Boundaries and Inclusive Public Management

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Abstract: This paper presents a framework for expanding opportunities to enhance connections across boundaries that are commonly experienced in public management: inside/outside organizational, expert/lay knowledge, temporal, and issue boundaries. In an analysis of vignettes from several public engagement efforts in Grand Rapids, Michigan, we find a range of boundary work practices relative to these sites of difference, including aligning them, translating across them, changing their meaning, creating them, and rendering them inconsequential. We elaborate the definition of inclusive public management to include creating connections across differences, and suggest that such boundary play supports resilient systems for addressing public problems.

Keywords: boundary work and boundary objects, inclusive public management, collaborative governance, civic engagement, expert and local knowledge

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The Salience of Boundaries in Public Management

This paper explores what kinds of connections *could* be created across a set of commonly experienced boundaries in public management: organizational inside/outside, expert/lay knowledge, issue, and temporal boundaries. We suggest that boundaries are created by actions in sites of difference and that public managers' actions relative to these sites are highly consequential. *Inclusive* public management practices involve creating connections of various types across sites of difference, whereas exclusive practices sever connections or reinforce boundaries. Both approaches are effective strategic management practices. The contribution of this paper is to demonstrate the value of boundary work as a lens for understanding the possibilities available to public administrators for managing the relationships among government agencies and other actors.

This is particularly important as the boundaries of public organizations are expected to become even more porous in the future, requiring deeper understanding of the nature of coordination across boundaries (Feldman 2010). With the increasing relevance of collaborative governance, public-private partnerships, network governance and civic engagement, practices of inclusive management are becoming an increasingly desirable mode of public management. Public managers are rising to the task by inventing ways to negotiate boundaries that alter the relationships within and between organizations, sectors, and the public so that more people, information, and other resources can be included in efforts to address public problems.

Discussions of collaboration, in research and in practice, sometimes reify boundaries between actors, between issues, and between process and content in problem-solving efforts. Distinctions in the possible and proper roles of experts and the "lay" public, between the public and private sectors, between "government" and "public" roles, between the "process designer" and "process participant" in public engagement, or between policy-maker and policy implementer are common manifestations of understanding these relationships in terms of clearly bounded domains. While these differences frequently are present, *assuming* that they distinguish mutually exclusive or antagonistic categories limits options for analyzing the ways that public managers organize collaborative efforts.

It also defies current organizational realities. Public, private, and nonprofit agencies are already deeply and increasingly involved in collaborative governance networks (Goldsmith and Eggers 2004; Crosby and Bryson 2005; Kettl 2006; Provan and Kenis 2008; Goldsmith and Kettl 2009; O'Leary and Bingham 2009; O'Leary, van Slyke, and Kim 2010), and the prevalence of such unbounded governance structures merits focused attention from public administration scholars (Koppell 2010). By their very definition, these arrangements suggest a negotiation, reconfiguration, or blurring of the boundaries of units and the relationships among them. At the same time that collaborative arrangements between organizations to implement public programs and policies are increasing, public and stakeholder engagement to inform decision-making has become a fundamental feature of the public-government relationship (Healey 1997; Reich 1998; Denhardt and Denhardt 2000; Vigoda 2002; Roberts 2004; Innes and Booher 2004).

Inclusive public management encompasses these aspects of interactive governance. It describes a pattern of public management practices that incorporate aspects of boundary work among institutions (collaborative management); among levels of management, sectors, or occupational groups (intra-organizational integration); and between government institutions and the public (public engagement). Indeed, inclusive management scholars assert that these domains of boundary work are intertwined, i.e., empowerment cannot happen via public engagement without empowerment occurring internally in the government agency, and vice versa (Feldman and Khademian 2003).

What distinguishes inclusion from other forms of civic engagement, organizational integration, or collaboration is its orientation to *making connections* among people, across issues, and over time. Three key features of inclusive management practices are that they involve public managers and others in co-producing both the process and content of decision-making, engage multiple ways of knowing, and sustain temporal openness (Quick and Feldman 2011). To be inclusive, managers need to engage multiple ways of knowing (Feldman, Khademian, and Quick 2009), including science/technically, politically, and experientially based approaches (Feldman and Khademian 2007). Using boundary objects and experiences is a way to "facilitate a process where individuals can jointly transform their knowledge'" and to "increase transactions" among individuals to facilitate the relational work that supports doing work together (Feldman and Khademian 2007: 315; see also Feldman, Khademian, Ingram and Schneider, 2006).

