategic response for urban development during the retrenchment era of the welfare state. PPPs often form to reconcile the institutionally weak position of urban governance and gain access to the resources needed for redevelopment. Justified by the presumed inefficiencies of the public sector from the "rolling-back" of the Keynesian-welfare state and the "rolling-out" of the neoliberal state (Peck & Tickell, 2002), localities use PPPs to reduce government expenditures on public services and shrink its area of responsibility and accountability (Miraftab, 2004). Scholars have remained skeptical of the preeminence of market-driven merging of public/government interests with private/corporate interests—arising from the assumption that developers would operate unchecked by the public sector and influence policy decisions—and raised concerns about the accountability of governance (Sagalyn, 2007).

For example, Miraftab (2004) argued that there is a strong likelihood that PPPs would become a form of privatization under neoliberal policies of decentralization, and compared PPPs with the Trojan Horse: "Like the Trojan Horse, these partnerships might arrive with the promise of a gift but only to further dispossess the poor from their locally mobilized resources" (p. 98). Through her review of PPP literature—most of which was found to be funded and published by development agencies as promotional material—Miraftab uncovered a conspicuous silence. Little prior research provided any evidence about PPPs' equity dimension or any documented records of PPPs servicing the interests of the poor. Similarly, most research had little to say about whether and how such partnerships replace the public sector's responsibility to serve the public good. As Purcell (2008) put it:

> Oligarchic institutions like public-private partnerships and quasi-public agencies are increasingly making decisions that were formerly made by officials directly elected by the public ... [with] ... citizens and their representatives ... increasingly replaced in decision-making by panels of business leaders and economic experts who are perceived to know how best to respond to the competitive global market. (Purcell, 2008, p. 27, as cited by MacLeod, 2011, p. 2648)

The underlining assumptions of PPPs advance the ideological neoliberal script by asserting that partnerships that are good for the market are also good for the poor—because they create jobs as well as economic growth—and therein conflate economic growth and poverty alleviation with an unexamined assumption that the wealth created by these partnerships are distributed equitably:

> Local governments that receive only limited funds from other tiers of government or from subsidies across public agencies are expected to raise their own revenues. To increase revenue, local governments are also urged to function as a private sector firm does, insisting on full cost recovery for services and competing to make their area more attractive to local or multinational investors. To gain a competitive advantage, then, local governments often ease regulations—among them labor or environmental protections—to be more 'market-friendly' to potential investors ... In either case, whether the state creates new but ineffective decentralized administrative structures or adopts the operating principles of the for-profit private sector, the outcome is often similar: the regulatory role of the government presumed to address equity in partnerships remains as toothless abstraction. (Miraftab, 2004, pp. 94-95)

Thus, Miraftab argued that PPPs (despite their names) belong among the privatization strategies of the neoliberal agenda that removes public amenities from the responsibilities of government, and reduces the urban poor's access to basic services.

Despite these criticisms of PPPs, Sagalyn (2007) contended that much of the academic literature on the subject has misunderstood the context and complexity of such partnerships. She argued that the "generalizations based on downtown [public/private] projects offered misleading notions of how negotiations would play out in inner-city neighborhoods and situations that deliberately incorporated a range of stakeholder interests" (Sagalyn, 2007, p. 12). Instead, incorporating lessons learned from practice, Sagalyn showed how community benefit agreements—a legally enforceable contract negotiated between the developer of a project and organized representatives of the affected community—are part of a larger effort to produce "development without displacement" or "equitable development." Thus, for PPPs to be both economically successful and equitable, they require intentional mediation either by the community, or by the government on the behalf of the community.

The capacity to promote equity is explicitly linked to the functional role of government, as well as the accountability of municipal actors for leveraging a broader set of community interests, thereby ensuring that the public good and social justice are promoted across a broad array of local and community stakeholders (Harris, 2015). However, neoliberal development and urban governance restructured as an entrepreneurial and market-oriented scheme that is regarded to be beneficial to all social groups therein effectively places social justice and racial equity concerns outside the purview of the neoliberal state in favor of revenue generation (Mele, 2013). In this regard:

> The role of municipal governments has transmuted from an overarching guidance of spatial, economic, and social order to a development pattern where all factors are subsidiary to economic development and the drive for economic growth, with its presumed result of the expansion of the municipal revenue base. (Harris, 2015, p. 5)

Moreover, the functional role of municipal governments is called into question wherein the benefits of local economic development tend to be "privatized," and the related risks or burdens of those initiatives are essentially "socialized" and borne by the local government (Barnekov & Rich, 1989; Harris, 2015). In this respect, municipal governments have become a "civil service" for private-interests and a symbolic interface for the social good of public-interests as market-oriented growth in the neoliberal era.

While contemporary entrepreneurial cities deploy well-established entrepreneurial toolkits (i.e., public-private investment ventures, municipal real-estate speculation, place-branding, inter-urban competition), Lauermann (2018) argued that these tools are used to pursue multiple political logics in parallel with growth, and suggests a more interventionist role for municipalities in development in three ways:

> [1] First, entrepreneurial city governments have diversified their investment and policy portfolios ... [to] articulate visions for urban development ... [that] marks a return to classical urban regime politics, [and] often means reaching beyond municipal territory to garner support and financing for local agendas ...
> [2] Second, entrepreneurial cities increasingly rely on experimentation rather than speculation. This means moving towards a variety of metrics for evaluating entrepreneurial 'success' and 'failure' in terms other than local economic growth. Historically, ... [e]ntrepreneurial projects were typically evaluated based on a return on investment, with return measured in the terms of growth ... New instruments like tax-increment financing and bond derivatives allowed municipal governments to 'financialize' their operations ...
> [3] Third, analysts highlight how contemporary entrepreneurial cities engage in both inter-urban competition and inter-urban diplomacy ... to compete more effectively, but also to build inter-urban cooperation in a more diplomatic fashion. (Lauermann, 2018, pp. 213-216)

In short, recent research suggests that urban politics of the entrepreneurial city are evolving as the practices of entrepreneurialism are increasingly separated from the logics of growth politics.

Yet, moving entrepreneurialism beyond growth politics does not in itself lead to more participatory urban politics, nor does the diversifying entrepreneurial city agendas separate itself from the political economic logics of profit and growth thereof (Lauermann, 2018). The proliferation of entrepreneurial labels (e.g., concepts of the "creative city," the "eco-city," the "sustainable city," the "green city," the "smart city," or the "inclusive city," etc.) has allowed the depoliticizing of diverse agendas that can be rearticulated through the lens of growth (Lauermann, 2018; Swyngedouw, 2009). Admittedly, Lauermann's call for a post-neoliberal entrepreneurialism would not necessarily move beyond growth politics, but would signify that "entrepreneurial cities are engaged in parallel, diverging, and contradictory political agendas which cannot be described solely through a neoliberal analytic" (Lauermann, 2018, p. 220).

Neoliberal Urban Development Strategies: Creative Cities

A highly influential political agenda adopted by many municipalities across the United States in recent decades has been popularized by Florida's (2002, 2003, 2012, 2017) "creative class" theory, which seeks to explain and inform the relationship between the creative class and economic growth. Florida argued that cities should reorganize their built environments to accommodate the needs and desires of the creative class (i.e., scientists, engineers, university professors, programmers, designers, architects, entertainers, poets, novelists, and opinion-makers), "whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology, and/or creative content" (Florida, 2002, p. 8). In doing so, they would then find themselves stronger and more prosperous than ever, because regional economic growth is driven by the specific locational choices of creative people (Florida, 2002; Zimmerman, 2008). To this extent, Florida declared that members of the creative class are more geographically footloose than members of the

traditional working class, and argued that people do not follow jobs so much as the jobs follow creative people (Zimmerman, 2008). Peck (2005) identified this tangible expression in which the creative class will thrive, per Florida, as the "buzzing, trendy neighborhood," equipped with a multitude of informal social houses (e.g., coffeehouses, bookstores, urban recreational nightlife ecologies, etc.) enhanced by a presumably open and tolerant culture with a large concentration of bohemians and gays (Zimmerman, 2008).

Florida argued that the success of economic development depends on a region's ability to foster talent, tolerance, and technology (the "3 T's"), and developed the "Creativity Index" to measure cities and regions against each other (Florida, 2002). The Creativity Index was generated from four regional measures: creative class concentration (workers with creative occupations); the Talent Index (populations with higher-education); the Innovation Index (patents per capita); and a High-Tech Index based on IT software and biomedical industries (Sadler, 2005). Florida (2003) later developed the "Gay Index" and "Bohemian Index" as indicators for tolerance of diversity, and argued that the presence of bohemians and gays are strong predictors for high-technology and population growth of creative capital, thereby making his contribution to the "human capital" conversation expressively cultural (Zimmerman, 2008). Despite heavy criticism from many scholars (Culver, 2017; Glaeser, 2005; Maliszewski, 2004; Peck, 2005; Storper & Scott, 2009; Zimmerman, 2008), Florida's theories have been championed and adopted by several municipalities across the United States as part of their "creative city development toolkits" nested within the neoliberal entrepreneurial logic to attract the creative class (Collis, Felton, & Graham, 2010). This happened to be especially the case in slow-growth metropolitan areas of post-industrial rustbelt cities that have experienced decades of relative decline (Zimmerman, 2008).

Of the many critiques, prominent among them were those that questioned Florida's assumptions about the relationship between the creative class and economic growth, as well as the extent to which the statistical analyses of index indicators were empirically grounded and could hold indicative value that would be predictive of economic growth. For example, Glaeser (2005) ran regressions on Florida's Bohemian Index data and found that there was very little independent effect from bohemian concentrations after controlling for young college-educated adults (as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). Kotkin and Siegel (2004) showed that Florida's creative urban hub clusters exhibited above average unemployment rates compared to other areas of the metropolis (as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). Likewise, Malanga (2004) argued that the existence of "bohemian neighborhoods" was most likely a consequence of economic growth, rather than a cause of it, and that Florida's argument was entirely based on circular logic (as cited by Zimmerman, 2008).

Furthermore, the intensifying of socioeconomic inequalities has been among the most critical observations of case-study research conducted on creative city practices (Culver, 2017; Grodach, 2013; Maliszewski, 2004; Peck, 2005, 2007). For instance, Maliszewski (2004) continued the offensive and criticized Florida's economic theory for wholly ignoring the intensifying problems of urban inequalities and condemned his thesis as an exercise in "yuppie self-indulgence," wherein Florida celebrated "job insecurity" and "uncertainty" as "liberating" workers from large corporations, factories, and unions (as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). Peck (2005) stressed that Florida's creativity script recodifies and even extended the neoliberal syllabus that was based on intensifying urban competition, place-marketing, property-led development, and gentrification (as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). Later, Peck (2007) and Grodach (2013) alleged that creative city strategies exacerbated socioeconomic inequalities

because they have been formulated to exist alongside inequality rather than alleviating it (as cited in Culver, 2017).

Correspondingly, Wilson and Keil (2008) displayed how creative city strategies were designed to cater to the desires of an already-privileged, well-educated, and economically better-off demographic, rather than addressing social inequalities and the needs of the socioeconomically marginalized (Culver, 2017). More critically, other scholars have positioned social justice at the core of neoliberal creative city urban development criticism in relation to gentrification and social inequalities (Burnett, 2013; Culver 2017; Parekh, 2014; Sims, 2015; Smith, 2002). Scholarly work on social justice is broadly concerned with the question of how more equitable geographies can be produced, while recognizing that unjust spaces are socially constructed and actively contributes to (re)producing social inequalities in a dialectic relationship (Dikec, 2001; Culver, 2017; Harvey, 2009; Soja, 2010).

Florida (2012) revisited his creative class thesis and addressed the critics whom challenged his methods of statistical analyses and determined that his arguments misunderstood causality, and were based on circular logic. Tasked with maintaining his core arguments and defending assessments of correlation versus causation, Florida invoked the "chicken versus the egg" paradox to assert his emphasis on human capital and creative talent: do people follow jobs, or do jobs follow people? In doing so, Florida continued to argue that building a creative community is the panacea for the city's economic ills (D'andrea, 2013; Florida, 2012). To be sure, Florida is not without his supporters, nor should enhancing the quality of place be a faulty virtue. However, the concerns therein are that:

> Creative place-making illustrates the power of policy discourse, but as a cultural policy movement, its projects struggle with engendering revitalization in disadvantaged places, supporting artistic development alongside community development, and may be exploited to spur property-based development schemes. (Grodach, 2017, p. 89)

Additionally, beyond a few isolated case studies, there is little to no empirical research on the community and economic development impacts of creative city place-making (Grodach, 2017).

In his latest rendition, Florida (2017) struggled to rectify the result of the widespread deployment of his creative class theorem by policymakers: gentrification and the widening of social inequities resulting from uneven development. That is to say—there are certainly benefits that can be derived from deploying methods to enhance an urban environment designed to attract and retain the creative class—albeit the burdens resulting from such practices rests on the historically marginalized working-class of the urban poor. Florida framed his defense in a "winner-take-all-urbanism," one that is both paradoxical and contradictory wherein the interplay of innovation and agglomeration gave rise to uneven development, the uneven distribution of income and wage inequality, concentrated poverty, and the deepening of residential segregation by income and rising housing prices (Beauregard, 2017; Florida, 2017). In Florida's words:

> Winner-take-all urbanism means that a few big winners capture a disproportionate share of the spoils of innovation and economic growth, while many more places stagnate or fall further behind. (Florida, 2017, p. 186)

To this end, Florida remarked on how urban amenities that should benefit all residents—such as transportation and urban parks—have become the spoils of the urban elites (Florida, 2017; Plummer, 2018). Central to this observation, Florida highlighted how cultivating a nightlife, attracting start-ups and tech firms, and creating transit options without thinking about inclusion and equity is what led to inequality (Florida, 2017; Plummer, 2018). Yet, this is not an argument about contradictions or exclusion, but about distribution and how economic and political power divides the spoils of growth and decline through a process of exploitation (Beauregard, 2017). To be sure:

> Prosperity and poverty exist together, with the implication being that prosperity depends on deprivation or, to state it bluntly, the rich are rich and creative cities are prosperous because other people and other places are exploited and marginalized. (Beauregard, 2017, pp. 1028-1029)

It seemed to come as a surprise to Florida that cities can both be diverse and segregated at the same time, until he ultimately acknowledged that "knowledge-based places don't just reflect inequality, they help create it" (Florida, 2017, p. 88).

Yet, through to the end Florida still maintained the core arguments of his creative class theory, and continued to suggest that creative cities present both the problem and the solution (Florida, 2017). In a PBS News Hour interview, Florida discussed his influence on urban revival and what he characterized as the "crisis of success:"

> A bigger, denser city in general increases the rate of innovation, increases the rate of start-up, increases the rate of productivity. At the same time, the bigger, the denser, the more knowledge-intensive increases the rate of inequality, increases the rate of economic segregation, makes housing less affordable. So, it's a two-sided monster. So, the second dimension is, I kind of call it a crisis of success. These places now become terribly unaffordable for anyone who's not either a knowledge worker or a techie or a member of the super-rich. Now owning real estate in a superstar city becomes another class of asset. I realized that this urbanism, winner-take-all urbanism, it was benefiting one group much more disproportionately than the other two. If the old urban crisis was about the middle-class flight from the city to the suburbs, the new urban crisis is about really the disappearance of middle-class neighborhoods from our society. That's the great contradiction of today's urbanized capitalism. You know, if we want to have a productive city, an innovative city, a country that innovates and creates good jobs, we need them, but, at the same time, that the very thing that is driving our economy forward is creating these divides. (PBS, 2017)

Finally, in attempt to promote inclusion and alleviate concerns of displacement, gentrification, and deepening inequalities within the creative city paradigm, Florida postulated a series of policy recommendations geared to solve this "new urban crisis" including place-based initiatives, land-value taxes, tax increment local transfers, and investments in mass transit (Florida, 2017). Seemingly though, not much has changed between the entrepreneurial practices that exacerbated these inequities and the solutions that fit within the neoliberal logic to rectify itself.

Transit-Oriented Development and Implications for Equitable Development

The evolution of the neoliberal paradigm positioned municipal governments as the entrepreneurs of place-based initiatives, and Florida's (2002, 2003, 2012, 2017) highly popularized creative class theory tasked municipalities with rebranding themselves through place-making strategies of growth, driven by securing the mobile human capital of creative people. Catalytic transit-oriented development (TOD) projects—such as the modern streetcar—offered municipalities the promise of rebranding their city to attract the creative class and enhance the transportation options of a given locality, while generating economic development through sustained private investment. As a result of these trends, many cities across the United States have been investing in mass transit and are now experiencing a resurgence of modern streetcar projects that can be understood as a shift towards "strategic spatial planning" (King & Fischer, 2016), or more precisely as a "creative city development tool" (Culver, 2017).

King and Fischer (2016) identified a shift of traditional transportation planning practices, and argue that contemporary streetcar projects have been used as a form of strategic spatial planning at the expense of integrated transportation planning. Traditional urban planning efforts combine various functions and priorities into a single framework to develop a robust and holistic network. Conversely, strategic spatial planning involves the setting of principles and frameworks to guide the location of development. Modern streetcar projects, for example, vary from one city to another with respect to the design characteristics, fare payment systems, and owners and operators. Common among them, however, are the way in which "streetcar investments consistently invoke spatial planning and are justified with the expectation of increased land value and property development benefits" (King & Fischer, 2016, p. 283). Emphasis on place-shaping and its isolation from the broader context of other long-range

planning efforts of city and regional planning agencies is how King and Fischer see modern streetcar projects as embodying this strategic spatial planning.

Culver (2017) developed King and Fischer's ideas further to argue that the streetcar is not just a form of strategic spatial planning, but more precisely a creative city development tool intended to attract the affluent millennials of the creative class, and thus embedded in the general trajectory of neoliberal urbanization. Culver's claims are supported by Brown, Nixon, and Ramos (2015). They find that enthusiasm for streetcars remained high among proponents—despite poor performance and low-ridership compared to local bus routes operating in the same general area—because the streetcar was not seen as primarily a transportation investment, but instead as a catalyst to jump-start economic activity, an attraction for young professionals, and a symbol of permanent public investment to encourage sustained long-term private investment. The authors substantiated their claims through an investigation of five modern-era streetcar systems—Portland, Seattle, Little Rock, Memphis, and Tampa Bay—and found that the primary purpose of all the streetcar systems was to serve as an economic development tool, with the secondary objective to serve as a tourism-promoting amenity, while transportation objectives were largely afterthoughts (Brown, et al., 2015). The study urged local planners and policymakers alike to consider the fundamental purpose of any proposed streetcar system in their community, and to consider its unintended consequences. For example, the streetcar systems in Little Rock and Memphis were designed to attract tourist-travel markets and experienced lower ridership and poor performance due to their vulnerability to economic conditions, compared to those that focused on serving a wider array of potential users (Brown, et al., 2015).

Essentially, contemporary streetcar projects are funded by capital subsidies administered through a variety of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs—including the

Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) and Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funds—and are predicated on local financial matches (Mallet, 2014). The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) TIGER grant application process requires municipalities to submit a cost-benefit analysis of proposed projects. Through their investigation, King and Fischer (2016) found that from 2009-2013, approximately $866 million was spent on streetcars (with $279 million, or 32% covered by TIGER grants), and approximately 75% of the expected benefits derived from generating economic development. Upon consideration of these findings, King and Fischer emphasized that "not only are these economic development benefits presented with a degree of certainty, the majority are calculated as property value increases which mostly accrue to private owners" (p. 386). Given the strong role of spatial planning and funding coming from both local and federal sources, it is important to investigate the major assumptions promoted by the policy framework and to ask whom the vision benefits and whom it excludes:

> It is unclear how enhanced property values in select, preferred locations align with national transportation priorities related to increasing transit modal split, reducing congestion and improving environmental outcomes. (King & Fischer, 2016, p. 387)

Thus, King and Fischer concluded that these projects should be evaluated by the FTA against other economic development strategies rather than against other transportation improvements, and they set the stage to raise important questions regarding the role of federal transportation funding for the benefit of private developers and property owners.

Even where municipalities diversify their portfolios, such as the case study of Detroit's Public-Private Streetcar (Lowe & Grengs, 2018), there is still concern for substantial and equitable collective benefits when public dollars combine with private funds. Mirroring the same concerns of King and Fischer, the authors remained skeptical of streetcars as U.S. DOT

investments without the proper mechanisms in place "to ensure collective benefits from projects focusing on increased property value, so that collective transportation benefits are not so contingent on individual actors" (Lowe & Grengs, 2018, p. 12). While advocates for such projects point to Portland as showcasing the "gold standard" for modern streetcar projects that spur TOD with enhanced property values and greater urban livability, critics contend that development subsidies and other incentives had a greater impact on property development than the streetcar investment itself—which accrue to private owners and raise concerns about the equitable distribution of benefits and burdens (Hovee & Gustafson, 2012; King & Fischer, 2016; O'Toole, 2012a, 2012b). Others have argued that without explicit considerations to confront social disparities, sustainability initiatives and "green" developments can reproduce racialized and spatialized social inequalities, and drive displacement and gentrification (Alkon & Agyeman, 2011; Checker, 2011; While, Jonas, & Gibbs, 2004). Herein explains Portland's "urban sustainability fix" (While et al., 2004) of how the inequitable distribution of green investment in the downtown area has led to a more White and affluent urban core, and highlighted the uneven development and distribution of opportunity-costs that ultimately contributed to the demarcation of racialized poverty along 82nd Avenue of East Portland:

> The sustainability fix is very much a spatial one; as capital returned to inner Portland under the banner of sustainability, livability, and neighborhood revitalization, devaluation of East Portland's built environment ensued—even as population increased. (Goodling, Green, & McClintock, 2015, p. 516)

Therein privileging economic growth over equity in effort to expand its tax-base, cities are tasked with the entrepreneurial efforts to attract affluent, well-educated, environmentally-minded residents and the businesses that cater to their tastes. Under such circumstances:

> Streetcars do little for and may even harm accessibility for transit-dependent populations —through bus service changes to accommodate streetcar service and indirectly through opportunity costs and future siphoning of limited subsidies. [Detroit Streetcar] supporters

> argue that the project does deliver collective benefits through economic development, but the *direct* economic benefit will be concentrated among property owners ... Instead of competition to attract affluent millennials, we argue that public sector officials must leverage their roles in public-private deals to ensure more spending that serves transit-dependent populations by design, not by chance. (Lowe & Grengs, 2018, p. 12)

There is still much debate surrounding the economic development effects of modern streetcar projects, although they appear to be major determinants of the decision to build streetcars in most cities, regardless of its transportation effects (Brown et al., 2015).

Furthermore, there is no empirical evidence that modern streetcar systems produce clear transportation benefits, nor is there any clear evidence that streetcars attract new users to transit (Mallet, 2014). Economic and political rent-seeking behavior underlie the growth machine dynamics and explains why streetcar projects remained appealing to those actors despite the mode's weak transportation performance (Ramos-Santiago, Brown, & Nixon, 2016). Likewise, there is no guarantee that local sustainable development projects and TOD—such as the modern streetcar—within existing neighborhoods will encourage or even maintain existing social diversity and equity. Dale and Newman (2009) argued that livability without equity leads to the gentrification of the "retailscape," and a shift towards higher-income residents:

> There may be an inverse relationship: 'greening' of neighborhoods can increase desirability and thus spur gentrification that drives up housing prices, making those developments increasingly less affordable and paradoxically decreases the diversity that Florida (2002) claims is so crucial for the creative class. (Dale & Newman, 2009, p. 672)

Even where some degree of accessible housing is mandated as a requirement for development, the authors contended that the reality of the housing types and retailscapes offered often do not meet the needs of lower-income families.

Importantly, Brown, et al. (2015) determined from key informant interviews that streetcars have taken on a symbolic role separate from its transportation function in many cities—for image-branding and place-marketing to others outside the community—with the

intention of generating tourism, attracting visitors, and promoting itself to the creative class. Cox (2017) described the role of ideology in growth coalition urban politics as:

> How, that is, the growth coalition fostered and benefited from a discourse that promoted the growth of the city and a subsequent national visibility as something that would work to the advantage of all, if only at the level of identity. (Cox, 2017, p. 391)

Manville and Cummins (2015) illuminated how ideological discourse created the disparity between transit support and actual transit use, identified as a collective action problem. Their findings revealed that public support for transit is grounded in its anticipated social (not private) benefits, and showed that transit supporters (predominately White and affluent) and transit users (predominately African-American, Latino, and/or low-income) are demographically very different people. The concern with these findings is that:

> Put simply, Americans are more likely to see transit as a way to solve social problems than as a way to get around ... Politically, convincing people to finance transit is easier than convincing them to ride it, because financing transit requires no change in travel behavior. But transit's benefits hinge on changes in travel behavior—on more people riding and fewer people driving. (Manville & Cummins, 2015, p. 331)

This collective action problem stems from the belief that people can benefit from transit without riding it, making it unlikely that transit voters will become transit riders. This is an important distinction for the streetcar resurgence era—because streetcar projects are not principally about providing transportation solutions—and neither transit supporters nor dependent transit users are likely to substitute automobile trips or bus rides for streetcar rides.

While transit's ambitions and numerous goals may or may not be poor public policy, "they are increasingly not public policy for the poor" (Taylor & Morris, 2015, p. 365). For instance, Culver's (2017) qualitative content analysis study of 12 streetcar projects in 11 cities—including Milwaukee's M-Line/L-Line—found zero references regarding how the projects may impact the socioeconomically marginalized (many of whom are captive transit users). In

addition, Culver did not find any considerations for the streetcar's purported impact on urban economic development for the urban poor, nor to how it may function as an improvement to local transit:

> In a context wherein the predicted benefits of a streetcar for new transit riders and tourists, for attracting new talent and residents, for attracting new and reinvigorating existing businesses, and for increasing local property values and the local tax base are all essential and consistent arguments, this discursive silence on the topic of social justice is deafening (Culver, 2017, p. 27).

Thus, careful consideration and attention to the anticipated benefits and burdens of the opportunity-costs of TOD streetcar projects need to be examined and scrutinized for its implications for equitable development.

Racial Equity and Evaluating the Benefits and Burdens

Recently, with recognition to the challenges of growing inequality in urban space exacerbated by neoliberal development strategies, governments themselves are starting to respond in different ways around these concerns of equity questions. There is an emerging set of literature and practices that offer new methods and toolkits to measure the benefits and burdens of racial equity, and to examine ways to address it affirmatively. Among these are the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) material and the Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) from the Race Forward material.

GARE was launched by the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society at the University of California Berkeley in 2014, and merged with Race Forward in 2017, under the umbrella of the Center for Social Inclusion (Bernabei, 2017). The GARE and Race Forward material present an emerging set of practices and principles around racial equity and development, and are becoming a foundational part of the considerations for a jurisdiction's

place-making strategies. GARE works to advance racial equity and increase opportunities for all communities by building the field of practice to advance racial equity within and through government, and Race Forward crafts and applies tools and strategies to dismantle structural racial inequity and transform policies and practices to create equitable outcomes for all (Nelson, Spokane, Ross, & Deng, 2015). Since 2015, over 157 local and regional governmental jurisdictions across the country have joined the ranks of GARE, including Milwaukee County in 2016 (GARE, 2019). In 2017, Milwaukee County created the Office on African American Affairs to address concerns of race and equity more explicitly throughout the county, and advance the practices and principles of the GARE and Race Forward toolkits.

The GARE Racial Equity Toolkit is guided by a simple set of questions: (1) What is the proposal, and desired results and outcomes? (2) What is the data, and what does the data tell us? (3) How have communities been engaged, and are there opportunities to expand engagement? (4) Who benefits from or will be most burdened by the proposal, and what are the strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences? (5) What is the plan for implementation? And, (6) How will accountability be ensured, and how will the results be evaluated and communicated? (Curren, Liu, Marsh, & Rose, 2015; Curren, Nelson, Marsh, Noor, & Liu, 2016). Likewise, the Race Forward REIA tool is:

> A systematic examination of how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision. REIAs are used to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences in a variety of contexts, including the analysis of proposed policies, institutional practices, programs, plans and budgetary decisions. (Keleher, 2014, p. 29)

Much like environmental impact assessments, the REIA tool is intended to be conducted prior to enacting new proposals and inform the decision-making process. Explicit consideration is necessary, because "when racial equity is not consciously addressed, racial inequity is often unconsciously replicated" (Keleher, 2014, p. 29).

Knowledge Gap

Much of the literature with attention to the recent reemergence of streetcars has mostly been limited to more quantifiable issues such as its relation to economic activity and transit-oriented development, construction and operation costs, impact on property values, congestion mitigation, transit efficiency, public health, or value capture (Brown, 2013; Brown et al., 2015; Currie, Delbosc, Harrison, & Sarvi, 2013; Currie & Shalaby, 2007; Foletta, Vanderkwaak, & Grandy, 2013; Hinners, Nelson, & Buchert, 2018; Mokadi, Mitsova, & Wang, 2013; O'Toole, 2012a, 2012b; Ramos-Santiago & Brown, 2015; Richmond et al., 2014; Taylor & Morris, 2015; Zhao, Iacono, Lari, & Levinson, 2012). Others have focused on more qualitative issues such as place-making, public perception and consensus, cultural politics, racialized space and mobility, and transit-induced gentrification (Dorsey & Mulder, 2013; Gibson, 2017; Golub, Marcantonio, & Sanchez, 2013; Immergluck & Balan, 2018; Manville & Cummins, 2015).

Pearsall and Pierce (2010) called upon the need for more theoretical and empirical research on the conceptualization of social sustainability and its relationship to environmental justice that addresses the distributive and procedural elements of an agenda or policy. Holifield (2001) noted that empirical investigations of environmental justice have typically failed to extend investigative analysis beyond sites of chemical hazards and environmental contamination. Yet, as illuminated by Holifield, the U.S. DOT, Federal Highway Administration, and the FTA consider "environmental justice policy" to be defined as ensuring that minority and low-income populations benefit proportionally from transportation projects—including but not limited to environmental effects such as aesthetic values, traffic congestion, and air quality, as well as social effects such as community isolation or displacement (U.S. DOT, 2000; Holifield, 2001).

Highlighted by Culver (2017), largely missing from the literature (with exceptions to Dorsey & Mulder, 2013 and King & Fischer, 2016) have been political and political-economic analyses of this major urban development trend, as well as its social implications. Following Culver's (2017) discussion for future research:

> These projects should be scrutinized as to how the needs of the socioeconomically marginalized and captive transit users are addressed by these plans, and whether and to what degree the improved livability and economic benefit for some might come at the cost of greater exclusion of the urban (mobility) poor. (Culver, 2017, p. 28)

As Culver suggests, mobility analysis should be considered through which social (in)justices are produced as a spatial phenomenon. Considering that mobility is inherently a spatial phenomenon (Cresswell, 2010), mobility must also be viewed as one site from and through which social (in)justice is produced.

Mobility measures the ease of moving on the transportation network and the travel time index (i.e., the ratio of travel time during congestion/peak-hours to the travel time in uncongested conditions), whereas accessibility considers both mobility and the location of activities from measuring the ease and efficiency that enables users to reach other people and places within the metropolitan area (Levinson & Emilia, 2011). In short, mobility is about moving people and goods from place to place, and accessibility is something that is easily approached, entered, obtainable, or attained. Mobility provides access, but it is not access. Likewise, accessibility does not necessarily provide or enhance mobility (Stanley, 2010). In this sense, accessibility can be a valuable indicator for the equitability of TOD projects for a given region or community:

> The choice, and even preference for, one transportation technology over another is driven by the desire for mobility and its ability to provide as a means for accessing the goods and services we want ... Simply adding transportation modes to an existing built environment will not necessarily increase mobility or accessibility. (Stanley, 2010)

More research is thus needed on the active role of TOD projects and its effects on accessibility, as well as more generally on government's co-constitutive role in the production of socially (un)just geographies, and its implications for equitable development.

Duranton and Guerra (2016) argue that accessibility is the main quantity to consider from an urban resource allocation standpoint as it links the two primary urban consumption goods: land-use and transportation.

> Accessibility is never absolute but always relative and conditional on one's needs and preferences. Consequently, any change in land use patterns or in the transportation infrastructure will be positive for some and negative for others. Accessibility is inherently a source of conflict. (Duranton & Guerra, 2016, p. 12)

Each urban policy will have multiple direct and indirect effects on accessibility. While urban transportation infrastructure is a congestible public good, the locational choices of commercial development, firm location decisions, and household location decisions are subject to externalities (Duranton & Guerra, 2016). There has been little research devoted to the issues of equity and accessibility to the transit system in relation to the modern streetcar resurgence, and the production of socially just and unjust spaces alike resulting from TOD strategies. If in fact the logic of the modern streetcar project is informed primarily as an economic development tool, then the questions become centered around how and where the benefits and burdens of TOD are distributed, and how to ensure that TOD projects produce equitable outcomes and improve accessibility for those who depend on public transit the most. More explicitly, to what extent does the Milwaukee Streetcar as a TOD project contribute to or detract from the challenges associated with growing inequality, equity and community development in Milwaukee?

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to investigate the Milwaukee Streetcar ("The Hop") as a creative city TOD tool, and to examine the distribution of benefits and burdens relative to distinct constituencies within the City of Milwaukee. My analysis will be conducted on the merits and claims of the streetcar resurgence as a neoliberal creative downtown development tool, and will investigate the import of this development strategy relative to racialized poverty located elsewhere in the city. Furthermore, it will include an exploration of what roles the municipal government played in advancing the streetcar project with respect to promoting access to urban opportunity, mobility/accessibility, and equitable development. Finally, a comparative examination will be made between The Hop's initial routes (the M-Line, L-Line, and Wisconsin Center extension) and the possible extension routes (to Bronzeville and Walker's Point) that deliberately focus on equitable-TOD (e-TOD) outcomes and explicitly consider anti-displacement strategies for implementation. This research will seek to shed light on the thinking surrounding the streetcar that intersects with the issues of anti-displacement and e-TOD, with a focus on whose needs are or are not being met, and how the benefits (and burdens) of the Milwaukee Streetcar are distributed. Concluding remarks will be made concerning the limits of this research and recommendations for future research.

This research will be drawing on qualitative content and discourse analysis[2] of newspaper articles, public meetings, and policy and planning documents to understand the true dynamics of

[2] Content analysis is the empirical documentation of quantitative frequencies of terminologies usage for a foundation, and discourse analysis builds off the foundation to explore how these meanings and frequencies are used to reinforce or establish meanings. Discourse is the guiding principle for policy and planning documents to frame its vision, goals, measurable objectives, recommendations, and outcomes. Discourse analysis is used to understand how the deployment of language has social content and societal effects, to identify discursive focus and discursive silence, and language difference between policy documents, public opinion and media coverage (Hastings, 2000). "Arguably, much of the ultimate value of discourse analysis rests in its capacity to be used as a critical tool for unearthing and, in the process challenging, deeply embedded assumptions and received knowledge" (Hastings, 2000, p. 138). Discourse analysis could also shed light on contradictory elements between documents and policy in action. Intertextuality works across different texts to identify the dominant discourse that helped stabilize common-sense ideas and acknowledges that meanings are co-created with an active audience (Waitt, 2010).

the benefits and burdens of the streetcar as a TOD strategy and its impacts in Milwaukee. To supplement my analytical perspective, this inquiry will also be based on five conducted semi-structured interviews of relevant stakeholders, including city staff, elected officials, development consultants, and community representatives of neighborhood and business organizations (Interview questions can be found the Appendix). For this study, interviewee identities will be kept confidential and quoted responses will be cited by a random number and the interviewer initials (e.g., 25JD) to ensure anonymity of the participants. Guided by the REIA and GARE material, this research will also be applying an equity lens to strategically question and analyze the distribution of the benefits and burdens between different groups and stakeholders. The use of multiple qualitative data sources allowed for the triangulation of data to be examined with an analytical perspective of an equity lens.

CASE STUDY OF MILWAUKEE

Milwaukee's Creative City Development Strategies

Zimmerman (2008) made the case that Milwaukee's growth coalition adopted Florida's creative class theory of urban growth in the early 2000's, and influenced policymakers to envision a creative city development template that established a new wave of planning that was "rooted squarely in a fortified regime of place marketing, property-led development, gentrification and normalized sociospatial inequality" (p. 231). Derived from a detailed investigation of planning documents and extensive interviews with Milwaukee stakeholders and land-based interest groups, Zimmerman's research demonstrated how Florida's ideas were assimilated into the infrastructure of Milwaukee's urban promotion, and argued:

> Milwaukee represents a strategic incubator site for the articulation of innovative neoliberal policy innovations. That is to say, recent growth coalition activities in

> Milwaukee are essentially experiments emerging within the broader neoliberal syllabus, which, among other things, dictates that urban space be mobilized as an arena for market-oriented economic growth and elite consumption. (Zimmerman, 2008, p. 231)

Among the first efforts of growth coalition activities was to rebrand Milwaukee's image from "brew town to cool town" following Florida's extensive tour of the city when he declared, "This is cool, this is really cool" (Gertzen, 2001, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008), and recommended that the city highlight and promote its "coolness components" of place (Cigallio-Granger, 2003, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008).

The Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC)—one of the city's most influential business coalitions—brought Richard Florida to Milwaukee for a series of visits beginning in 1999, which began his influential imprint on the Milwaukee business and development community, and received considerable positive attention from the press (Sherman, 2015). Following his visit, the MMAC—along with the help from the OnMilwaukee news publication—created a social network organization called the Young Professionals of Milwaukee (YPM) to spark the creative class conversations in the greater metropolitan Milwaukee area, and rebrand the city's image (Sherman, 2015; Zimmerman, 2008). YPM (now known as Fuel Milwaukee) also encouraged the spawning of other Florida-inspired organizations, such as Newaukee and the Creative Alliance (Sherman, 2015). Between 1995 and 2005, Milwaukee's official promotional logo was represented by an industrial gear-like symbol reminiscent of the industrial past, accompanied with the slogan "Milwaukee, the Genuine American City" (Zimmerman, 2008, p. 233). Milwaukee's rebranding efforts were not materialized until another alliance of downtown business groups—the Spirit of Milwaukee (SOM)—conducted a study and found that most Americans associated Milwaukee with "beer" and "cold," and thus began their campaign to dismantle the Genuine American City logo and replace it with "a new representation

of Milwaukee—moving towards cool without screaming cool" (Zimmerman, 2008, p. 234). Milwaukee's new logo that launched in 2005 became a representation of the Calatrava-designed addition of the Milwaukee Art Museum (MAM) that SOM determined to not only have stunning visual images, but also produced the strongest identity of place (Zimmerman, 2008).

The Calatrava symbol worked on many fronts. Named after the internationally renowned "starchitect" Santiago Calatrava, the new addition to the MAM elevated Milwaukee to an international stage of recognition, generated measurable increases in tourism, and was instrumental in producing a high-rise residential real estate boom in the surrounding area (Murphy, 2003, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). The $122 million addition of the MAM was also representative of the entrepreneurial city's strategy of "speculative development of place" (Harvey, 1989, p. 8), wherein the MAM:

> Became an apt symbol of recent growth-coalition activity in Milwaukee, in that it mobilized both private and public funds to support selective economic growth and elite consumption practices, while at the same time successfully merging the 'creativity script' with the symbolic economy of the city's downtown neighborhoods. (Zimmerman, 2008, p. 236)

Prior to the completion of the MAM expansion, Milwaukee had initiated a series of catalytic projects that sought to humanize its streetscapes with mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly redevelopment projects, and reestablish connections between downtown neighborhoods and the riverfront.

Milwaukee's 1999 comprehensive downtown plan was envisioned with a New Urbanist ideal that began to shift the city away from the modern automobile-centric and mono-functional zoning planning, and initiated a series of catalytic redevelopment projects that would help craft more pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. Spearheaded by Mayor John Norquist (1988-2004)—and member of the Congress for the New Urbanism Board of Directors—the plan estimated that

70% of streetscapes within the downtown area were unwelcoming to pedestrian use, and called for the elimination of one-way streets and the conversion of vacant land, surface lots, and brownfield sites into mixed-use pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, each with their own distinct identity (Zimmerman, 2008). The plan's rhetoric represented a confluence of:

> The discourse of 'traditional' cultural values, the ascendant planning discourse of New Urbanism, and dominance of neo-liberalism in the arena of public policy converge in Milwaukee's image-making and development strategies. (Kenny & Zimmerman, 2004)

As highlighted by Kenny and Zimmermn (2004), New Urbanist design principles and neo-traditional values are not necessarily linked inherently, but were conflated into a neoliberal discourse that favors "individual responsibility over government subsidies and emphasizes private-sector solutions for issues ranging from affordable housing to education" (p. 75). In doing so, Mayor Norquist and the Congress for the New Urbanism championed civic entrepreneurialism, and attributed uneven development and the flight of jobs and capital as the result of an overbearing federal government (Kenny & Zimmerman, 2004).