In sum, previous writing on inclusive management has implied that working with boundaries is a key aspect of accomplishing inclusion. This is consistent with scholarship on collaborative governance and public engagement, which indicates that public managers must engage and sometimes redefine traditional boundaries. This paper elaborates that work in three ways. We identify four boundary zones that are particularly salient to inclusive public management. We analyze how and what kinds of connections public managers are creating across these zones in several vignettes of inclusive public engagement processes. We conclude by discussing how public managers can build resiliency in collaborative arrangements and public engagement through enlisting a palette of boundary work practices.

Boundaries, Boundary Objects, and Boundary Work

Public affairs scholars have introduced the concepts of boundary work and boundary objects into the public management and planning literature from science studies, sociology, and organizational studies. We begin by defining these terms.

Boundaries

This analysis follows the lead of numerous sociologists in understanding boundaries to be created by actions at sites of difference. This understanding denaturalizes boundaries and entities as given, fixed things, instead recognizing them as emergent, relational, and generative (Gieryn 1983, 1999; Abbott 1995; Emirbayer 1997; Lamont and Molnár 2002; Tilly 2004; Watson-Manheim, Chudoba, and Crowston 2011). Thus even boundaries that are taken for granted – such as boundaries between government and non-government domains – are effortful accomplishments. Abbott, one of the central figures in this literature, defines boundaries as "sites of difference (1995: 862)." In his paper, "Things of Boundaries," he reverses the assumption that boundaries are consequences of pre-existing entities. Arguing that "Boundaries

come first, then entities (p. 860)," he suggests that actions create sites of difference, which then constitute boundaries, which are then linked together to create an entity.

The definition of boundaries is a political and interpretive move done largely for reasons having to do with power. How sites of difference are managed is thus highly consequential. Boundary definitions are important to the definition and internal cohesion of networks and the nature of relationships across boundaries (Gieryn 1983, 1999; Tilly 2004). They assert the legitimacy of entities, facilitate their endurance, and categorize them in either/or distinctions of what they are and are not (Bowker and Star 1999). For example, individuals or groups contesting a public policy issue may distinguish what is "science" versus "ethics" or "religion" in order to denote who does or does not have legitimate roles in formulating and deciding the issue (Gieryn 1999). Where group identity, for example ethnic identity, plays a role in public issues, narratives do work to create or reconstruct connections or membership in groups, generating cohesion, legitimacy, and relationships around "insider" and "outsider" boundaries of a group or grouping of groups (Smith 2006). McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) describe the impacts of boundary work in "contentious politics" involving interactions among parties making competing claims about a political issue. They find that interest group formation, brokerage, and defection are key dynamics in maintaining a stable array of recognized political actors and in "transgressive" contention in which new groups or coalitions identify themselves.

Boundary work

Boundary work describes the practices for managing boundaries, for example to erect, maintain, relocate, or bridge them. Simply sustaining boundaries is effortful. For example, in the public management arena, active boundary work is involved in trying to enact principles about what are properly the domains of "politics" and "administration" in governance (Kettl 2002, 2006), or contests between "science" and "religion" in deciding public policies (Gieryn 1999). Collaborative governance networks are sometimes characterized as boundary organizations that draw together different bases of expertise in order to coproduce actions that employ these different perspectives (Jasanoff 1990; Guston 1999, 2001; Miller 2001).

Boundary work takes place through many different kinds of actions, and different kinds of boundary work produce different outcomes. Boundary work may be generative, producing learning and change (Bechky 2003a; Brown and Duguid 1991), but this kind of knowledge boundary work requires complex processes of transfer, translation, or transformation (Carlile 2004). Boundary spanning across previously existing communities appears to require the creation of a new, joint field of practice (Levina and Vaast 2005) or domain. Examples of creating new domains in public management include diverse and geographically dispersed stakeholders collectively developing and implemented measures to manage water in the Sacramento River delta (Innes and Booher 2010), or participants in a multi-jurisdictional forest management network shifting their frameworks from forest fire suppression to controlled and planned burns by exchanging and learning from one another (Butler and Goldstein 2010).