Two of the largest redevelopment projects that resulted from the plan was the demolition of the Park East freeway—located along a strip of prime real estate that also represented a symbolic barrier between the downtown and the slowly gentrifying neighborhoods to the north—and the development of a mixed-use neighborhood built along a brownfield riverfront corridor in the Beerline district:

> Beerline redevelopment efforts paid special attention to opening up the formerly-inaccessible riverfront property, and re-establishing connections to the adjacent neighborhoods. The downtown Riverwalk was extended along the entire waterfront portion of the corridor, fashioning one of Milwaukee's most unique semi-public spaces. Pedestrian access to the neighborhoods above the bluff was provided by a series of prominent outdoor staircases as well. Highlighting the emphasis on outdoor recreation and the reclamation of the river for use by the creative class, the Milwaukee Row Club was invited to make its home in a prominent location in the heart of the new neighborhood. (Zimmerman, 2008, pp. 236-237)

Within the following few years, roughly 3000 new residential units were constructed in the central business district with an average of 500 new units per year, and property owners registered a 54% increase of property values (Gertzen & Daykin, 2003, Gould, 2002, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). Figure 1 shows the marriage between redevelopment zones in Milwaukee and the creation of new residential units, exemplified as property-led development.

Later, Milwaukee's subsequent plan entitled "live/work/play" envisioned an even more explicitly creative city development template, again showcasing how Florida's visits inspired municipal actors. The authors of the plan worked in popular motifs of the "creativity-driven economy" and encouraged certain companies of the manufacturing sector to rebrand themselves and resurface as tech companies (Kahler-Slater, 2002, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). The plan also stressed the importance of attracting and securing the young professionals of the creative class in a competitive global market of cities, and recommended the integration of Milwaukee's new logo into the material landscape of the city with "bright, colorful, and fun signs" at the airport and along freeways and city streets—and even went so far as to recommend that local media outlets report more positive stories about Milwaukee, and showcase successful neighborhoods and industries to cast the city's image to be more attractive to residents surrounding the greater metro area (Kahler-Slater, 2002, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). While rebranding a city's image and attempting to attract young professionals into the local economy are not troublesome on the surface, Zimmerman's concerns were that:

> Celebrations of the creative class by the Milwaukee growth coalition had the overall effect of repackaging gentrification and making it politically digestible to local planners and municipal actors desperate for simple solutions to complex problems. (p. 240)

To be clear, the ambitions of the creative city development template are not necessarily rooted in an ambivalence toward the working poor population—openness to outsiders, tolerance, social

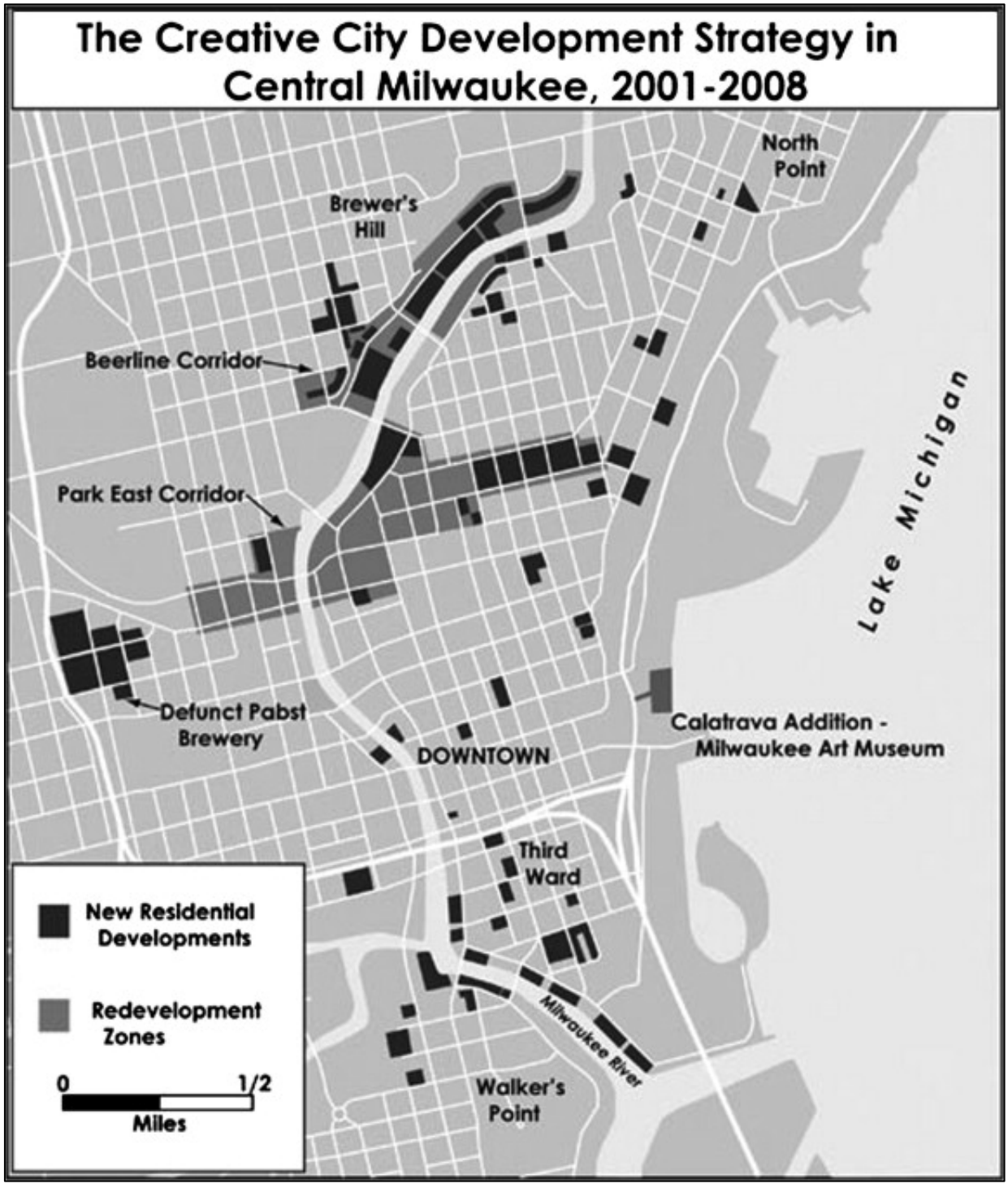

Figure 1: Property-led development in Milwaukee, 2001-2008 (Source: Zimmerman, 2008)

and cultural diversity, active lifestyles, and vibrant neighborhoods are all noble and virtuous ambitions. However, the effects of these (re)development strategies and the (re)distributions of the benefits and burdens across a community or municipality that is alarming and needs to be reckoned with by planners and policymakers alike.

Zimmerman showed how this "repackaging of gentrification" was underscored by the Milwaukee City Council's vote to reject a $41 million public subsidy to redevelop the former Pabst Brewery Complex into a new upscale downtown neighborhood, and the following onslaught that ensued from the growth coalition and its media arms. Policy-makers responded by publically blaming the city's presumed culture of working-class conservatism:

> Do enough people understand that Milwaukee will have to shed its working class heritage if it is to join the ranks of America's great cities? The City Council vote to reject the PabstCity project suggests there is still much work to be done on this front. It was instructive to learn how relatively easy it was to kill the project. Defending the status quo will always be easier than championing for change. (Lightbourn, 2005, p. 20, as cited by Zimmerman, 2008, p. 240).

These discursive moves demonstrate how the Milwaukee growth coalition developed a pro-gentrification narrative that essentially validated one comparatively small and privileged class of consumers, and normalized socio-spatial inequalities buttressed by overlapping regimes of exclusion, while making nearly invisible representations of the broader population of the city's African-American, Latino, and working-poor populations (Zimmerman, 2008). For example, from 2001-2005, Milwaukee's economic development portfolio exceeded $412 million—71% invested in real estate and other physical improvements, 22% used to attract, retain or expand jobs within the city, and only 1% invested in workforce development and training—with approximately $300 million in public subsidies directed for the professional classes (Zimmerman, 2008). To further illustrate the case of inequities, in 2006, the local parks district announced that it would be closing 43 public swimming pools (90% of the city total) due to

budget shortfalls (Umhoefer, 2006, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). Yet, the same agency was robust enough to dedicate $200,000 for a public art installation in an upscale corridor of the downtown area, thereby substituting the quality of life in many of the city's poorest neighborhoods for a creative-cultural expression in the public spaces of Milwaukee's central area (Schumacher, 2005, as cited by Zimmerman, 2008). To complicate things further, between 1999 and 2003, almost 50,000 jobs were lost (White, 2004, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008), and 60% of working African-American males were jobless between 2002 and 2004 (Levine, 2004, as cited in Zimmerman, 2008). These factors are what allowed Zimmerman to connect Milwaukee's development strategies with gentrification:

> Gentrification supported directly by the local growth coalition similarly produced a widening zone of intensifying rents, which displaced hundreds of centrally-located manufacturing jobs from the Third Ward and Walker's Point neighborhoods. In other neighborhoods where the actions of the local growth coalition were especially intense, an exclusive professional-class monoculture emerged. This was particularly true in the riverfront Beerline redevelopment area and in immediately adjacent neighborhoods such as Brewer's Hill, where the conversion of rental duplexes to single-family homes worked to progressively purge the working-class African-American population from what was once one the city's most diverse neighborhoods. (Zimmerman, 2008, p. 241)

In short, Milwaukee's redevelopment strategies throughout the course of the early 2000's were inspired by Florida's creative class theory, and guided by Milwaukee's ambitions to assert itself on a national and international stage as a "cool and hip" destination for young professionals to relocate and settle, but also harbored unintended consequences of widening the gap of social inequities with uneven development.

In 2010, Milwaukee's Citywide Policy Plan (a revision of the 1999 plan) continued to invoke the rhetoric of creative city economic development strategies. Highlighted among them include opportunities for the city's ability to attract talent:

> Successful employers rely not only on home-grown talent, but also work hard to attract well-educated people from all over to their firms. Highly educated individuals who bring

> their skills and experience to Milwaukee are a significant economic asset, and it is thus appropriate to focus on attracting a more educated population. Milwaukee's image was long considered a barrier to the attraction of job applicants from other parts of the country, but that is changing. Strategic investments like the recent redevelopment of Milwaukee's downtown and riverfront neighborhoods have helped to increase the city's appeal to a young, educated, mobile population. (DCD, 2010, p. 98)

Policies to attract talent to Milwaukee from elsewhere included: investing in quality of life measures; investing in public transportation assets; promoting Milwaukee's assets to regional and national audiences; supporting activities of FUEL Milwaukee; and positioning Milwaukee as a "green city" that supports environmental sustainability (DCD, 2010). The plan also recognized that the downtown continues to evolve as a highly-attractive destination—attributed from recent development activity in the residential sector near the Milwaukee River, Historic Third Ward, and downtown—and called for exploring opportunities available for continued downtown development, including improvements at the lakefront, and the creation of a streetcar line.

Historical Context of the Milwaukee Streetcar

The historical context—including the coalition building across scales and sectors, and the political battles and struggles that ensued—all played an important role in why, how, when, and where the Milwaukee Streetcar became the priority for implementation. As one interviewee responded:

> That question requires a 30-year understanding of the history of the funding that was used for the streetcar, and the fact that it wasn't initially the priority. The priority was to build a high-speed rail system that would have connected the City of Milwaukee to our western suburbs, and the funding was allocated from the federal government to do just that. We had the funding to do that, and obviously, our suburban municipalities have done everything they can do to stop that and put up barriers every step of the way—there's been barriers that have been put up by a number of people from different political levels going back to the early 90s to stop any kind of a more extensive regional transportation options that would connect the city to the suburbs. The city's priority in 1992 was to build a more robust system, but then funds were peeled off for other things. (31JD)

In 1991, Congress passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and opened a pool of $155 billion in federal funds. ISTEA was a significant benchmark in transportation policy in several ways. First, it was envisioned as landmark legislation that would propel the United States into a post-interstate era through an emphasis on intermodal systems, linking highway, rail, air, and marine transportation. Second, it called for the designation of five high-speed rail corridors, including a Midwest corridor linking Milwaukee to Chicago, St. Louis and Detroit. Third, the act reorganized the Federal-aid highway program and established the National Highway System and the Interstate Maintenance Program, thereby limiting activities authorized for funding to include:

> The reconstruction of bridges, interchanges, and over crossings along existing interstate routes, including the acquisition of right-of-way where necessary, but shall not include the construction of new travel lanes other than high occupancy vehicle lanes or auxiliary lanes. (Weingroff, 2017)

In addition, ISTEA continued discretionary and formula funds for mass transit, and state and local governments were given more flexibility in determining transportation solutions with the creation of the Surface Transportation Program, and its subprogram the Transportation Enhancement Program, which was designed to increase public participation and enhance the collaboration of transportation stakeholders (Schweppe, 2001). In summary, ISTEA has transformed the transportation planning and development process by allowing state and local governments greater autonomy of how to allocate federal dollars for regional and local projects, and by increasing opportunities for collaboration and giving stakeholders a stronger voice (Schweppe, 2001).

From the aftermath of ISTEA, Milwaukee was awarded $289 million for the use of public transit projects in 1991. In the late 1990s, the Wisconsin DOT approved a plan put together by civic leaders throughout the region to split the money between a Milwaukee light-rail

system and expanding bus service to Waukesha County (Schmitt, 2012). However, officials debated and rejected plans for a full-scale light-rail system, a bus-only highway, a guided electric bus system, and reserved bus and carpool lanes along the I-94 corridor, which ultimately led the federal government to withdraw $48 million because of the local and state officials' inability to decide where, when, and how to spend the funds (Sandler, 2009). It was reported in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that Wauwatosa's State Representative Scott Walker (1993-2002) "was among the suburban Republicans who helped kill that plan, persuading fellow Republican Thompson to rule out any state or federal money to study light rail" (Sandler, 2011a).

In 1999, a deal between County Executive Tom Ament (1992-2002), Mayor John Norquist (1988-2004), and Governor Tommy Thompson (1987-2001)—with the approval of the federal government—diverted $149.5 million of the remaining $241 million to a series of projects that included the construction of the new Marquette Interchange, 6th Street Viaduct bridges, Canal Street redevelopment, Lakeshore State Park walkway, and the demolition of the Park East Freeway (Jannene, 2009; Sandler, 2011b). The last part of the deal set aside $91.5 million for a public transit project that would connect downtown to its surrounding neighborhoods, and Walker attacked that portion of the agreement, expressing that he would rather lose all the $241 million than see any of it spent on light-rail. Another interviewee explained:

> The downtown streetcar has a long and complicated history. I might not be the best person that has the whole history, but I know it did originate from a lawsuit. The funds became available as a result from a lawsuit and then had to be used for a rail system. So, that's kind of the short story of why there was a streetcar, but I think the city has always envisioned having a fixed-rail option within the city. (55JD)

The lawsuit came from a civil rights complaint filed against the state through the U.S. DOT—spearheaded by attorney Bob Bauman who would later become Milwaukee's 4th District

Alderman (2004-present)—which ruled in the city's favor in 2000 (Schmitt, 2012). The case was won under Title VI, arguing that many of Milwaukee's African-American residents didn't have cars while nearly all white suburbanites did, and that there was a discriminatory impact against minorities by favoring freeways over public transit (Sandler, 2011a; Schmitt, 2012).

Throughout the following decade, the remaining $91.5 million in federal funds was debated and fought over leading up to the 2010 gubernatorial election between County Executive Scott Walker (2002-2010) and Mayor Tom Barrett (2004-Present). In 2009, Senator Herb Kohl and Representative David Obey introduced a bill that became known as the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009, which subsequently divided the $91.5 million in a 60/40 split between the City of Milwaukee ($54.9 million) and Milwaukee County ($36.6 million), allowing each branch to pursue their respective projects (Jannene, 2009). The county used their $36.6 million share, supplemented by an additional $9.1 million in federal funding and $6.5 million matched by the county, for the purchase of 136 new buses for Milwaukee County (Sandler, 2011b). The city used their portion of the funds to pursue the hotly debated streetcar project:

> It has probably been the most controversial project around City Hall in the last decade. I mean, is it even close? Not for city-controlled municipal projects. I mean, obviously, there are other things going on. Well, maybe the police stuff—maybe the issues of police shootings—but even that probably generates less phone calls. If you're talking things that generates phone calls to our office, and media stories, it's really the streetcar, and then everything else. (25JD)

There was also a separate pot of funds that was made available for Wisconsin that is important for the context of the streetcar, and became the central issue of debate between Walker and Barrett for the seat of Governor in 2010.

High-Speed Rail and the Race for Governor

In 2009, President Obama announced his vision for the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail program, a 21st Century "New Deal" that would revolutionize travel in the United States (Figure 2). President Obama called for a collaborative effort by all branches of the government and other key stakeholders to help transform America's transportation network. Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle (2003-2011) and Mayor Barrett answered that call and joined forces to recruit a train manufacturer to Milwaukee and begin preliminary work. In 2010, Wisconsin was awarded $810 million in federal stimulus money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to build a high-speed rail from Milwaukee to Madison, and had expansion plans that would eventually extend to Minneapolis.

In August 2009, Governor Doyle announced that he will not be seeking reelection for a third term, more than anything else, due to ethical reasons and his belief that office should only be held for 8 years, regardless if the state permits it (WMTV, 2009). President Obama released a statement praising Governor Doyle, and after the announcement, several rumors began to circulate that the governor might be asked to join the ranks of the Obama Administration given their previous collaborations (CBS News, 2010). Even though Governor Doyle was out of the 2010 gubernatorial race, President Obama's visit to Wisconsin and endorsement of Mayor Barrett seemed to align all the pieces for a Barrett victory and the implementation of the high-speed rail (Losh, 2010). Republican candidate for Governor Scott Walker, however, had a different vision and rallied to protest President Obama, Governor Doyle, and Mayor Barrett's plans to build a high-speed rail system in Wisconsin, demonstrating his distaste on how government tax dollars should be spent (Losh, 201

Figure 2: Proposed High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail network (Source: AECOM, 2011)

Right out of the gates, Walker publically opposed the spending of federal money and made it the centerpiece of his campaign: labeling it as a "boondoggle," a waste of taxpayer money, and reckless government spending (Schultze, 2009). After President Obama's visit, Walker continued the barrage of attacks and insisted that the money would be better spent by investing in Wisconsin's crumbling roads and bridges. In response, U.S. DOT Secretary Ray LaHood wrote to Walker to be clear on how the federal funds may be used:

> I respect the power of governors to make decisions for their states. There seems to be some confusion, however, about how these high-speed rail dollars can be spent. For this reason, I would like to set the record straight: None of the money provided to Wisconsin may be used for road or highway projects, or anything other than high-speed rail. (Smith, 2010)

As insurance, Governor Doyle and Wisconsin Legislature's Joint Finance Committee moved ahead to approve the spending of federal stimulus money to be included in the 2009-2011 budget bill, as well as inserted legislative roadblocks which would require another bill passed to remove the funds from the budget (Stein & Marley, 2010).

The gubernatorial election was held on November 2, 2010, and with a 52.2% to 46.5% margin, Governor-Elect Scott Walker celebrated his inauguration and vowed to keep his promise of putting an end to the high-speed rail project in Wisconsin. Despite long-term planning and bipartisan support, on December 9, 2010, Secretary LaHood announced the DOT were withdrawing and redirecting the funds allocated to Wisconsin due to Governor Walker's commitment to derail the project (U.S. DOT, 2010). As one interviewee described the opposition for the streetcar:

> One strain of opposition was the totally car-centric libertarian/republican argument which was just any form of transportation subsidy—except for the massive freeway and road subsidies (anything but those!)—is communism: 'No God-fearing American taxpayer should have to pay for somebody else to ride a train.' They can pay for somebody else to have a smooth ride in their car, but don't let them be on the train because that's communism, or socialism. That's the same reason Governor Walker won in his

> opposition against the heavy-rail, and it worked. You can't say he was sneaky about it. He said: 'This train is a waste of money,' and 52% of Wisconsin agreed with him. He got elected Governor three times, lost the fourth time, but that first election is what killed heavy-rail. It seemed to galvanize this idea that any spending on public transportation is a waste of money. (25JD)

As several interviewees pointed out, it is important to note that the Milwaukee Streetcar was intended to be one piece of a larger package of transportation technologies: heavy-rail, commuter-rail, light-rail, and buses. And all four technologies need to be integrated and work together to have an effective system:

> The heavy-rail would be Chicago-Milwaukee-Madison-Minneapolis, and then Milwaukee-Green Bay/Appleton. Commuter-rail would be Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha, Milwaukee-Waukesha, and Milwaukee-Mequon. And then the light-rail would be what the streetcar is. So ultimately, the only way the streetcar will be successful is if you ultimately get all four phases with strong revenue stream and expansion, and all four need to work together. (25JD)

Another interviewee explained:

> During this time, when some of these decisions were being made it seemed like we were on the path for having high-speed rail from Madison to Milwaukee that would have terminated at the Intermodal Station and the Streetcar would have been a great complement to that. So, that was another thing that was stopped by the Republican leaders in Madison. And at the same time, they were also passing laws that prevented Regional Transit Authorities. It's one thing to be able to step back and look at it from a purely academic standpoint ... and then it's another thing to have to operate in the political context we're operating in—a lot of those things have huge obstacles of feasibility because of the people who are setting some of the rules we have to operate in—and that's a real challenge. (31JD)

To Stone (1989,1993, 2005), regime behavior is not habitual, but rather purposeful, and purpose is central to the rise and fall of urban regimes. Purpose motivates engagement, engagement mobilizes resources, and mobilized resources provide problem-solving or purpose-advancing capacities. Thus, it is purpose engagement, and capacity which are central to forming, sustaining, and altering regime arrangements. Furthermore, problems are not self-defining—they require an actor or a group of actors to shape and frame them, in which case human agency

becomes central—it reflects and is constrained by context, but also has the capacity to alter that context and reshape an agenda. The political discourse in which cities are represented, then, becomes some form of self-fulfilling prophecy. Reichl (1999) develops an analytical framework that highlights political discourse in the process of forging political coalitions that depend on a shared vision that defines and justifies an urban policy agenda:

> Urban regimes are constructed not only around direct material interests and trade-offs, but also around a shared discourse that defines and justifies to a particular urban agenda ... material interests shape the language of politics, and political discourse shapes the pursuit of material interests. (Reichl, 1999, pp. 15-16)

The coalition that formed around the Obama Administration, former Governor Doyle, and Mayor Barrett (among others) was indeed forged around the shared vision of transforming American cities with high-speed passenger rail intended to generate economic activity following the 2008 Great Recession, and address environmental and climate change concerns. While it may have been noble in principle, Barrett's campaign failed to invoke symbolic imagery to advance their agenda. Walker's campaign, on the other hand, was founded on the rhetoric of the neoliberal prescript—austerity, deregulation, downsizing government, lowering taxes, and positioning government as the enemy of economic freedom, prosperity and wealth.

Not only did Governor Walker continue to create barriers for expanding public transit infrastructure in the state legislature since taking office with more budget cuts, but he also contributed to the budget crisis of the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) while serving as County Executive. One interviewee indicated that the most important transportation issue in Milwaukee is dedicated funding:

> Our bus system is starving. I've always been a proponent supporter of our bus system, and they're starting to feel the effects now where it's starting to hurt. I'm a regular transit rider and I'm getting on bus lines where the frequency is once every half-hour. That's unacceptable. MCTS is doing the best they can with the resources we have, but we need to get them more resources. It's starving to death, which could come to a crisis point at

> some point down the line. That's the most singular important issue. Dedicated funding. (41JD)

As another participant explained:

> Right now, the buses are on a death spiral of funding. It started with under County Executive Scott Walker when he started spending capital money on operating. He basically did something that worked for 5 years and then when he got elected Governor, all that capital money he'd been spending on operating ran out and there were massive service cuts to the bus system, and as Governor gave even less money to the buses. This is what I call the 'death spiral' where legislatives, for whatever reason, provide less money for the bus system, which has always relied mainly on county, state, and federal money for revenue streams. We need this taxpayer dollar money. Once you decide to cut that, then you have to cut service. You cut service, and then less people want to ride it because it becomes more inconvenient. When head-wastes go up, ridership goes down, except for people who have no other choice. But people who do have a choice, begin to choose not to ride the bus if it becomes too inconvenient and it doesn't come often enough or go to enough places, or you have to transfer too many times. So, then less people ride it, there's less people to complain to politicians about the funding cuts, and then they cut even more—that's the situation we're in now. It's not a definite death spiral because we have federal grants that could help and we have a county government that has disagreements about the bus system, but isn't anti-bus. But we did for 8 years have a state government that was anti-bus, and that has consequences for funding. (25JD)

The interviewee went on to suggest that instead of being in competition with MCTS, that the streetcar could save the buses if it meant it gets more people out of their cars, and the two systems are integrated with one another. In the next section, the streetcar starter lines will be explored in greater detail.

Milwaukee Streetcar: M-Line/L-Line

After nearly 30 years of political debate and over 40 Common Council meetings, Milwaukee's Streetcar ("The Hop") was granted approval of its proposed 2009 route in 2015—albeit with minor modifications to avoid major utility intersections—and began operation of its 2.1-mile downtown loop ("M-Line") in November of 2018 (Figure 3). The M-Line connects Westown and the Milwaukee Intermodal Station with the Historic Third Ward, East Town and

Figure 3: Milwaukee Streetcar M-Line/L-Line routes (Source: thehopmke.com)

the Lower East Side. Demographics of the respective neighborhoods directly served by the streetcar are in stark contrast to Milwaukee's general composition, and the demographics of neighborhoods not immediately served by the streetcar. While Milwaukee's general demographic composition breaks down to 38.2% African-American, 35.5% White, and 18.7% Latino, the Historic Third Ward harbors a population of 84.9% White (8.16% African-American, 2.86% Latino) and surveyed 69.5% of residents using automobiles as their means of transportation to work, with only 5.46% surveyed as public transportation users (City-Data, 2016). Likewise, the Lower Eastside houses a population of 80.2% White (8.6% African-American, 4.35% Latino), wherein 66.2% drove a car to work and only 7.26% surveyed as public transportation users (City-Data, 2016).

With intentions to garner new transit users, the City of Milwaukee—made possible with its $10 million partnership with Potawatomi Hotel & Casino over the next 12 years to help cover operation costs—will provide free rides for a year ($1 per trip following). A federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality grant of $3.18 million awarded in 2014, will also contribute to cover 80% of the operating costs through the first 18 months (Reid, 2014). Sponsorships and advertising during the first three years will cover the operational costs not covered by the grant, and beyond that will be funded through a combination of fare box revenue, federal funding opportunities, operating agreements with partners, and additional sponsorships and advertising (Hess, 2018). The 0.4-mile lakefront extension route ("L-Line")—the system's second phase—was made possible by a $14.2 million federal TIGER grant awarded in 2015, and is expected to begin operation in 2020 (Barrett, 2015). Outside of the Potawatomi Hotel & Casino partnership, federal funding from the ISTEA and TIGER grants, and other corporate sponsorships, the Milwaukee Streetcar will be supported by an additional $59 million from Tax Incremental

Financing (TIF) districts (Figure 4)—$9.7 million from the Cathedral Place TID #49, $18.3 million from the Erie/Jefferson Riverwalk TID #56, and $31 million from the East Michigan Street TID #82 (Jannene, 2015). The only TIF district that would directly intersect with a streetcar route will be TID #82 with the L-Line extension route (Osmulski, 2019).

The first phase routing alignment was chosen for several reasons. First, as mentioned above, part of the stipulation with the federal grant required the streetcar to connect with the heavy-rail Intermodal Station. Second, as one interviewee explained:

> Some of the routing towards the end [of the planning process] was impacted by utility costs, which was a major thing—and again, that's another way that a political battle certainly impacts real-life of what happens on the ground when the State Public Service Commission changed the rules around who would be responsible for the payment out of any utility work that would happen as a result of the streetcar, and shifted the costs from the utility provider—which is how it is done in every other transportation project in the state—to the local municipality, and that had impacts on the routing decision. (31JD)

Third, within its quarter-mile walkshed, the route is in proximity to reach 100% of the area's hotels, 91% of the area's occupied street-level retail space, 90% of the area's office space, 77% of the area's housing, and it connects with 13% of the city's tax-base (Figure 5) despite being only within a quarter-mile of 2% of the city's land area (Jannene, 2011). Furthermore, there was also a rationale that this alignment would generate more tourism activity and attract new users to public transit. As one interviewee indicated:

> My biggest concern is that we need to think about our transit network as a network and a system, and we don't do that. We think of it as these one-off shiny projects. To be frank, the streetcar was the flavor of the day. Every other city in the country was either looking at it or doing it. I think it was sold as this thing like: 'this is how you get millennials to move downtown.' I think it is an amenity, but it should be part of a bigger package in a bigger system and network. I also struggled greatly with the fact that spending so much money in one small component of our system that doesn't really elevate the rest of the network, and really only serves a very certain segment—generally the wealthier, Whiter segment of our community—when most of the regular transit users in our community are people of color living out in the neighborhoods, and generally lower-income. (41JD)

Figure 4: Tax Incremental Districts financing streetcar construction costs (Source: Osmulski, 2019)

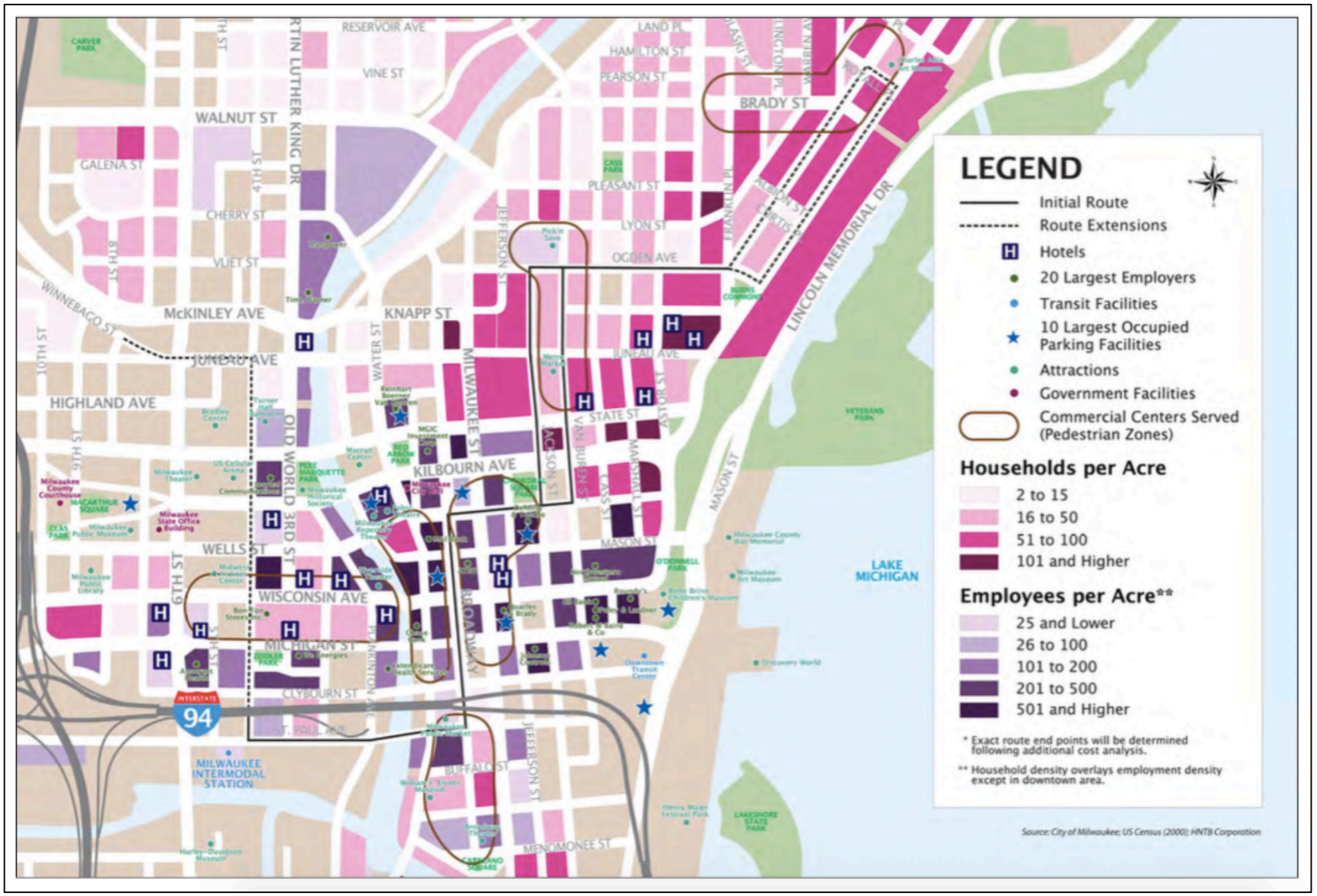

Figure 5: Downtown activity generators (Source: FTA, 2011)

There is also a potential for creating two very separate worlds in transit when such a short route is catered to attract "choice-riders," as another interviewee cautioned:

> I think there are multiple reasons for the focus on 'choice-riders.' One is, I think there is this idea that we always want to increase ridership and increase revenue, and the only way to do that is by convincing people to use the transit system. I mean, the people who don't have access to cars and don't have other options are already taking the transit system, so there is this push to serve ... but then I think there is also this sort of critique of municipalities that we want to serve choice-riders because in some ways [streetcars] are viewed more attractive. Like, the idea of 'how do we get young professionals to use transit?' Well, we have to give them fancy vehicles and Wi-Fi and all that stuff. Which, it might be true, but I worry that there are certain times that certain decisions can be made through that lens, and the interests between those population groups are not always equal—and if there's ever a time when those interests are in conflict, then you choose to do things that are going to benefit people who are called choice-riders—and it can potentially have equity impacts and negative impacts on people who are transit-dependent. (31JD)

Another interviewee expressed this as:

> I think there is a potiential danger there if the different units of government can't get their act together and cooperate. And so, there's a danger if we don't integrate them well [MCTS and the streetcar] you would create a 'yuppie train' and a poor-person's bus. (25JD)

On this front, a recent report shows that 60% of MCTS riders have an annual household income of less than $36,000, and 45% of riders use the bus as their primary means to get to work (CEDS, 2015). Alderman Bauman—who filed the civil rights case against the state for discriminatory impact with the allocation of the high-speed rail funds—even publically admitted "two miles of light rail doesn't benefit minority communities, we readily acknowledge that now ... we're looking at this as an economic development tool" (Schmitt, 2012). Former Alderman Joe Davis was also vocal about what benefits it would bring to the African-American community and "black millennials," condemning Mayor Barrett that he only cares about "white millennials" for its chosen downtown location (Horne & Murphy, 2015).

In fact, the city has been forthcoming on labeling the streetcar as an economic development tool as the main driver. When asked what the main benefits of the M-Line/L-Line would be and who might experience them, participants mainly pointed to the streetcar serving as an economic development driver that would influence the real-estate market, increase property values, and increase the tax-base revenue for the city. One interviewee responded:

> I think that it's true that the Mayor has been upfront from the start of this process, and he often talks about this in his public comments about the streetcar: that it isn't just a transportation project, we've been upfront that it's also an economic development driver. Certainly, the City has trumpeted the fact that assessed values have gone up significantly more than city averages near the streetcar line. We've seen tremendous new developments near the streetcar line too, whether it's hotels, housing, or offices. So, I mean, it's clearly influencing the real-estate market, we're seeing new development because of it. When you go down and ride the streetcar on the weekend, it's clearly getting huge ridership from tourists, which is another group that will benefit from it. And over time, of course, we want it to become part of the regular day-to-day life, and it is. Obviously, to reach more people and more jobs, we will need to extend it over time. (31JD)

The City of Milwaukee reported a 27.9% property value increase for properties located within a quarter-mile of the streetcar line since 2015, compared to the 13.4% average increase of property values citywide (Milwaukee, 2018). Mayor Barrett attributed the increase to the streetcar:

> Of course, The Hop is a transportation asset. At the same time, it is an economic development tool, and we are seeing new construction and significant investments around The Hop stations. By adding to the economic strength of the center of Milwaukee, The Hop brings benefits throughout the city" (Milwaukee, 2018).

Culver's (2017) content analysis of the Milwaukee Streetcar (including several other streetcar systems in other cities) confirmed that the most prominent theme argued that the streetcar would be economically beneficial to the city:

> The predominant arguments were that streetcars would: help to spur economic development; encourage new commercial and residential investment; attract new residents, new talent, and new businesses; increase property values and the local tax base; strengthen the downtown; encourage revitalization; create jobs; increase tourism; make existing destinations even more attractive, and local businesses stronger; and benefit creative/knowledge sector workers. (Culver, 2017, p. 25)

Culver also revealed how language in the Milwaukee Streetcar plans conveyed that the project was intended to "project an image of a modern and forward-thinking city" (p. 26), and was envisioned as a "world-class fixed transit network" (p. 26). Choice-riders were also a point of emphasis for the project, as it was sought to:

> Provide a new perspective on quality transit in Milwaukee, and encourage people who previously did not see themselves as transit patrons to consider using all forms of transit and establish excellent transit as an important aspect of a high quality of life. (Culver, 2017, p. 26)

Furthermore, as a creative city development tool, the Milwaukee Streetcar plans predicted that the project would "attract and retain young talent needed to grow Milwaukee's economy, support the creative class and fuel a culture of entrepreneurialism" (Culver, 2017, p. 27).

Initial estimates for potential streetcar ridership were anticipated from downtown user statistics, including: "Over 1 million annual passengers at Intermodal Station; 77,500 daily downtown employees; 5,500,000 annual downtown visitors; 726,500 annual hotel stays; and 14,900 downtown residents (and growing)" (CTSM, 2009). Responding to public opposition prior to The Hop's completion, Mayor Barrett pointed to the resistance that Miller Park garnered until people saw how much of a success it became after it was built, and suggested:

> It's all going to be dependent on what people do when it opens a year from now, or a little over a year from now, whether people ride it. I'm very optimistic that people will ride it. That's going to be the true test, whether people use it. (Keith, 2017)

Through the first month of operation, the Milwaukee Streetcar totaled 76,125 rides through November, with 16,409 total rides during the opening weekend (Nov. 2-4), and averaging just 2,297 daily ridership thereafter (Hop, 2018). December saw a slight uptick in ridership data, with an average of 2,453 daily rides for The Hop (Hop, 2019). In the cold month of January, ridership dropped to only 49,501 total rides, and the city lost February and March ridership

statistics "due to glitches in the city system that tracks the data" (Ryan, 2019). By comparison, Kansas City's streetcar averaged 5,794 daily ridership in 2018, Portland's streetcar averaged 12,104 daily ridership figures, and Seattle's streetcar averaged 4,800 daily rides.