Boundary objects and experiences

Boundary objects and experiences allow parties to work hands on or directly immerse themselves in a problem or dilemma. They may instantiate new forms of knowledge, including practical knowledge and social learning that is realized through hands on interaction with a problem or artifact (Brown and Duguid 1991; Suchman 1995; Orr 1996; Bechky 2003a; Nicolini,

Gherardi, and Yanow 2003; Carlile 2004; Dourish 2004; Yanow 2004). Where there are different domains of knowledge, for example related to individuals' or groups' roles or areas of expertise, that need to be coordinated to produce work on shared goals, boundary objects and experiences are a pragmatic means of representing, learning about, and transforming those domains and their interactions (Star and Griesemer 1989; Carlile 2002; Bechky 2003b). Boundary objects or experiences may also help to constitute communities of practice that identify with or cluster around a common artifact or experience (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Tilly 2004). In the public management domain, these boundary objects might include products or processes such a government budget or new piece of legislation that they design and implement. Artifacts may also serve as traces or markers of the creation of a community of practice or the work a group has done together (Suchman 1995; Bechky 2003a, 2003b; Carlile 2004; Dourish 2004). In a public management setting, such objects might include legislation constituting a new agency, minutes of a public hearing, or dot voting at a public meeting to generate policy options.

Skillfully deploying boundary objects or boundary experiences can help people to experience difference in a new way. In public engagement, they have sometimes been used to bring various perspectives, vocabularies, or values to bear on evaluating different options (Wang and Burris 1997; Feldman and Khademian 2007; Morse 2010). Sometimes a boundary experience may activate opportunities for recognizing difference and bringing it out to work with as a resource. When public engagement practitioners intentionally invite a diversity of perspectives into a deliberative setting, for example, they are often trying to seed opportunities for learning and discovery of new options by enlisting a variety of ways of understanding an issue. At other times, the boundary object or experience may be a way to remove differences in ways of knowing as a barrier to participation. Feldman and Quick (2009) observed a citizen budget advisors group begin to work more collaboratively on a budgeting challenge when they reoriented their work away from debating specific budget line items and towards "What kind of community do we want to be?" This illustrates how the question used to call people into a public policy dialogue may be a boundary object that exacerbates or diminishes oppositional dynamics. Another example comes from transportation management. Interactive GIS technologies and models in which community members manipulate different aspects of transportation infrastructure designs or financing packages helps them to communicate their questions and suggestions to technical experts and other public managers, and is also correlated with greater public satisfaction with outcomes (Bailey, Brumm, and Grossardt 2002; Grossardt, Brumm, and Bailey 2003).

Common Boundary Zones in Public Management

In this section, we review the literature on four boundaries that are commonly experienced in public management, particularly when collaborative governance and public engagement are involved:

- −Inside/outside organizational boundaries

- −Expert and "lay" knowledge boundaries

- −Issue boundaries

- −Temporal boundaries

Inside/outside organizational boundaries

We suggest that management of insider/outsider boundaries differentiates the various modes of collaborative governance that public managers facilitate and model. Collaborative governance involves realigning or otherwise reorganizing relationships among bounded organizations, allowing the parties to link or share information, activities, resources, and power to achieve jointly benefits for the common good that could not be achieved separately (Crosby and Bryson 2005) and to improve overall performance (Goldsmith and Kettl 2009). Recent theorization of network governance analyzes cross-boundary collaborations within networks that include government and non-government actors (Kettl 2002; Booher and Innes 2002; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Goldsmith and Eggers 2004; Agranoff 2007; Sandfort and Milward 2008). Already, a range of inter-organizational arrangements have been identified, from communication to coordination, collaboration, or merger of organizations (Huxham 2003; Crosby and Bryson 2005; Sandfort and Milward 2008), public-private partnerships to jointly undertake traditional public activities (Savas 2000), and boundary-spanning organizations that are not strictly "governmental" or "public" (Koppell 2010). In these complex networks, rules about who is entitled to information, decision-making authority, and other forms of insider status may be important to trust and effectiveness (Deseve 2009: 135).