To encourage more ridership, The Hop partnered with TransLoc to develop a user-friendly app that tracks the streetcar in real-time. The app itself contains several other transit systems throughout the country. Interesting enough, however, the real-time transit app exclusively tracks the streetcar and is not integrated with the MCTS bus system routes that would allow users to easily switch between the two transit modes. Several interviewees also expressed that concern:

> That's a little sample of the dysfunction, but that could rear its head in a really ugly way a year from now, because right now the streetcar is free. If all of a sudden, we get to the end of that Potawatomi free period and they start charging money and it's not integrated with the bus system, I (and many other people) will stop using it. I have a bus pass in my pocket right now, and if I can't hop off the bus downtown and step onto the streetcar and swipe that same pass-card, I'm done with the streetcar. (41JD)

Likewise, another interviewee observed that "right now, there's not a single bus route that is exactly parallel or on the same alignment as the streetcar route" (31JD). Another stressed:

> One thing that I think will be very important is making sure that it is actually integrated with MCTS. Some of that is political will—because right now the city operates the streetcar and the county operates MCTS—so, some of it is going to be the political will with the city and the county getting along, because if you had one pass that gets you onto both, then you've just increased the value of someone who's buying a monthly bus pass and you've also gotten ridership on the bus system via the streetcar, and that now creates the ridership and the political will to get more funding for the bus. (25JD)

The most consistent responses among the concerns and critiques of the current route is its lack of connectivity and integration with the larger transportation network, the length (and location) of the route in regards to who it benefits and serves, and the opportunity costs of spending federal and local taxpayer dollars on a downtown fixed-rail public transportation project that serves as a

tourism-boosting amenity catered to an already affluent population (25JD; 31JD; 41JD). For instance, one interviewee responded:

> To be completely frank, the streetcar is very cool. I've ridden it a bunch, I've taken my kids on it, I like it. What purpose it serves, and it's such a short singular route, I still have a lot of questions about. Most of the times I've used it, I've gone out of my way to use it. Like, it doesn't serve my daily needs, and I'm a daily transit rider that goes between meetings in the central core of the city, so you'd think it would be perfect. I mean, I ride buses every day, and essentially most of the people on the buses—with the exception to downtown—are, some segment are college students, but the rest of it are low-income people who rely on the bus system. And I think we need to elevate that system and think of it as a larger amenity that supports our overall transit system. Thinking about it as a system and as a network, who it's serving and how it's serving those people, as opposed to these one-off debates or arguments. (41JD)

A resident from northwest of downtown in the Sherman Park neighborhood conveyed that several other residents in the neighborhood also opposed the project:

> I walk the neighborhood all the time. There are folks, if you say 'streetcar' and you're supporting the streetcar, they'd smack ya. There's a whole kind of resentment. People go downtown and they see all this money being spent on a streetcar that really is not helping our neighborhood. Are you going to give us free rides (on a streetcar), or a transportation system that connects us to downtown? (Keith, 2017)

The project, however, has not been without considerable widespread support from private sector developers who plan to develop along the route and contribute to the TIF districts that finance the streetcar, including the Mandel Group, Manpower Group, Johonson Controls, Wangard Partners, Carroll Properties, Stark Investments, and Barret Lo Visionary Development, to name a few (Jannene, 2014a). As one interviewee mentioned:

> The downtown business community, in general, has been supportive of the streetcar. The Business Improvement District that represents the downtown businesses is one of the biggest supporters that I can think of because they know it will bring significant benefits to both the businesses and the residents of those neighborhoods. (31JD)

For example, the Couture approval—a planned 44-story high-rise apartment building—was fundamental to securing additional funds for the streetcar construction costs, and is anticipated to be completed with the opening of the L-Line in 2020, and expected to provide an additional $122

million to the East Michigan Street TIF district (Horne, 2014). The Couture will be located on a site that was used as a "bus barn" by the Downtown Transit Center, and when completed, will be a termination point for The Hop's L-Line. As one interviewee explained:

> The funds to build the official transit center that was on that site—and is now demolished to build the site for the Couture—there was federal FTA funding to pay for that project. So, when the Couture was proposed, one of the requirements from the FTA in order for the county to not have to pay back the funds that were given to the county to build the transit center, was that there would continue to be a transit plaza in the Couture. So, that was a major part of the project's design since its inception, is that it will be a public transit plaza that will have a termination point for the streetcar, and will be a major public plaza—and the renderings show when it does get built, it will be a pretty stunning amenity for the public and a pretty stunning gateway to our lakefront. (31JD)

Besides all the other aforementioned benefits that the M-Line and L-Line are expected to bring, other anticipated benefits important to note include reducing dependence on cars, increasing the walkability and livability of downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods, and establishing better connections from downtown to its surrounding neighborhoods (25JD; 31JD; 36JD; 41JD; 55JD). As one interviewee noted:

> Ultimately, the streetcar does make downtown more livable and ultimately more walkable. Just yesterday I was a having a conversation with someone who lives and works downtown, and they were saying that a lot of the people they know who live and spend a lot of time downtown are starting to walk more because the streetcar has gotten them to do that. Which seems crazy, but for a lot of people if you're just in the routine of getting in your car to go everywhere, it takes something to pry that away. So, I think in that regard, the streetcar is serving some function of making downtown more walkable and livable. (41JD)

Likewise, the streetcar is also expected to enhance the city's image and place-branding:

> I think in Milwaukee we're really trying to bolster our transit options. And service is really important, I think across the board, to our current bus service that the county offers, and I think the streetcar is really exciting because it offers a new option to people. I think it brings us closer to being a first-class city when you have a fixed-rail option. In general, I think the biggest issues are increasing the transit and moving forward to really offer those options to people through using the equity lens so that everyone benefits and everyone has options. Not just downtown but also the rest of the city. (55JD)

Another interviewee responded:

> The system only works if it expands as a transportation system. The one thing that people on both sides of the argument would often say is – there would be a lot of things that was not true – but one criticism that was definitely true was that it's too short. It only works if it expands. So, in the short term, one of the stronger measurements of success other than ridership is increased tax base/increased property values. You know, it's already in an area that's already pretty high in property value, but it's not so much the increase in existing property value (even though all of that matters), it's the ability to drive new transit-oriented development – which is definitely one of the benefits. (25JD)

To be able to establish better connections from downtown to its surrounding neighborhoods, however, as previously noted, the streetcar must extend out of downtown and become integrated with MCTS to create a more robust and connected transportation network throughout the region to benefit the more transit-dependent communities in Milwaukee.

Milwaukee Streetcar: Convention Center Extension

Additional expansion plans are underway (Figure 6). In 2016, the Common Council approved an 0.75-mile extension line along 4th Street (renamed to Vel R. Phillips Aveune) from the Intermodal Station to the new Milwaukee Bucks arena, contingent on the city receiving another federal grant that would cover at least 50% of the estimated $40 million cost (Jannene, 2016). The other half of the costs would be covered by three additional TIF districts—$4 million from TID #39, $8 million from TID #41, and $8 million from newly created TID #88 (Jannene, 2016). While Milwaukee has been unsuccessful in its bid to secure additional federal funding for this extension, since the announcement that Milwaukee will host the 2020 Democratic National Convention (DNC) at the Wisconsin Center (located at Vel R. Phillips and Wisconsin Avenue), the city plans to use its $20 million TIF set aside to at least extend the line to the convention center (Zank, 2019).

The 0.3-mile extension is anticipated to begin construction during the fall of 2019 and expected to be completed by June of 2020, a month before the DNC. Speaking to reporters,

Figure 6: Milwaukee Streetcar extension lines and study areas (Source: thehopmke.com)

Alderman Bauman indicated that there is a huge sense of urgency to complete the streetcar expansion to the convention center prior to the DNC because, "Obviously, the existence of the streetcar was a big deal" (Zank, 2019). Seemingly, this expansion was an integral part of securing the bid for the 2020 DNC, since the city signed a contract with the DNC that stipulates that the streetcar must be free during the days of the convention (Janenne, 2019; Zank, 2019). As one interviewee explained:

> As long as it will expand, I'm not going to be preventive about where it expands. So, if the political will is strong to expand it elsewhere, I'm happy to expand it in any direction. Right now, it looks like the strongest expansion likelihood would be up to the Wisconsin Convention Center, the DNC would push that. (25JD)

Alderman Bauman admitted, "Some in Milwaukee might not place a big value on the streetcar, but obviously, people in Washington D.C. do" (Jannene, 2019). The full 0.75-mile extension would have served as a starting point for the extension route heading north into the Bronzeville neighborhood.

Milwaukee Streetcar: Bronzeville and Walker's Point Extensions

While there have been concerns of equitable-TOD (e-TOD) based on the locations of the first two phases (M-Line/L-Line) of Milwaukee's streetcar system—including the Convention Center extension—the FTA awarded Milwaukee with a $750,000 grant to study potential neighborhood impacts if the streetcar were to extend into those communities. The two neighborhoods targeted for this study were a potential extension from the Convention Center heading north along Dr. Martin Luther King Drive (MLK) into the Bronzeville neighborhood, and a potential extension heading south into Walker's Point from the Third Ward (Figure 6). As one interviewee explained:

> The FTA offered a Pilot Program for the first time, where they pretty much funded the vast majority of the study because they had the foresight to realize that as they had funded some of these transit projects around the country, there were some unfortunate issues that were accompanying them. That being housing issues and displacement issues of residents—and moving forward, they wanted to do this pilot program to find ways to remedy that. (55JD)

Another interviewee expanded on the topic:

> The FTA has been clear and thoughtful of how they approached this by saying: 'if we are going to be investing 10s or 100s of millions of dollars in local communities to build new transit, we want to make sure that those local communities first have done some planning to think about the impacts on development, think about the impacts on housing, on
>
> affordability, and the potential for displacement.' So, in some ways, they're being very progressive by saying: 'we want to see that cities have steps in place that will both maximize the impact of the investment in transit, but also make sure that the investment is benefitting the people who it is designed to benefit and not displace them.' (31JD)

Future extensions of The Hop to Fiserv Forum and Bronzeville would use the Wisconsin Avenue extension, but if the streetcar is to be extended to Walker's Point and Bronzeville using federal grants, the Common Council will need to authorize federally required alternative analysis studies of the proposed routes (Jannene, 2019). Another interviewee explained how these studies were less about feasibility and more about impact:

> The Streetcar [M-Line/L-Line] was used as a catalyst before the study to get the money. Ultimately, the reason why I was excited to be a part of the e-TOD study is because, yes there are a lot of benefits for downtown having a streetcar, but for the rest of the city—which is most of its residents—to realize those benefits, it must get out to the surrounding neighborhoods. So, that's what the study was about. It was less about how do you get into the neighborhoods—it was more like, when it comes out to the neighborhoods, what does it mean for those neighborhoods, how do they change, how do we prepare for those changes, and what impacts and benefits do we want to see. Not so much about the streetcar itself and where it might go, and how we would get it there, that's sort of a different conversation. This was more about land-uses, neighborhood benefits, community needs and priorities, and the neighborhood challenges, such as gentrification and displacement. (41JD)

With the FTA grant, the city's Department of City Development (DCD) hired an outside consultant team to perform an economic development market analysis and physical planning

(including HR&A Advisors, SOM, and SB Friedman), and partnered with businesses and community organizations within both of the neighborhoods of the study areas (including the Historic King Drive BID, Historic Brewers Hill Association, Halyard Park Association, WestCare, and P3 Development Group from the Bronzeville neighborhoods; and the Harbor District, Inc., Walker's Point Association, Soutside Organizing Center, and ABRAZO marketing from the Walker's Point neighborhoods). These studies are significant in the way in which they differ from the highly politicized procedures and developments of the initial phases of the streetcar routes, with a strong emphasis on community-informed planning and e-TOD with attention to anti-displacement measures.

The MLK corridor and Bronzeville community encompasses the Harambee, Halyard Park, Brewers Hill, Schlitz Park, Hillside, and Haymarket neighborhoods. The Historic MLK Drive has a strong African-American social, economic and cultural history and continues to be the home to many African-American owned businesses (Figure 7). Over 20,000 residents from 9,000 households live within a half-mile of the potential MLK alignment and adjacent tracks for the streetcar expansion (TOD MLK, 2018). A market analysis study of the King Drive neighborhood found a population increase of 1,565 people between 2000 and 2015 (Figure 8)—an increase of 2,300 White residents while the African-American population decreased by 1,200 residents—and harbored poverty levels (33%) greater than the City of Milwaukee (25%) as a whole (Figure 9) (HR&A, 2018; TOD MLK, 2018). The study also found that, while the area already supports a significant supply of affordable housing units, nearly 4,000 households (45% of the market) are housing burdened—spends more than 30% of income on housing—and predicts that "540 more households are likely to become housing burdened if rents increase due to continuing market trends and the extension of the streetcar" (HR&A, 2018a, p. 6).

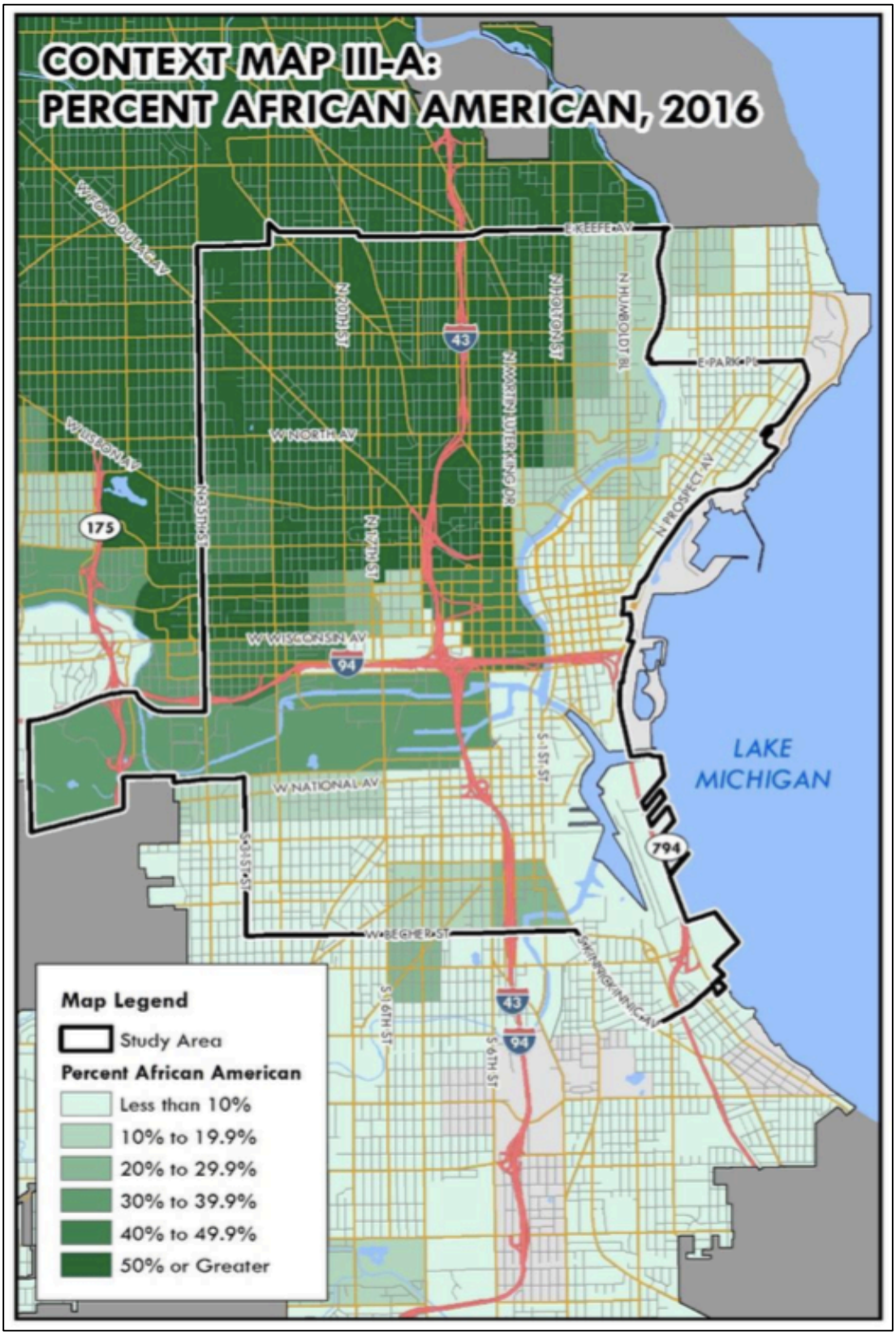

Figure 7: City of Milwaukee context of African-American populations (Source: DCD, 2018)

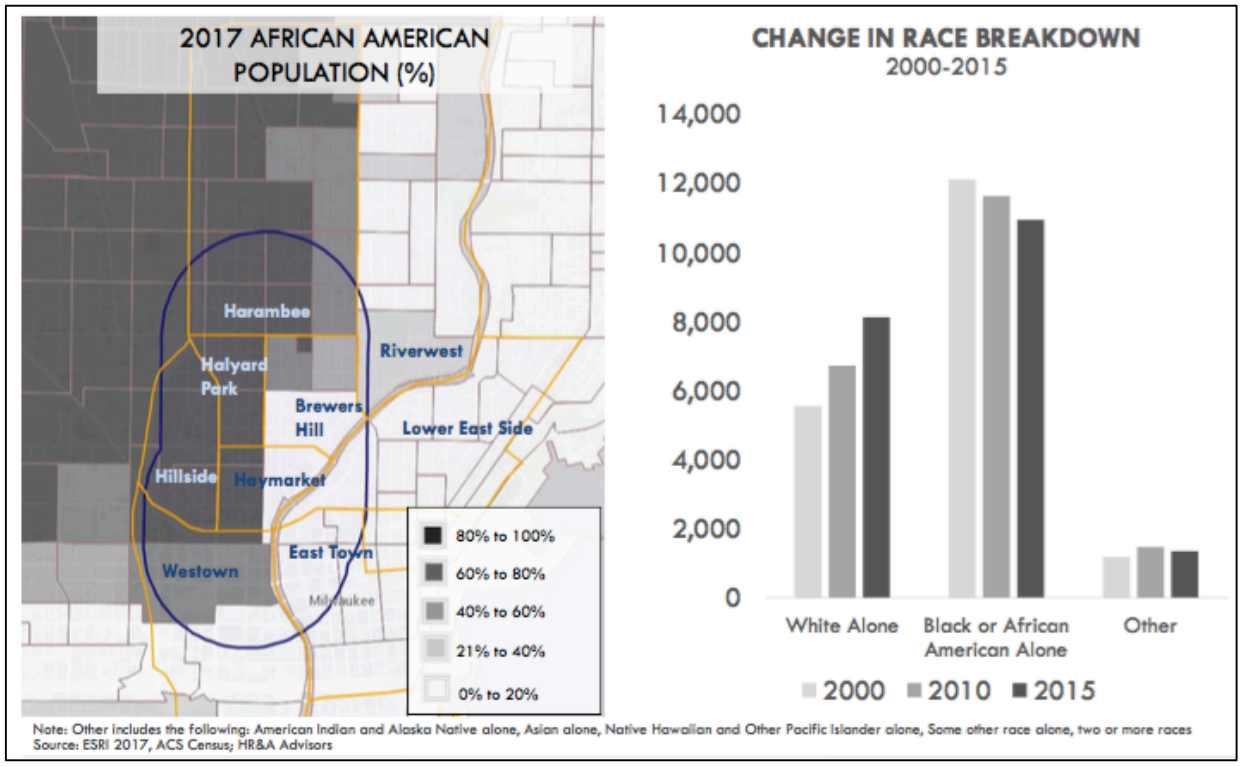

Figure 8: Bronzeville population changes and racial composition (Source: HR&A, 2018a)

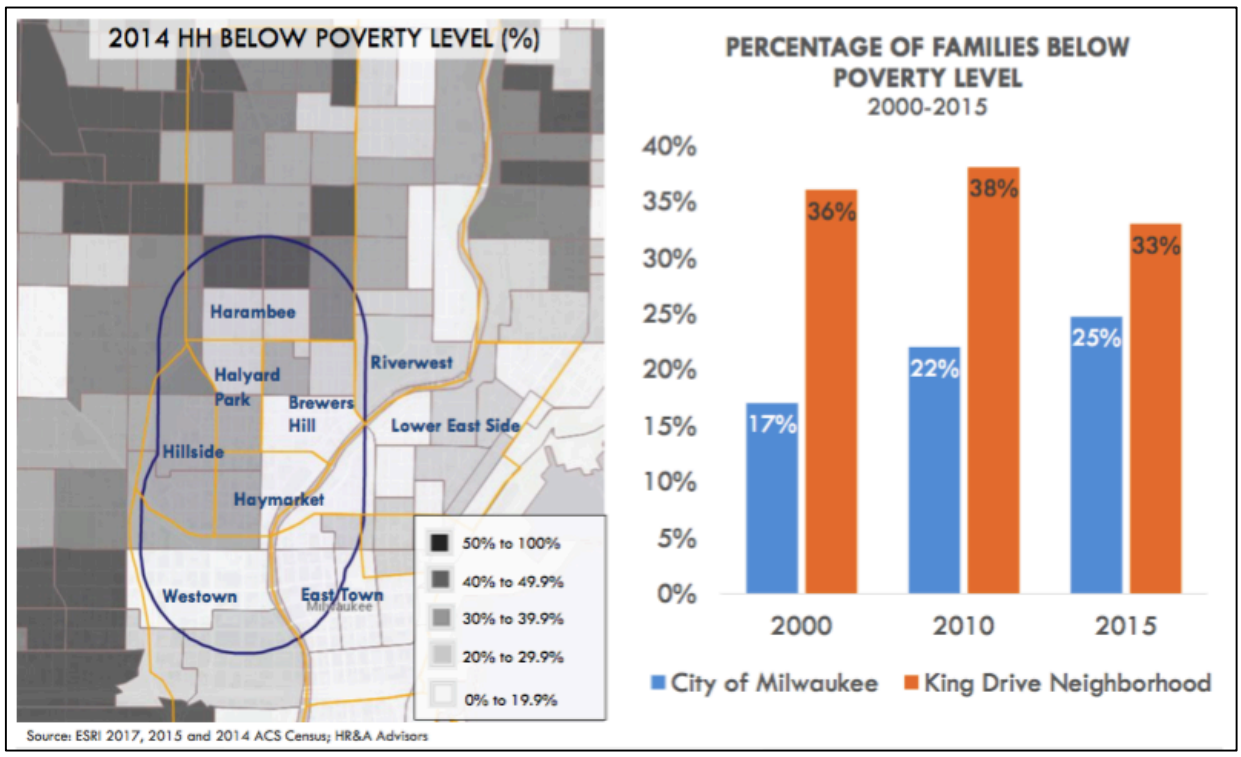

Figure 9: Bronzeville poverty levels versus the City of Milwaukee (Source: HR&A, 2018a)

The Walker's Point area is buttressed by the Harbor District, Historic Mitchell Street, and Walker's Square, consisting of a mixture of former industrial and warehouse buildings, a traditional commercial corridor, single-family, duplex, and multi-family housing, with a significant Latino and Hispanic population (67.3%) and strong ties to the LGBTQ+ community (Figure 10) (TOD Walker's Point, 2018). Over 12,000 people from 5,100 households live within a half-mile of the potential alignment and adjacent tracks for the streetcar expansion along the 1st and 2nd Street corridors (Figure 11). A market analysis of the Walker's Point neighborhood found that despite a significant supply of affordable housing, over 2,000 households pay more than 30% of their income on housing and predicts that "525 more households are likely to become housing burdened if rents increase due to continuing market trends and the extension of the streetcar" (Figure 12) (HR&A, 2018b, p. 6).