The management of government/public boundaries in particular differentiates modes of public engagement. "The city" and "the state" are entities constituted of, by, and for the public. By their very nature, therefore, the inside/outside boundaries and roles of government institutions are not clear. Public administration scholars have pointed to tensions involved in balancing administrative efficiency with democratic control and responsiveness to citizens have been a focus of public administration scholars (Osborne and Gaebler 1992; Kettl 2006). If insider/outsider boundaries between "the government" and "the public" are erected or reinforced, they may limit opportunities for democratic decision-making. This presents challenges and opportunities for government managers to act. Government managers' practices relative to government / public boundaries are highly consequential for the kinds of communities or collaborations that are created (Quick and Feldman 2011). The new public management advocates considering the public as a partner rather than a customer of policy development and implementation (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000; Bovaird 2007). In some sustained collaborative arrangements or boundary-spanning institutions, stakeholders learn together, iteratively coproducing the definition of the problem as well as the policies approaches, and perhaps share responsibility for ongoing implementation (Innes and Booher 1999, 2003, 2010; Roberts 2004; Kallis, Kiparsky, and Norgaard 2009; Butler and Goldstein 2010; Quick and Feldman 2011). These settings provide ways to create resources, such as interpersonal relationships, community attention to issues, and knowledge, which are valuable for community-based problem solving (Healey 2004; Briggs 2008; Feldman and Quick 2009).

Even managers who are acutely aware of the downsides of this "insider" and "outsider" distinction may find it difficult not to create and reinforce it in the guise of designer/convener and "participant" roles in collaborative problem solving processes. Reinforcing boundaries between the parties limits opportunities to make connections that can be used to build community capacity for ongoing policy-making work, often resulting in a separation of process and content that further limits the ability to tap the generative potential of engagement. Sometimes, however, the distinction dissipates and "insiders" and "outsiders" coalesce as "co-learners" (Roberts 2004) who "co-evolve" the process (Innes and Booher 2003). The ability to

produce such processes is related to another often-experienced site of difference between expert and lay perspectives, to which we turn next.

Expert/lay knowledge boundaries

The ongoing shift towards more collaborative or inclusive policy making calls public managers to become skillful in negotiating differing domains of understanding, values, and resources (Thacher 2001; Feldman, Khademian, and Quick 2009; Innes and Booher 2010). Technology platforms are facilitating the vital exchange and integration of information in collaborative networks (Pardo, Gil-Garcia and Kuna Reyes 2010), but this is not necessarily the same as an interchange of various ways of knowing a problem. Without some means for sharing diverse knowledge and understanding, coordinated planning may not be possible (Bryson, Crosby, and Bryson 2009; Dawes, Cresswell, and Pardo 2009). Effective communication across "expert" and "lay" knowledge bases is one of the zones that requires negotiation. By "expert" knowledge, we mean knowledge that is certified in some way, perhaps through degrees or institutional affiliations. This knowledge is generalizable, though it may be customized for specific contexts (Yanow 2004). "Lay" or "local" knowledge, by contrast, is contextual, not generalizable and not certified, and practical in its orientation (Scott 1998). It is constituted of understandings about what works in the specific context. Most of the people working for the government have "expert" knowledge, knowledge of planning generalizations, knowledge of laws and regulations, knowledge of analytical techniques. Many of the non-governmental participants also have expert knowledge. They may, for instance, be teachers or lawyers or engineers. In any particular planning or policy process, however, it may be their lay or local knowledge that is engaged rather than their specific expert knowledge. Scott (1988) argues that the inclusion of lay knowledge is a necessary antidote to overly rationalist, modernist thinking by public managers and planners that otherwise oversimplify the world through their modeling.

Embracing democratic participation as a means and end of public policy-making involves a de-centering of traditional governmental technocratic expertise. Technical expertise has traditionally been a privileged form of knowledge and the primary contribution of public managers to public deliberations about policy-making (Jasanoff 1990; Fischer 200; Feldman, Khademian, Ingram, and Schneider 2006). However, experts systematically misvalue things because they do not share the humanistic knowledge – imagery, lived experience, or empathetic understanding – of ordinary people (Thacher 2009). This has been empirically demonstrated in a number of public policy areas, including crime prevention (Thacher 2001), public transit service quality for recent immigrants (Brugge, Leong, and Lai 1999), and urban pedestrian safety (Schacter and Liu 2005), where scholars have found that gathering information and preferences from the lay public is not only a question of fairness, but frequently also produces important and otherwise unrecognized data and new understandings of problems.

The blurring of the traditional expert/lay knowledge distinction prompts several concerns about opening domains traditionally reserved for expert discretion. One challenge is how to make the issues and choices understandable to the public and provide adequate technical support so that they can be informed participants in policy-making (Callahan 2000; Silverman 2003). Another concern is whether the inclusion of public perspectives will advance or obstruct opportunities to make the choices that experts would advise, for example on the basis of their knowledge about safety, equity, economic efficiency, environmental protection, or political feasibility (Simonsen and Robbins 2000; Zhong, Young, Lowry, and Rutherford 2008).

Managers also worry that it will limit their managerial discretion to act decisively and as the need arises without the "intrusion" of a non-expert public "running amok" in their process (Rossi 1997; Callahan 2000). They may be concerned that disclosing their professional decision parameters for a project will fuel even stronger resistance among well-organized opposition stakeholder groups (Schwartz, Yajima, Bartsch, and Brittingham 2003). On the other hand, providing minimal information to the public may fuel perceptions that the agency is withholding information or changing the rules midstream, compromising the credibility of the agency or policy decisions (Callahan 2000; Silverman 2003; Schwartz, Yajima, Bartsch, and Brittingham 2003). The role of public engagement under conditions of risk and uncertainty is particularly complex, requiring trust, social networks, and bi-directional learning to ensure effective communication and engagement that promotes learning and understanding rather than conflict (National Research Council 1996, 2008; Lundgren and McMakin 2009).

Issue boundaries

The unbounded nature of "wicked" public policy problems (Rittel and Webber 1973) renders traditional issue and organizational silos for managing them ineffective and inappropriate (Kettl 2006; May, Jochim, and Pump 2010). In some cases, managers may seek to delimit issue definitions as a strategy to define what is and is not the responsibility of their organizational unit or what is and is not included in the task they are trying to accomplish. In a public engagement process, they may do so to keep attention focused on the topics and questions they consider most important. Setting the agenda for problem-solving is a form of what Foucault described as "problematization," the practices that constitute something as an object of analysis and action (Rabinow 2003). They have great consequences in policy and governance arenas (Ferguson 1990; Escobar 1995; Schneider and Ingram 1997) in terms of what issues are on the table and prioritized. The dynamics of problematization – the definition of the problem at hand, its connection with other issues, and who gets to define the problem and those connections – are useful lenses for analyzing practices for managing public engagement process.

Such decisions are often coincident with the mandates of the organizational entities in charge of the planning or policy process. Issue boundaries may be coincident with organizational structures. For example, city budgeting may boil down to framing of choices between police *or* parks and recreation because they are managed by separate departments and funded separately, despite testimony from managers from both units of city government, the public, and researchers that the two are mutually supportive (Feldman and Quick 2009).

Temporal boundaries

The distinction between past, present and future, though fundamental to a variety of social science issues, has not received a great deal of attention from public management scholars. The sequence of accepting a proposed project, program or policy idea, refining it, airing it for public review, and taking it to a governing body for a decision is very familiar to public managers. Frequently these decision sequences are managed in a one-off way, as if they are unrelated temporally to other actions. This view is limiting in several ways. In terms of potential connections with the past, making policy decisions without reference to previous decisions or events may feel like "reinventing the wheel." They produce decisions that do not mesh well with policies, projects, or institutional arrangements that have already been put in motion. Public management decisions relating to a place or particular group of people that fail to acknowledge a

history of displacement or marginalization have been strongly criticized (Sandercock and Forsyth 1992; Hayden 1995), as have those that seem to de-legitimate or override decisions and values embraced in previous deliberations (Quick and Feldman 2011).