Furthermore, each of the respective neighborhoods also have low-rates of vehicle ownership (Figure 13; Figure 14), and have a strong need for more and better transit options. As one interviewee put it:

> It's also deeply socially unfair and economically unfair to say only if you can afford a car, afford car insurance, afford registration costs, afford gas, and afford car maintenance—all those things are an entry-level barrier to employment and even just social mobility. If you are someone who can't afford a car, or maintain a car, then your options are limited. But as far as a public transportation system, in the long run, investments in public transportation should be a form of economic equity. (25JD)

Another interviewee related social mobility to a skills and spatial mismatch of job locations:

> We obviously have a high number of individuals who are very, very low-income and often don't have access to a car. So, making sure we have a reliable and extensive public transportation network, I think is critical. The other main challenge is we continue to have a spatial mismatch of areas were jobs growth is sometimes happening in areas that is very, very far from our population centers, and are not served well by transit. That's a huge mismatch for the people who are likely to get those jobs and it makes their life a lot more difficult to have to figure a way to access a job. I think the bigger needs of public transit are to serve people who are dependent on it, but for us to have a robust transit system that incorporates multiple modes. (31JD)

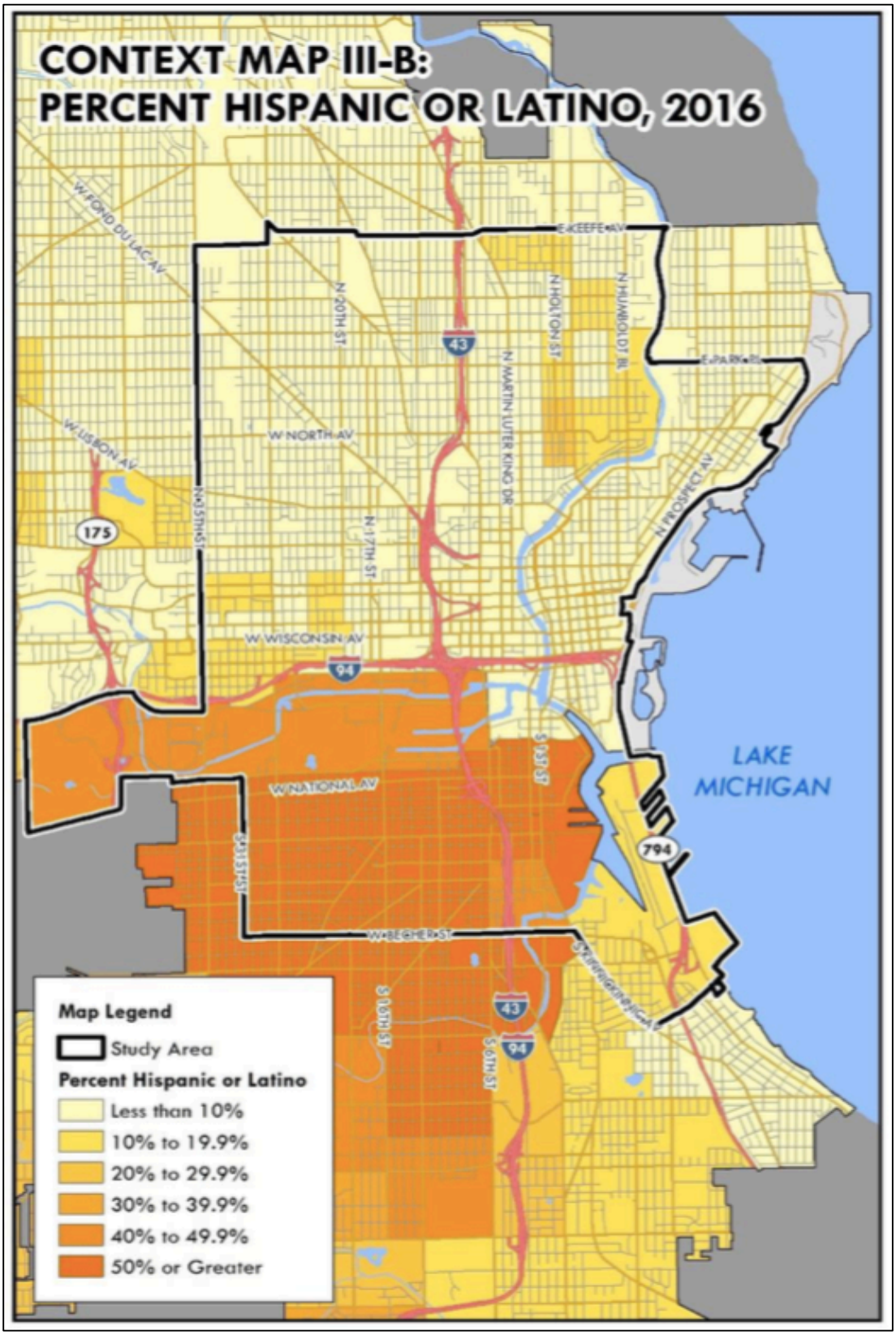

Figure 10: City of Milwaukee context of Hispanic or Latino populations (Source: DCD, 2018)

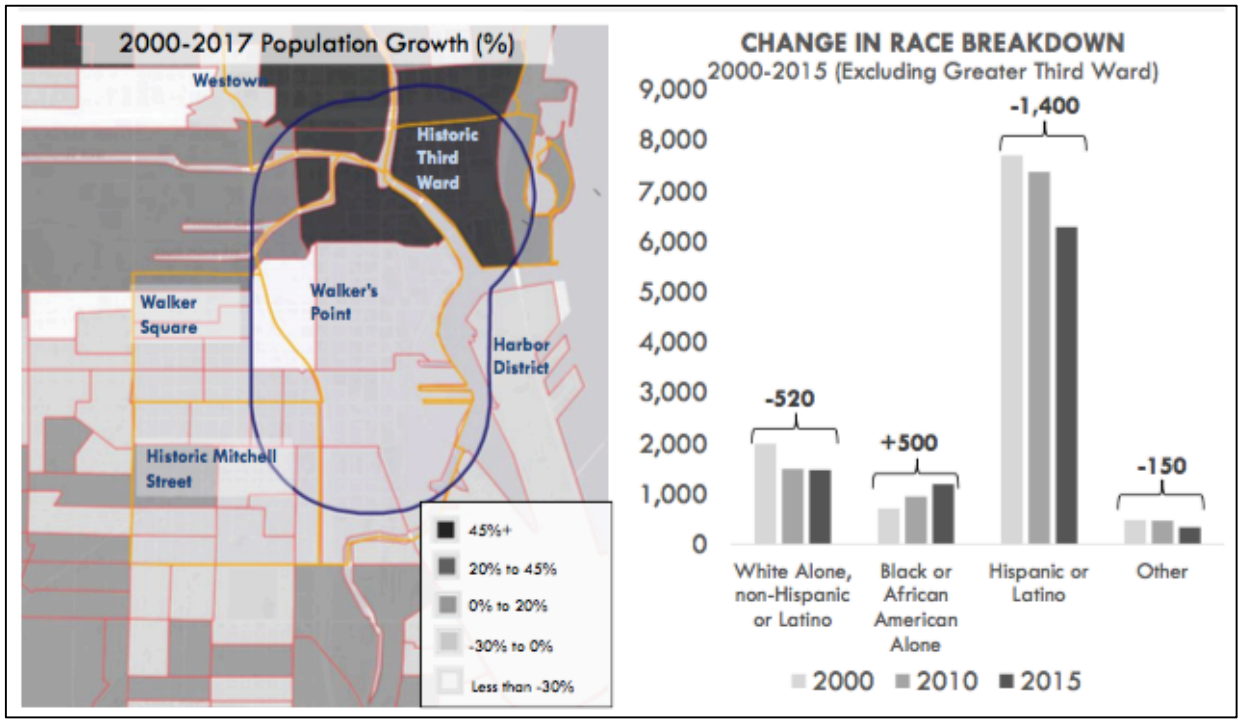

Figure 11: Walker's Point population changes and racial composition (Source: HR&A, 2018b)

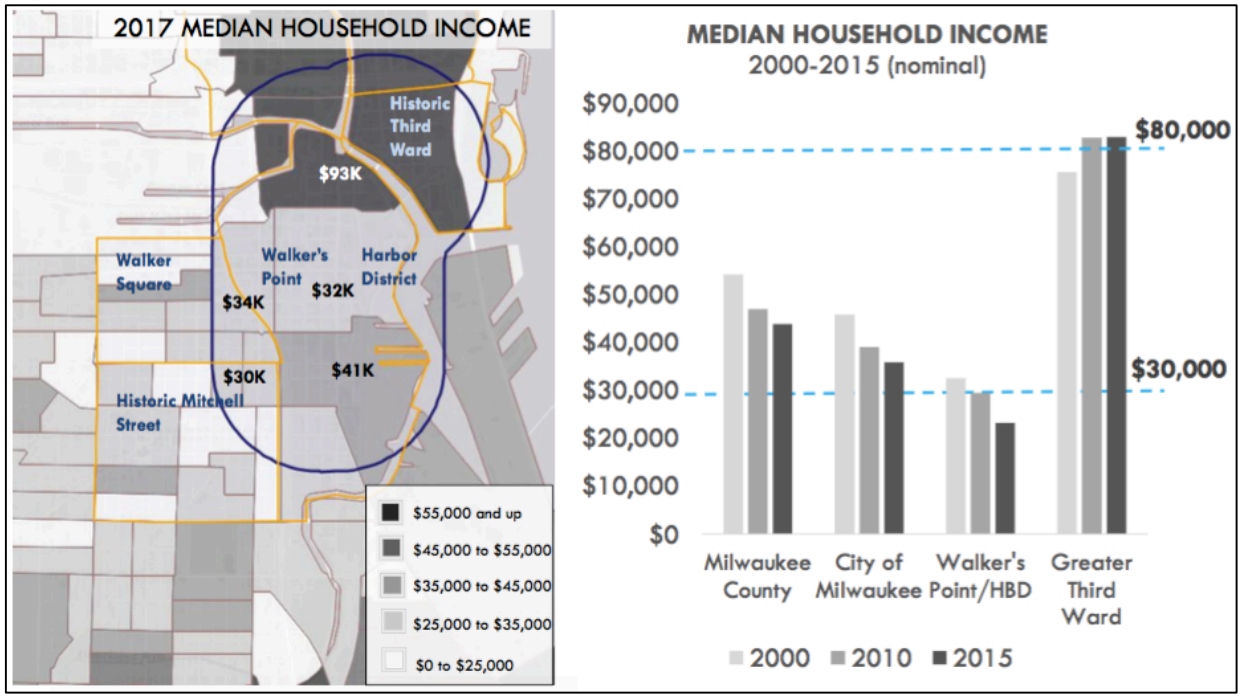

Figure 12: Walker's Point household income versus the Third Ward (Source: HR&A, 2018b)

The market analysis of both communities confirmed such a skills and spatial mismatch of entry-level job locations (Figure 15; Figure 16), finding that of the total jobs in the study area—41,400 total jobs in Bronzeville and 12,800 total jobs in Walker's Point—only 2% are filled by neighborhood residents, respectively (HR&A, 2018a, 2018b). A "spatial mismatch" generally refers to spatial isolation of workers from jobs, whereas a "skills mismatch" means that there is a poor fit between the jobs available in these neighborhoods and the skills/qualifications that neighborhood residents bring to the labor market. In this sense, both communities experience a skills mismatch of the types of jobs available, and a spatial mismatch to the low-skilled/entry-level jobs located outside their study areas not served well by public transit.

The anticipated benefits that the streetcar would bring to these communities include increasing mobility and accessibility to jobs centers with better connections across the surrounding neighborhoods, creating more walkable and livable neighborhoods, and creating more opportunities with more housing and retail options (25JD; 31JD; 36JD; 41JD; 55JD). Increases in property values was both seen as a benefit and as a burden. As one interviewee responded:

> Another benefit is most likely an increase of development that has the potential to bring an increase in property values, which can benefit current owners, but it's a double-edge sword. If you own a place, you are able to benefit from the increase in value which increases your overall wealth in equity. And though, again, it can be a double-edge sword and it could become more costly for some, and some people may not be able to afford where they are living now. That can become an issue that we have to be very cognizant about. (55JD)

Other potential burdens include maintaining affordability for both housing and businesses, drastic neighborhood change (including changes to the cultural character of the neighborhoods), increase of parking pressure, and burdens felt by businesses during construction, but often the biggest fear is displacement and gentrification (25JD; 31JD; 36JD; 41JD; 55JD).

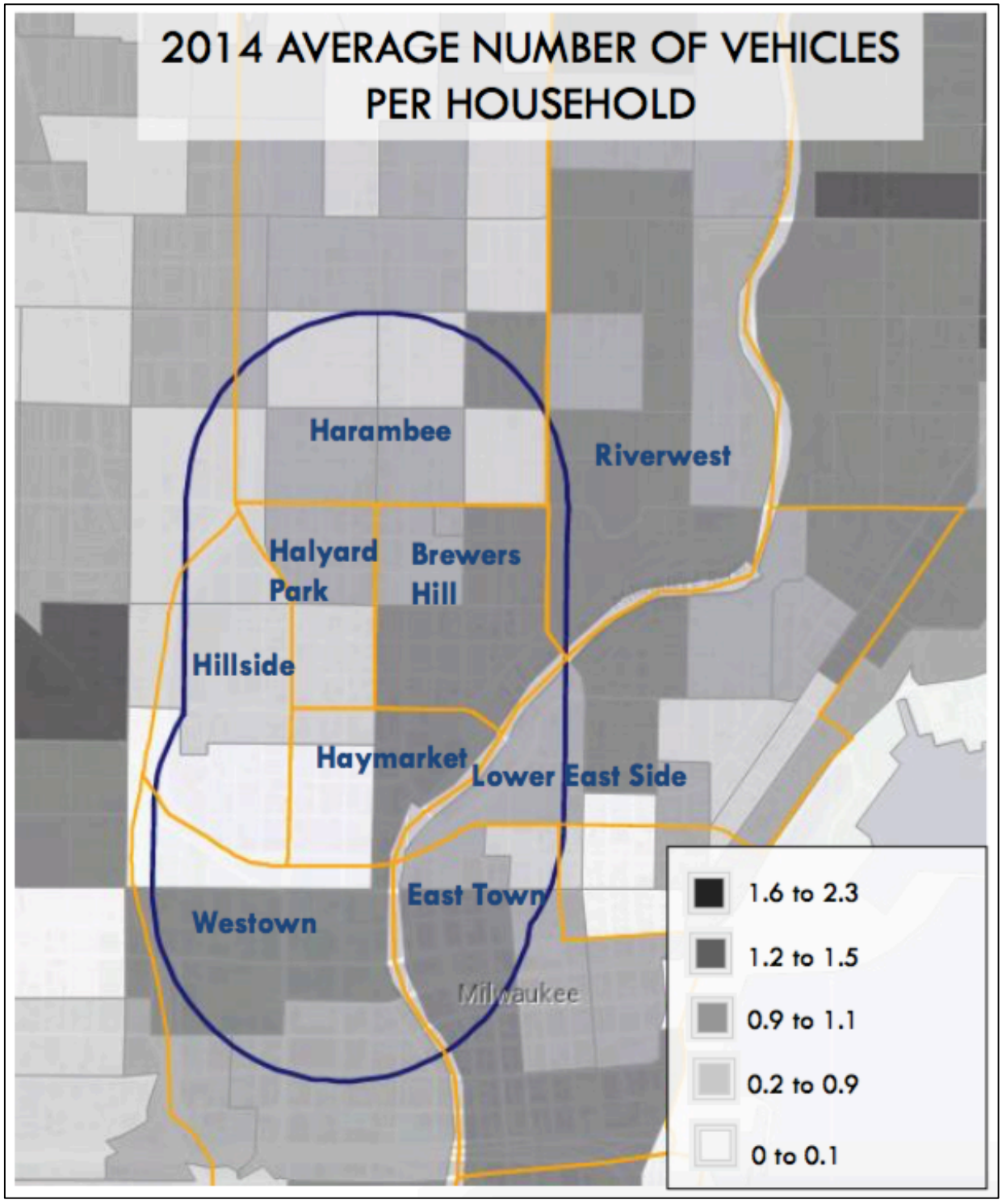

Figure 13: Bronzeville average number of vehicles per household (Source: HR&A, 2018a)

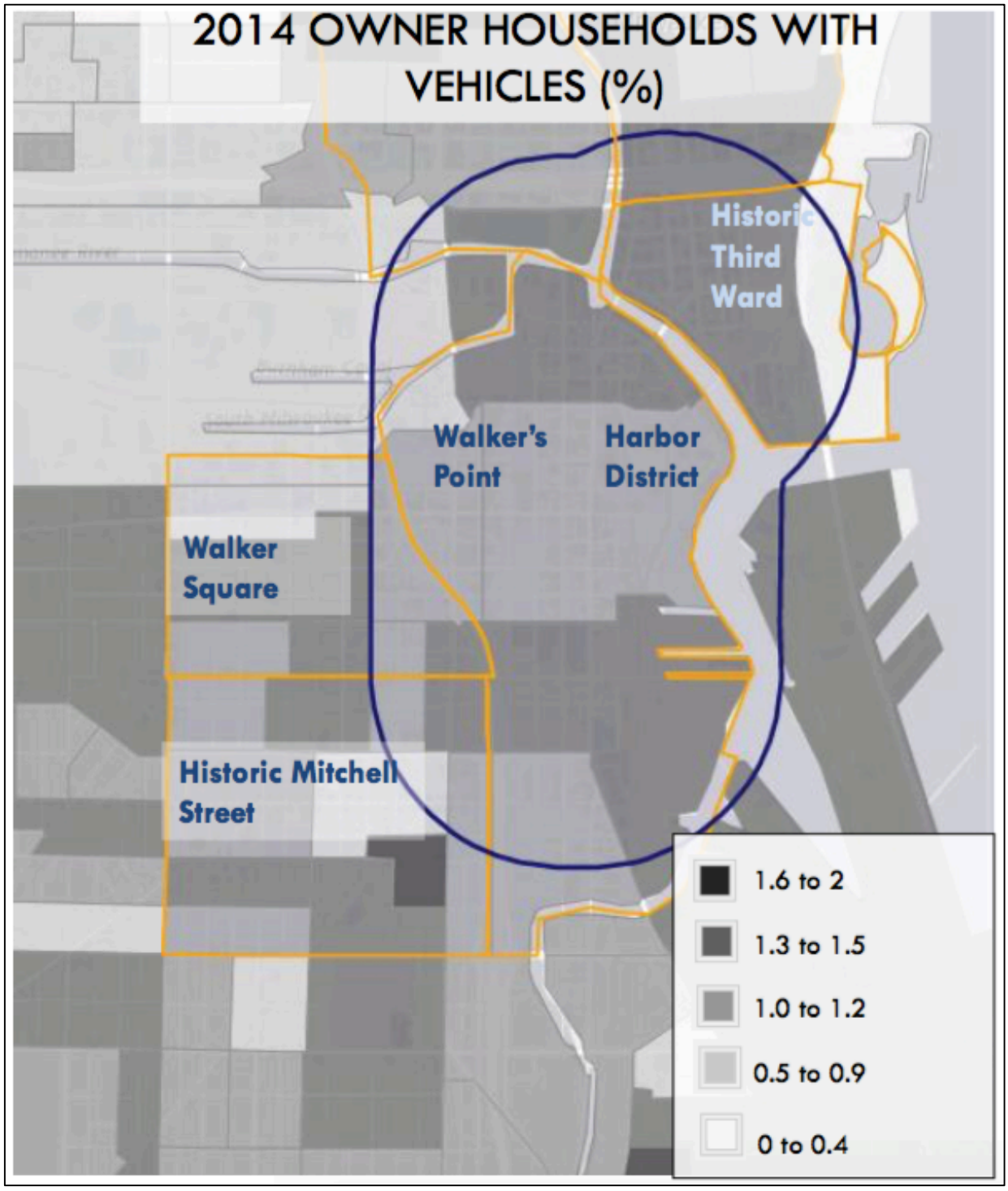

Figure 14: Walker's Point average number of vehicles per household (Source: HR&A, 2018b)