In terms of potential connections with the future, a long tradition in public administration idealized a shift from "political" policy-making by elected officials to subsequent apolitical policy implementation by public managers. Temporal and organizational boundaries in policy-making are frequently neither so unidirectional linear nor so discrete, however (Reich 1998; Feldman and Khademian 2000; Kettl 2002). They may not even be desirable, since reversibility and inventiveness avoid stifling innovation through rationalist or modernist decision-making (Scott 1998). Another limitation of separating the decision and implementation phases is that it misses opportunities for thinking about decision-making as part of a stream of building an ongoing community. We have suggested that temporal openness is a defining feature of inclusive processes, which have a future orientation manifested by participants building a community to do ongoing work together, including deciding policies, implementing programs, and identifying future work to sustain and make use of the relationships and knowledge they have built (Quick and Feldman 2011). In this context, not "finishing" an engagement process once and for all seems to reduce participation fatigue and burnout in the long run (Quick and Feldman 2011. Closure may not be reached on all of the important issues raised in a process, but sometimes the process provides a home for unresolved issues by setting up subsequent deliberations to pick them up.

Methods

This research is part of a longitudinal ethnographic project in a single, mid-sized, Midwestern American city that began in 1998 and is still continuing. Data analyzed for this paper were collected through interviews, participant observation, and content analysis of materials produced by multiple sources about the processes that we were analyzing.[1] We have to date conducted 265 interviews with 100 study participants, including many long-term participants with whom we have interacted repeatedly over many years and across numerous public policy issues.[2] The study participants represent a wide variety of roles, and include dozens of city government employees, ten elected or appointed officials, and multiple representatives of neighborhood and business organizations, consultants, nonprofit foundation staff, and individual residents. In addition, between 2001 and 2010, one or both authors made eleven visits to the city, toured with city staff and community organizers, and observed 12 community meetings or events related to these vignettes. The longitudinal nature of the project, the depth and breadth of the interviews we have conducted, and the multiple perspectives we tap through a diverse range of study participants and secondary sources, and are all important for this analysis.[3] Together they allow us to generate thick description, enhancing the validity of our interpretive analysis and inductive theory development (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Geertz 1973; Kirk and Miller 1986; Lin 1998; Locke 2001; Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2006). We analyzed the data using standard coding, categorizing, and memoing techniques (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990; Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995; Lofland and Lofland 1995).

Grand Rapids, Michigan has been a long-term study site because of the pattern we have observed of strong commitment by public managers, political leaders, community members, and philanthropic foundations to engaging diverse stakeholders in addressing community problems, coupled with ongoing experimentation with the formats for public engagement.[4] On some

occasions, all parties have been very satisfied with the opportunities and outcomes of engagement, and at other times, there has been indifference to or angry backlashes against efforts to involve the public (Feldman and Quick 2009; Quick 2010; Quick and Feldman 2011).

Observing these dynamics prompted our questions about how public managers negotiate sites of difference – potentially zones of conflict or collaboration – and how their boundary work practices might bear on decision-making and ongoing capacities to work together. In the following section, we present three previously unpublished vignettes from public engagement processes that we have observed in depth. We chose these vignettes for analysis because each involves work in the four commonly experienced boundary zones identified in the public management literature: inside/outside organizational, expert/lay knowledge, issue, and temporal boundaries. We analyze how public managers engaged these sites of difference and identify the impacts that these practices had on the potential boundaries, such as aligning, spanning, or rendering them inconsequential. In the subsequent discussion, we discuss how public managers can manage potential boundaries to enable inclusion and resiliency.

Boundary Work Vignettes

Community-oriented government

An initiative called Community Oriented Government (COG) was intended to create better connections between the community and the City of Grand Rapids government. Previous efforts by city employees and managers to make their organization more and effective had led to the insight that being more responsive to residents could not be separated from improving how units of the city government operated and coordinated with each other. Learning to be responsive to the "internal customer" was a necessary part of being responsive to the external customer. COG was set up to help any coordination that would make it possible to address problems effectively. The framework facilitated coordination among units of city government and between them and residents, other governmental entities, and neighborhood or business associations, to address a broad range of problems through joint efforts.