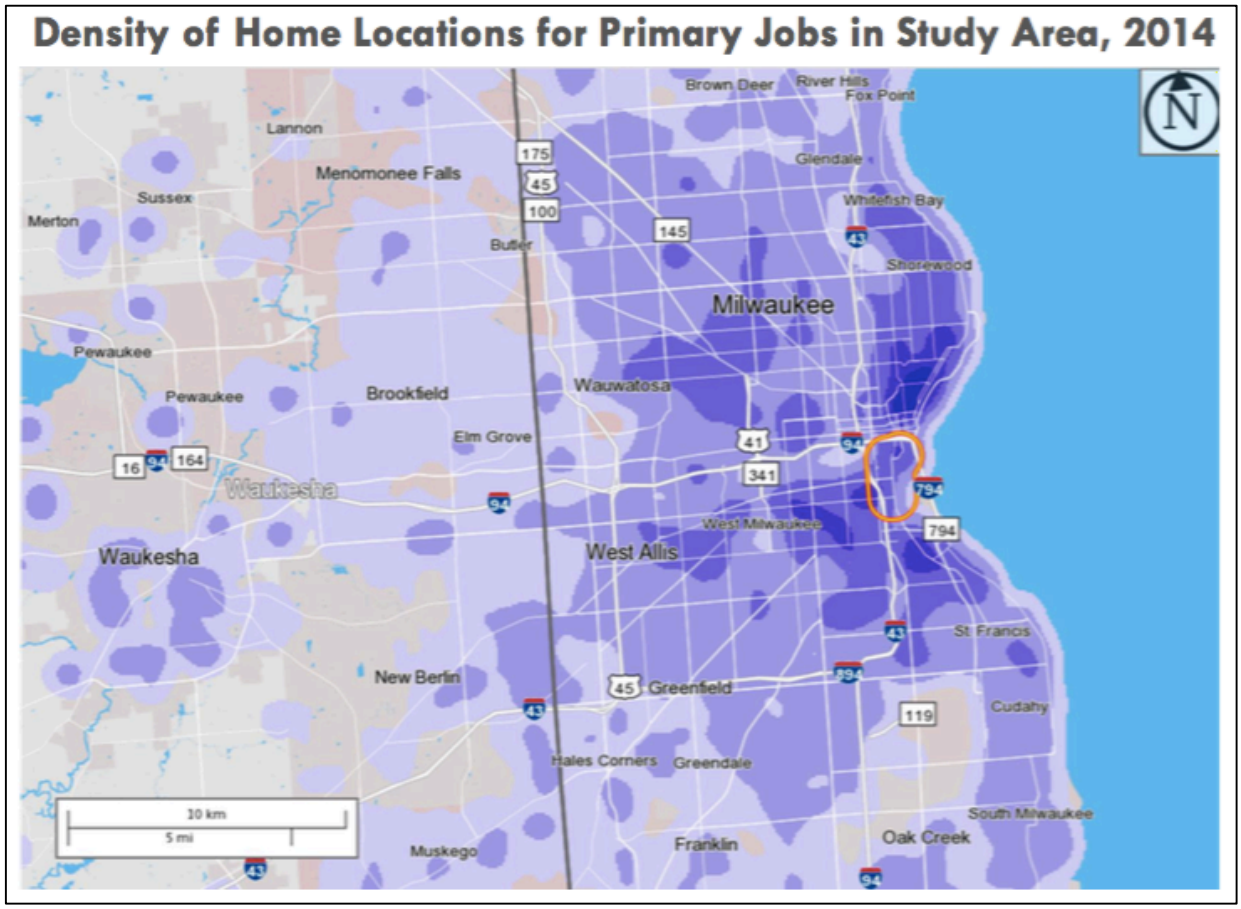

Figure 15: Spatial skills mismatch of jobs serving Walker's Point residents (Source: HR&A, 2018b)

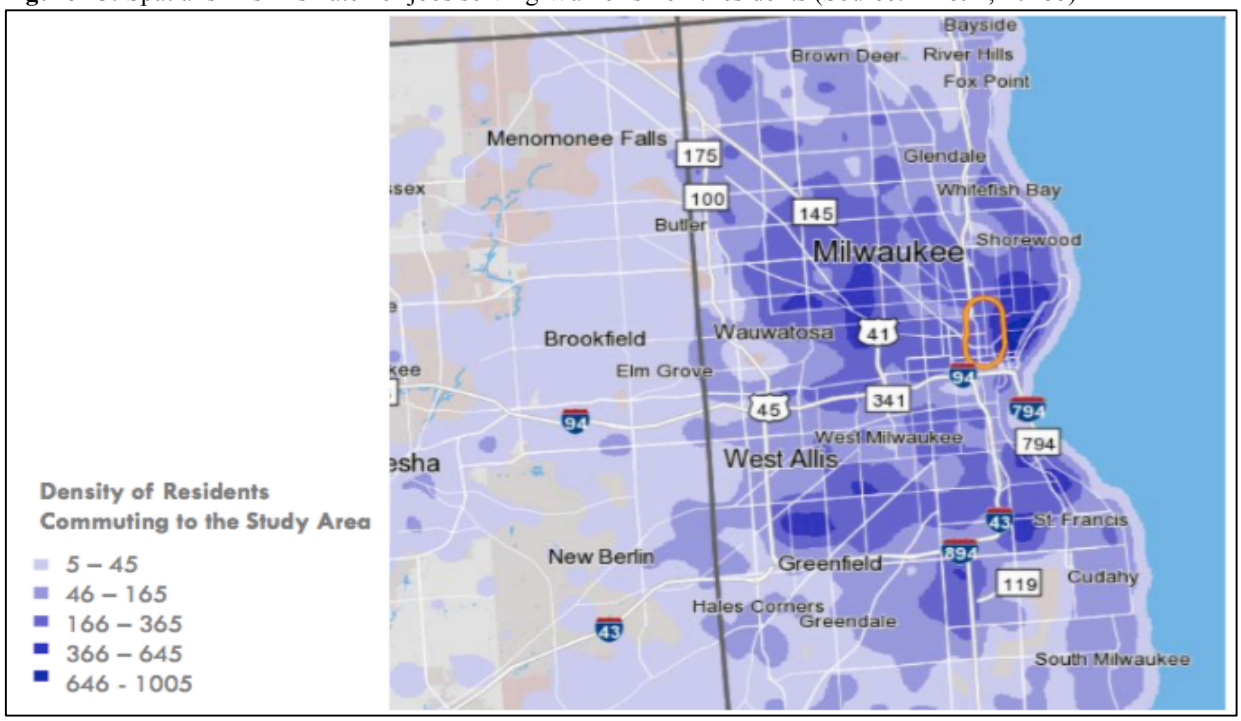

Figure 16: Spatial skills mismatch of jobs serving Bronzeville residents (Source: HR&A, 2018a)

Along with these possible benefits and burdens in mind, the e-TOD planning processes utilized community outreach to maximize involvement to not only make sure that the streetcar will be equitable and benefits everyone without leading to displacement, but also to establish the community needs and priorities, and to make sure that the streetcar is something the communities want to see in their neighborhoods. Interview participants noted that the community outreach was an extensive and engaged process, including online surveys, door-to-door canvassing, presence at community events (including festivals, farmer's markets, art-round tables, and setting up tables at grocery stores), five large public meetings, and employed a large public involvement team of community organizations, as well as having a Stakeholder Advisory Committee with over 50 people of professionals from all areas of expertise (31JD; 36JD; 41JD; 55JD. As one interviewee noted:

> We had probably the most extensive community engagement effort we've ever done in many of our planning processes. And I think the results spoke for themselves as far as how many people were engaged in the process, the different types of engagement, and the fact that there was pretty consistent support for the plan once it was unveiled in both the neighborhoods that were the focus of the study. (31JD)

The communities' priorities, in many ways, overlapped with the priorities of the extension studies, including maintaining affordable housing and affordable businesses, bringing in more neighborhood-serving retail, building density, and maintaining the cultural identity of the neighborhoods (31JD; 36JD; 41JD; 55JD).

While there is clearly a need for expanded public transit options in each neighborhood, both communities exhibit indicators for potential displacement and gentrification—i.e., increase in residential property values and loss of low-income households (Figure 17); and decrease in people of color and increase in household incomes (Figure 18) (HR&A, 2018a, 2018b). For the strong likelihood that property values will rise and rents may increase because of TOD and the

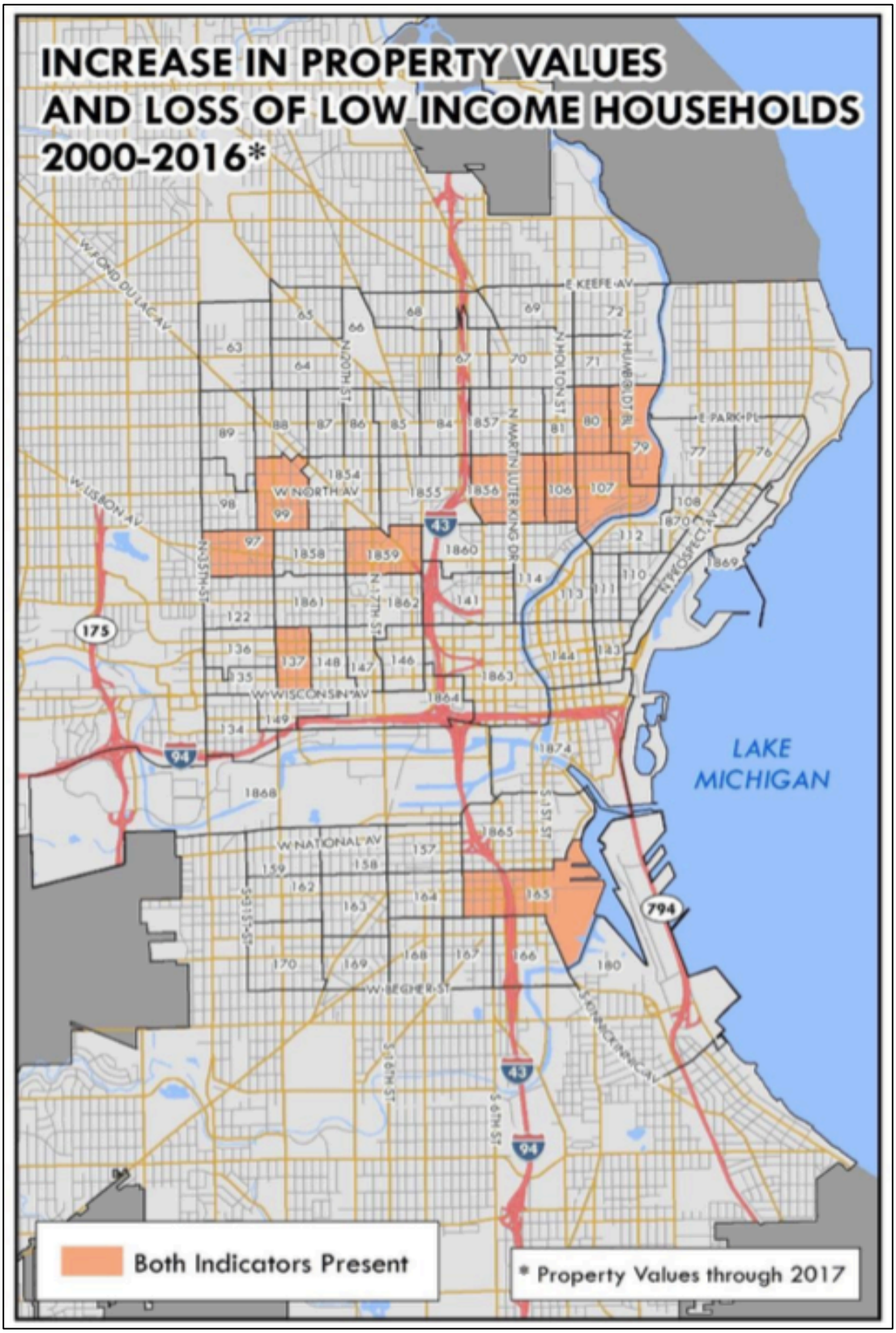

Figure 17: Indicators for potential displacement (Source: DCD, 2018)

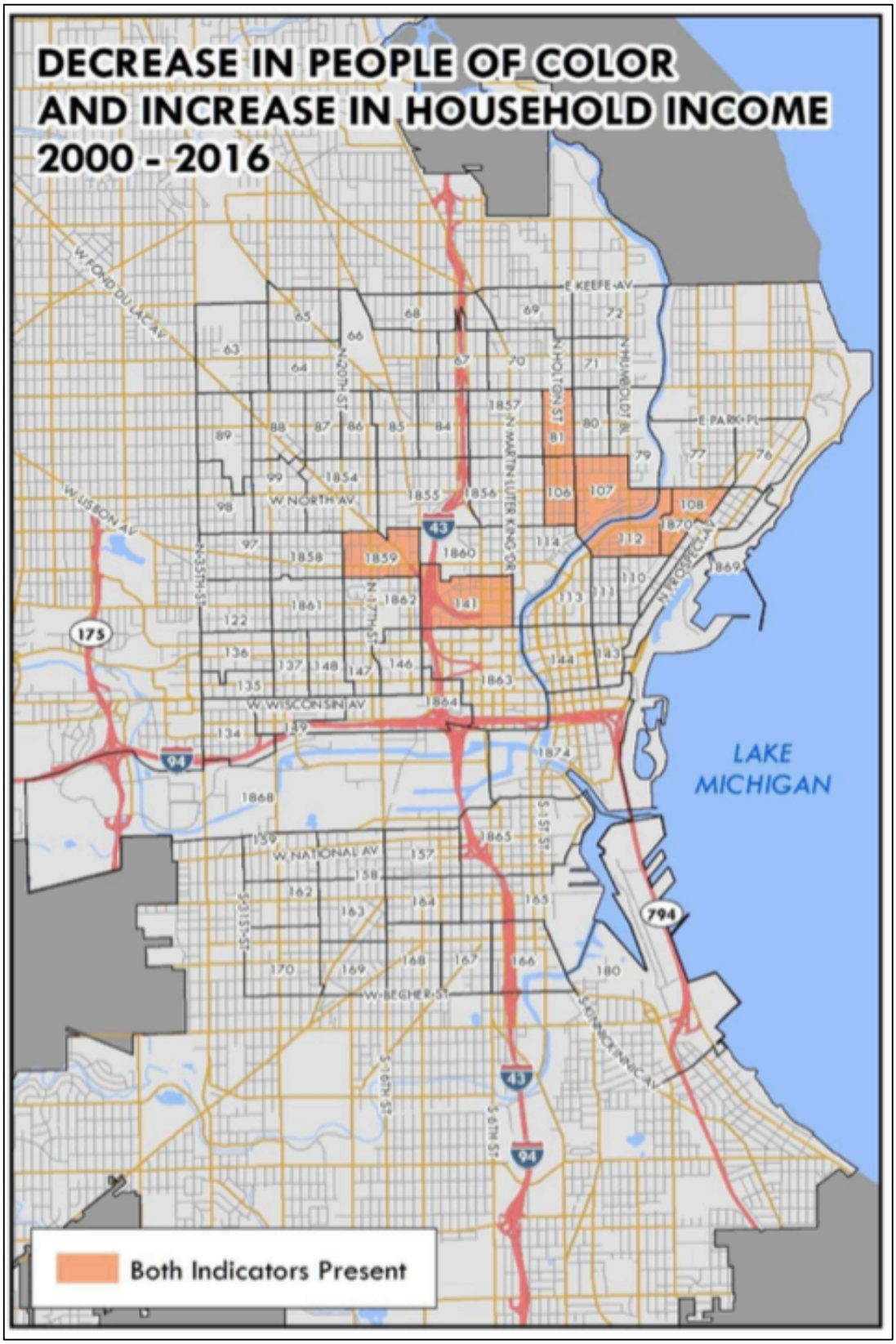

Figure 18: Indicators for potential gentrification (Source: DCD, 2018)

extension of the streetcar, attention to housing affordability strategies will need to be explored to prevent displacement of current residents (DCD, 2018). The city recognized these concerns and has given considerable attention and commitment to an anti-displacement strategy, representative of the Milwaukee Common Council Resolution #171143 that directed the DCD to prepare an Anti-Displacement Plan for the Neighborhoods Surrounding Downtown Milwaukee:

> Milwaukee's skyline is changing on a monthly basis due to the rapid pace of new construction and while the downtown building boom brings many improvements to the city, including more people and an expanded tax-base, it may also kill some cultural traditions and diversity, the precise characteristics that make Milwaukee so dynamic and desirable in the first place ... Development should not dismantle and displace existing neighborhoods and communities in order to make way for new residents ... DCD must ensure that its economic revitalization efforts for Milwaukee include policies that help poorer residents. (DCD, 2018, p. 4)

One interviewee explained that the Anti-Displacement Plan was done in conjunction with the e-TOD plans and the market analyses of the respective neighborhoods, even though it is a stand-alone plan on its own (55JD). Not only does the plan establish a baseline of metrics and indicators to measure the risk of displacement and gentrification for Census Tracts of Milwaukee neighborhoods, but it also elevates the discussion of the historical role of institutional racism and government's role in crafting policy to address displacement. As another interviewee explained:

> I think in some ways the Common Council Resolution speaks for itself, and the council members were hearing from their constituents concerns with this idea that with all this new development happening: 'am I going to be able to stay in the neighborhood?' And I think there's a few things driving that. I think there's this perception that there was a lot of speculation—perhaps people who were acting predatorily—and obviously because of the history in both our city and the country, I think that does get people concerned about displacement and government's role in the past: government's role in fostering displacement of communities of color. (31JD)

The focus of the Anti-Displacement Plan is to strike a balance between preventing displacement of low-income and minority groups, with the need for attracting new investment and increasing the socioeconomic integration with neighborhoods:

> City of Milwaukee policymakers should prioritize choice and equity alongside traditional development goals. Prioritizing choice means recognizing that as development occurs, policies and programs should be crafted to minimize the potential for displacement of existing residents and businesses that want to remain in their communities. Prioritizing equity means that anti-displacement policies and related programs should be intentionally designed to ensure that historically disadvantaged groups are also able to benefit from and gain access to the wealth-building opportunities provided by development occurring in the city neighborhoods. (DCD, 2019, p. 8)

In this regard, the goal of the plan is not to stop neighborhood change or put up barriers to investment, but to elevate the discussion of these issues and explore strategies to address and mitigate displacement.

In doing so, the Anti-Displacement Plan investigated national best-practices of policies and programs that address the topics of displacement and gentrification, and is complete with a list of 19 recommendations and strategies that are also incorporated into the respective e-TOD Plans. However, as one interviewee acknowledged, the existence of a plan does not mean the problem has been solved:

> While there's a growing knowledge of how to kind of best anticipate and prepare for, and hopefully take steps to mitigate that type of risk—there's no municipality that has been able to bring that risk down to zero. I think sometimes there's places that have been able to be really thoughtful and good about how to help make sure people understand the goal is not to displace communities or individuals—and I think those are all the steps that we would be taking as the city. But none of it is easy. I don't want to pretend that it's problem solved. I mean, these are all complex challenges that other cities around the country are all dealing with. (31JD)

Of the studied national-best practices, the main strategy that the city is pursuing is to create a Strategic Acquisition Fund that essentially puts together a pool of funds to acquire properties before they go up in value, and hold them for future affordable housing developments (31JD; 36JD; 41JD; 55JD). There are a lot of challenges for addressing issues of displacement and gentrification in Wisconsin because a lot of the tools that are employed in other communities outside the state are illegal in Wisconsin by state law (25JD; 31JD; 41JD; 55JD). For example,

one of the more commonly used tools recently that is illegal in Wisconsin has been inclusionary zoning, which basically mandates that any new housing development in the area must include a certain percentage of housing to be affordable housing (41JD). In that sense, the Strategic Acquisition Fund is a work-around for the city to be able to make deals with the developers that purchase their acquired properties to include a certain percentage of affordable housing, without requiring it by law (55JD). Another strategy from the Anti-Displacement Plan's list of recommendations was explained by one interviewee:

> The Common Council passed another directing resolution to study the creation of an anti-displacement tax fund. The simple idea there would be: whatever your taxes are today, those will be your taxes for the next 20 years, and even if your assessed value and the tax rate go up, some funding source will be identified to cover that difference so that government and our partners can make that commitment to people that rising taxes are not something that's going to be forcing people out of their home. The model that we've been asked to study and try to figure out how to implement locally is the model that was employed in Atlanta. Atlanta has a similar structure that we do here in Wisconsin—because of the uniformity clause that we have in our State Constitution, it requires the city to tax everyone equally. So, that's why the city can't do certain things that you might see in other states as far as like abatements or different tax treatments for different groups of individuals. (31JD)

In Atlanta, they were successful in identifying non-city funding sources from a combination of big businesses and foundations who thought it was important enough to develop mixed-income housing in areas that were seeing the potential for displacement, specifically surrounding the area of the Atlanta Falcons new stadium (31JD). In Wisconsin, virtually the only tools that have been available due to the existing state laws have been Low-Income Housing Tax Credit projects, Section 8 housing vouchers, and tax-incremental financing, all of which have concerns of their own (41JD). Overall, most interview participants expressed that the main challenges for solving affordable housing, mitigating pressures of displacement, and overcoming barriers for equitable development all come back to the revenue structure and the limited tools available for the city (25JD; 31JD; 41JD; 55JD).

Together with the Anti-Displacement Plan and the e-TOD Plans for each neighborhood, the City of Milwaukee is making a deliberate effort to address and define what TOD means for the city and its neighborhoods:

> There is a growing realization that equity needs to be at the foundation of planning for Transit Oriented Development. While new development has many positives, including new housing and shopping options in the community and increased tax base for the City, the benefits of new development—including TOD—are not always distributed equally. For that reason, this process included candid conversations about who may benefit from new development and redevelopment, what can be done to minimize and mitigate any potentially negative effects to current residents, and to find those opportunities to move forward the community's vision for the neighborhood. At the most fundamental level, equitable growth means that development benefits and does not displace either current residents or the cultural character of neighborhoods and that historically disadvantaged groups are able to gain access to wealth building opportunities by investments in transit and Transit Oriented Development. (TOD MLK, 2018; TOD Walker's Point, 2018, p. 11)

Each of the e-TOD plans presents the community engagement, input, and aspirations processes; a physical planning framework for key corridors, connectors and nodes of the neighborhoods; identifies strategic places of focus and recommendations; and highlights policies, programs, and actions complete with an implementation strategy and timeframe to actualize the goals and recommendations of the plan into reality (TOD MLK, 2018; TOD Walker's Point, 2018). The plan's recommendations included zoning code changes of land-uses to accommodate higher-densities, parks and open spaces, and mixed-use and mixed-income housing; minimizing displacement through affordable housing; and streetscape improvements to encourage walkability and to make neighborhoods more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly (36JD). As one interviewee summarized the goals of the studies:

> The goals were really about equity, and equitable growth for the community. And I think that the city was really proactive about it. Often, what happens is that people are thinking and talking about transit-oriented development and they talk about all the benefits in terms of the development it would bring and the vitality it would bring—new jobs, new retail, new opportunities—but people are not thinking about the housing burdens and gentrification. So, I think the city was a step ahead of the game and they were thinking about it. This project, you know, is still quite a few years down the line. Often, if the

> streetcar comes in and there is no plan for the community, then the development sort of rules the game and then the city and the planning departments are really playing catch-up—but here, they wanted to make sure that they could take the time, first of all, to put a plan in place with the community's vision, the community's needs, and making sure that all of these community needs were already integrated beforehand—before the streetcar came. So, I think that they were really ahead of the game in that sense, and I personally think that really helps in not having any negative impacts because you're prepared. (36JD)

In this regard, given the fact that these neighborhood plans have yet to be equipped with the federal funding to bring the streetcar into their communities, at the very least, the studies alone can move forward with streetscape improvements and provides valuable metrics that establish the community needs and priorities.

DISCUSSION

Comparative Analysis between Initial and Extension Routes

At this point, it becomes clear that the initial streetcar routes (including the M-Line, L-Line, and Wisconsin Center extension) were engaged in very different planning and conceptual processes than the Bronzeville and Walker's Point extension studies. While some may argue that the streetcar's original alignments may have concerns of equity—including the opportunity costs in consideration of the distribution of burdens and benefits—the original funding required that it must connect with the Intermodal Station and restricted other possibilities. There was some community outreach for the M-Line routing and "locally preferred alternative routes" were created (though, not adopted), but the highly-politicized debates surrounding the streetcar's inception prohibited further analysis and engagement outside of the realm of politics.

The regime politics, if you will, broke down the growth coalition to such a degree, that at a certain point all that mattered was to build the streetcar in some capacity. This is evident through its lack of integration with the existing MCTS bus system, even though it was originally

envisioned as being part of a larger, holistic network of heavy-rail, commuter-rail, light-rail, and buses. Seemingly, when the high-speed rail project got squashed under Governor Walker, so did the feasibility of a holistic vision for a robust transit network that would have incorporated all four technologies. As such, allocated federal funds were being dissipated and peeled off for other projects, and there became a sense of urgency to utilize the limited funds remaining before the federal government retracted them completely, regardless of its integration with the bus network and equitable development impacts. What was left was enough funding to build a 2.1-mile starter system, and to maximize the city's return on investment (along with the Intermodal connection stipulation and the utility costs provision) we got the alignment that we have today.

It can also be argued that the initial M-Line and L-Line routes served as a catalyst for both the Wisconsin Center extension and the e-TOD studies, although from two very different processes. There is no denying that the streetcar played an integral role in securing the bid for the 2020 DNC, realized from a creative city development template. In this regard, the streetcar served to not only recast its image to outsiders, but propelled itself to a national stage that will only continue to further enhance the name and image recognition of Milwaukee, not to mention the surge of tourism adjoined with the DNC. The creation of an additional TID (along with the extension of two preexisting TIDs) to finance the 0.3-mile extension for an event that only lasts one weekend also raises concerns for equitable development. While the streetcar is currently free to ride through the first year of operation from the Potawatomi Hotel & Casino sponsorship—and with Milwaukee's bid to host the 2020 DNC being contingent on extending the streetcar to the Wisconsin Center and providing free rides during the convention—it is important to note that if and when the streetcar is extended into the Bronzeville and Walker's

Point communities, there is no guarantee that the streetcar will be made free for the transit-dependent populations for any period of time.

The Bronzeville and Walker's Point extension studies, on the other hand, were quite depoliticized compared to the other phases. Granted, while the $750,000 FTA grant for the e-TOD studies was also contingent on Milwaukee having a streetcar in the first place, there was a clear recognition of the potential negative impacts that TOD can have on historically disenfranchised communities. Unlike the initial routes, the extension studies had a strong emphasis on e-TOD, overcoming barriers to equity, and mitigating pressures of displacement. The studies were very intentional about e-TOD to such an extent that the community engagement process was unique and meaningful for establishing the visions and goals towards creating equitable outcomes of TOD (e-TOD).

Racial Equity Impact Assessment

While the benefits of extending the streetcar into Bronzeville and Walker's Point would include connecting more people to jobs in these different communities, and brining more people into these communities—clearly, the burdens are that the increase in property values could cause issues of displacement and gentrification down the line. The city recognized these concerns and are giving it considerable attention, and prepared an Anti-Displacement Plan for the neighborhoods to strategize how to mitigate these concerns. In their investigation of national best-practices, the Anti-Displacement Plan also specifically explored the racial equity literature of the Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) material and incorporated the Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) and GARE toolkits (DCD, 2018, p.31) into their planning processes for the e-TOD studies. Per the guidelines of the toolkits, the

assessments were conducted prior to implementation of the project proposal to inform the decision-making processes for these communities. Data was developed to measure indicators of potential displacement and gentrification. The city is taking in what people in that community are saying, and they are reaching out to the community in such a capacity that has not been done before in Milwaukee. The studies also incorporated an analysis of the benefits and burdens of the streetcar entering these communities, and developed strategies for advancing racial equity and mitigating unintended consequences. There is a plan in place for implementation, and there is also continual community engagement, even after the studies have been completed to streamline communication and retain accountability.

From an analysis of the planning documents and stakeholder interviews, the benefits and burdens all lead to the same conclusions: yes, there are a lot of potential benefits that can come out, but there are also a lot of potential burdens too, and unmitigated burdens are just going to create more equity problems than we have now, and that is exactly what we do not want to do because that defeats the entire purpose of the e-TOD studies. We know that the government is reaching out to communities and that they do care about what could happen as a result of extending the streetcar into their neighborhoods, and that is an important step in the right direction because we want people in government to care about what happens to people in these communities. However, deep down, listening to these concerns does not mean that the city is actively solving any problems or coming up with any solutions yet, and many of the strategies are still raw and underdeveloped. Ultimately, trying to solve for these affordable housing issues is essential for equitable development. Otherwise, we are going to see the brunt of the changes and negative impacts of new development, new investment, and new density being borne by the businesses and residents in the communities. We need to mitigate those negative impacts, and

right now, we do not have any good answers for that. Frankly, no city has yet to solve that issue. And this is where these questions of equity are still hanging out there without any good answers.

Implications for Equitable Development

Now that we know what these potential burdens and benefits are, the question remains as to how we are going to address them. One problem is that TOD is still rooted in the neoliberal habitus of development. TOD is a market-driven development strategy which is essentially about growth being considered a good thing, irrespective of negative externalities. This is one of the huge challenges that exists in the planning and development field: well-meaning people don't always create outcomes that are equitable. They could be well-intentioned, but they are also part of a systemic set of decision-making that, even though their intentions are good, the outcomes may not be equitable. The point is, e-TOD is difficult largely because the neoliberal ideological frame is so narrow and constrained. The pragmatics of TOD are not what we should be contending with—what we should be contending with is the lens through which we make our decisions, and the ultimate distribution of the benefits and burdens of those decisions—irrespective of the pragmatics (because democracy requires we do that, even if it is hard).

Built inside that is also this neoliberal thinking that is embedded in development about capitalism as a form of production—that it is always given the benefit of the doubt as the positive means by which we produce outcomes in our society—and some of us have been given the privilege to interpret those in a positive way continuously. Those who are negatively affected by it on a regular basis, however, might have a different opinion. So, part of the struggle, and why we call it "neoliberal," is because it is a struggle within a paradigm of our understanding of capitalism—this idea that economic development is the way of advancing

growth and good byproducts that will benefit us all (underlined as the assumption that it is going to benefit us all, generally).

From an economic development vantage point, it is because the mandates of the market have their own imperatives, even in the face of good people trying to do the right thing. It is that neoliberal thinking about the positives of market forces, and the failure to fully appreciate how they have had such negative consequences for many communities is what allows us to say, "Well look at how difficult it is, look at the pragmatics." Pragmatically, wherever the streetcar goes is going to increase the walkability and livability of neighborhoods, therefore, it will benefit everyone in the community. However, that also presumes that the streetcar in it of itself as a development tool can be isolated from the overarching objectives of development patterns that have historically happened in cities and have historically been manifested in our planning practices. TOD does not sit outside of that, and in fact, I would argue that the streetcar as a development strategy, is a strategy of attracting from the outside, not a strategy of building from the inside. If you consider the streetcar as a development tool, it is about how it can attract people from the outside-in, not addressing the needed issues of the individuals inside the community, because what it is fundamentally (besides a transportation amenity), is an attraction.

Thus, it is critical to understand the economic development literature in order to know what the historical tensions and challenges have been because there is a long-line of analysis in the economic development field about the problems associated with these long-standing practices and strategies that do not explicitly contemplate the distribution of benefits and burdens. In particular, the distribution of benefits and burdens must be considered when it comes to using enormous amounts of public resources, because if those public resources are extracted from the general populous, then the benefits should endure to everyone as well. This,

however, poses another problem within the circular logic of neoliberal capitalism which would argue: development itself as a capitalistic endeavor will benefit the "greater good" because they are attached to a certain number of presumptions—such as growth and the attraction of capital will create new jobs (but rarely does it ask, for whom?), or that it is going to expand the tax-base (but rarely has it asked, what are the implications of that for those who exist in those communities in which that is happening?), or that it is going to create a new set of political relationships and PPPs (often ignoring that those new sets of relationships are because communities turnover from displacement). Not considering these factors is a failure of our ability to understand how opportunity is distributed in urban space, and what continues to sustain and create the reproduction of inequalities. Thus, it is the realignment of resources, the realignment of peoples, and the realignment of those individuals with certain ideologies of urban space (in the absence of calling the questions) that (re)produces the replication of the (in)equities that we say we want to mitigate.

Another problem is rooted in the revenue structures of the city, the state, and at the federal levels. The city is very reliant on property taxes in terms of funding, and raising additional funds is always difficult and forces cities to be creative about it, and often enter various PPPs that compromise equitable values. For instance, Wisconsin's Uniformity Clause prevents municipalities from taxing property taxes differently for different individuals, but TIFs are an exception to that clause. At its most fundamental level, TIFs are tax abatements given to developers for major real-estate development projects. When Wisconsin adopted TIF legislation in 1975, it intended to solve issues of equity by encouraging development to occur in blighted areas of urban neighborhoods, or an area receiving development challenges, and that the development would not happen "but for" the use of a TIF (WI TIF, 2019). A lot of the sources

of funds that cities use for TOD projects have been shrinking at federal and state levels over the last few years, and because of those funding constraints, Milwaukee has had to use its TIFs to fund the construction of the streetcar. Doing so limits the city's ability to use that same TIF for other uses in the TID around the streetcar, and that is one of the sources that might be used to implement some of the e-TOD recommendations. Thus, if the city is using all the increment from the increased tax-base to pay for the streetcar itself, then it limits what else they can do with it for other neighborhood or community improvements. This is again, a challenge of the city's limited funding sources for transit, and not having a Regional Transit Authority or a dedicated sales tax for transit has given the city limited flexibility to address local needs and use different tools to do that. One of the biggest problems moving forward, is that there are a lot of barriers at the state level that prohibits many of the tools that addresses equitable affordable housing issues. Therefore, it is crucial to lobby the State of Wisconsin lawmakers—whether its state-shared revenue, or the ability to do different kinds of funding structures for transit or affordable housing that several other municipalities in other states do—to see major policy changes that allows local governments to take steps for protecting residents in these communities that may experience TOD, and the burdens associated with them.

From the outside looking in, all the associated benefits with the streetcar and TOD seem great, and it makes Milwaukee more attractive by adding new public transit amenities and establishing better connections across neighborhoods. However, it also poses the threat of causing displacement and gentrification by attracting a more affluent and White population into these communities, while pushing African-American and Latino populations further out. Which unfortunately leads to the same problems, but two-miles further north or south. Obviously, with any project it is desired for the benefits to outweigh the burdens, but the burdens could

potentially be devastating for the low-income families who rely on public transportation the most and should be benefitting the most. The revenue structures at the federal, state, and local levels—including several of Wisconsin's state laws—present barriers to achieving e-TOD in Milwaukee. None of this is to say that Milwaukee should not continue to pursue the expansion of the streetcar to achieve equitable development. However, until those barriers are addressed and the proper tools are identified and developed that distribute the benefits and burdens of TOD equitably, Milwaukee will continue to exhibit uneven development in its neighborhoods and communities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research investigated the Milwaukee Streetcar as a creative city TOD tool, and examined its implications for equitable development. This research also unpacked the historical context of the political regimes and coalition building which brought the streetcar to Milwaukee in the first place. The findings of this research revealed that the initial streetcar routes (M-Line, L-Line, and Wisconsin Center extension) align with the creative city development template wherein its primary function serves as an economic development tool, along with the secondary functions of place-making and image-branding, while transportation benefits were tertiary. This was evident with its lack of integration with the MCTS bus network. The benefits of these initial streetcar routes are thus localized in the downtown central business district, wherein the majority of the benefits accrue to private developers, property owners, and the city from increased assessed property values. Other benefits include the expansion of multi-modal transit options and enhanced livability and walkability for the more affluent residents that live in the downtown neighborhoods. The burdens of these initial streetcar routes tend to fall on the associated

opportunity costs of transit-dependent populations in the surrounding communities whom rely on public transit amenities the most, while the city's scare resources and political capital are extracted for the downtown streetcar.

On the other hand, the findings of this research also revealed that the potential streetcar extension lines to Bronzeville and Walker's Point entailed a very different planning and political process than its predecessor. With a focus on e-TOD and careful attention to anti-displacement strategies, the city's planners and policymakers exhibited a clear intention to mitigate pressures of displacement that could result from the expansion of the streetcar, prior to its inception in their communities. The potential benefits of expanding the streetcar into these neighborhoods could be great for the residents and businesses alike, however it could also be catastrophic to the cultural character if the burdens of TOD are borne by these communities, and the residents and businesses become displaced. While good intentions are not enough to mitigate pressures of displacement and overcome barriers to equity, the city's policymakers would do best by lobbying the State of Wisconsin's lawmakers to change several of the preexisting laws that limit the city's tools and resources to address these concerns.

This research has made a significant contribution to the existing literature on TOD by way of a political-economic analysis of the Milwaukee Streetcar case study through an equity lens, including an examination of its social effects of the benefits and burdens of accessibility, and its implications for equitable development. Other cities and communities could do well by incorporating the lessons and insights learned from this Milwaukee Streetcar case study as a model for e-TOD moving forward. Milwaukee's e-TOD extension studies lay the foundation for extensive community engagement and involvement throughout the entirety of the planning process, and identify several tools and mechanisms to ensure equitable development, while

mitigating pressures of displacement. Other externalities previously mentioned could pose problems for Milwaukee to incorporate those tools and implement the full extent of these plans, but other cities that do not have those same barriers could still move forward using Milwaukee as a case study for e-TOD.

Limitations of this study include the restricted time-frame of this research, and an under-representation of the business community stakeholders in interviews. Interviewees were broadly represented across sectors, although, it could have been useful to have more voices incorporated into this study. Time-frame restrictions of this research also affected the number of interviews that could be conducted. The Milwaukee Streetcar is also still very new, and the time-frame of its operation limited the effects of the streetcar that could be measured. Recommendations for future research would include measuring the impacts and effects of the streetcar and its surrounding communities in the years to come. It would also be interesting to investigate—when and if these future extension lines are in place—how it will affect ridership, if it will become effectively integrated with the MCTS bus network, and in 10 years from now, wherein the benefits and burdens lay.

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APPENDIX

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

General Questions

1. How are you involved in mass transit and transportation planning in Milwaukee?

2. What do you see as the most important transportation issues in Milwaukee?

3. Why did the streetcar become the priority for implementation?

M-Line/L-Line Questions

4. How have private funders/stakeholders been involved in planning decisions and implementation?

5. What has been the role of other businesses, government agencies, and community groups in project planning and implementation?

6. Has anyone opposed the project, and if so, who?

7. What do you think the most important three benefits are from the M-Line/L-Line and who will experience them?

8. What do you think the most important three negative consequences (or burdens) are from the M-Line/L-Line and who will experience them?

9. How will the project impact low-income and minority groups?

10. What, if any, measures have been taken to integrate their needs into the project?

11. What are the community priorities?

MLK/Walker's Point Extension Questions

12. Who was the driver for the equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD) studies and extension plans? How was the FTA grant received, who applied and why?

13. How have private funders/stakeholders been involved in planning decisions and implementation?

14. What has been the role of other businesses, government agencies, and community groups in project planning and implementation?

15. Has anyone opposed the project, and if so, who?

16. What do you think the most important three benefits are from the MLK/Walker's Point Extension-Lines and who will experience them?

17. What do you think the most important three negative consequences (or burdens) are from the MLK/Walker's Point Extension-Lines and who will experience them?

18. How will the project impact low-income and minority groups?

19. What, if any, measures have been taken to integrate their needs into the project?

20. What are the community priorities?

Equitable TOD Questions

21. How has the thinking and perspectives differed between the two different planning processes (M-Line/L-Line versus MLK/Walker's Point Extension-Lines)?

22. How is the city planning on mitigating pressures of displacement?

23. What do you see as the key barriers to making sure that TOD projects like the streetcar foster equity?

24. Does the speed of the planning process undermine democratic participation?

25. How does the speed of the planning process effect the community engagement process, sample size, and community representation for democratic participation?