The organization of COG was simple. Three city employees who were relatively new to the city government were selected as COG liaisons. A senior manager explained, "[They] weren't tainted with our bureaucracy, didn't know the rules themselves, and so they didn't hesitate to ask why and to try to do things… We told them, 'Go solve a problem. If you see a problem, solve it' (Ian, 6/9/03)." Rather than becoming a separate entity, these three COG liaisons continued to work in their current positions – one in engineering, one in community development, and one in the city manager's office – and took on the COG work as additional responsibilities. In addition to meeting regularly as a team with the deputy city manager, each COG liaison had responsibility for a geographical section. For his or her geographic region, the COG liaison organized monthly city staff meetings and quarterly meetings of staff and the leadership of the neighborhood and business associations in the area.

The COG districts matched the districts set up for community oriented policing, a prior initiative that had led to the widespread recognition that addressing problems effectively required coordination across organizational boxes:

> *There was kind of an evolutionary thinking among city staff…. that neighborhoods were the basic building block of civil rights in this community, so if we wanted to do*

governance well, and deliver service well, and do all those kind of things, we would recognize neighborhoods as a basic building block…. I think the change in the atmosphere started with community oriented policing, when that was rolled out and the results that were earned there, because part of how we got into community oriented government was police captains would be out there trying to solve community problems and they weren't problems that police generally solve. (Ian, 6/9/03).

Problems addressed through the COG structure ranged from small-scale complaints such as potholes and abandoned cars to more complex issues such animal nuisance and neighborhood vandalism. Changing the ways these issues were dealt with required the ability to pull together the many perspectives, to imagine new ways of coordinating a multi-unit response, in both large and small ways:

I think an everyday small one that [one of the COG liaisons] touched on was the fact of us closing the loop and calling people back. That may seem like a really small gesture, but even if we didn't have anything to report to them, we could call them and say, "Listen, this is taking so long. It's going to be another two weeks." The residents enjoyed that because we would say, "Okay, we'll fix your pothole," or whatever the case may be, and they never see us again, they never know if it was taken care of, if it got lost on somebody's desk or whatever the case may be, and I think we have tried to instill communication. And I think the departments are also doing that more often. They're coming through us, "Can you please distribute this out to your neighborhoods?" So they are looking at ways of changing the way they do business. (Joe, senior public manager, 6/9/03)

COG was launched at the same time as, and in close coordination with, a massive and extensively participatory Master Planning process. The Master Plan process began with two forums about 3 months apart, each attended by 150-300 people, and over 120 neighborhood outreach meetings. These forums and meetings invited people to think broadly about their city and their neighborhoods and to describe what they liked and envision what changes could be made. Both city planner staff and the COG liaisons correctly anticipated that this broad invitation to participate in the Master Planning process would elicit discussion of issues that were not typically included in a master plan, items that staff recognized as "more immediate" than the "future description of the neighborhood" that was the focus of the Master Plan (Brenda, mid-level manager in the city, 1/30/06). Through their joint efforts, representatives from different city departments (e.g., police, parks and recreation, public works) were on hand at meetings to become aware of the residents' concerns. COG liaisons had responsibility for following up on specific issues, coordinating efforts to address the immediate issues, and when appropriate reporting back to the community member (Brenda, 1/30/06). Public managers associated with both the COG and Master Plan reported that the efforts were mutually supportive and energizing (Zoe 6/9/03 and 12/6/04, Brenda 1/8/04, and Rachel 5/5/06, all mid-level managers in the city).

For example, in the Baxter neighborhood, residents were troubled by crime, abandoned housing, and poor recreation opportunities. The participatory master planning process involved neighborhood meetings around in the city in which residents were asked, among other things, to indicate on a map the "problem areas" where they would like to see change. Whereas in most neighborhoods people circled an empty lot or two or an abandoned commercial business they'd like to see revitalized, the Baxter residents circled the entire northern half of their neighborhood

on a map. This immediately captured the attention of the planners and other city department staff who were present (Kylah, neighborhood resident, 6/24/05; Rachel, 4/5/11). Through listening to the residents' concerns that day and working together more closely in the years since, city staff have gained a much better recognition of the depth and multiplicity of Baxter residents' concerns.

Through the COG framework, various parties have continued to deepen their knowledge of the problems in Baxter and look at coordinated strategies. In the course of discussions about whether to focus on poverty, drug use, or the challenges of single parents, residents and agencies recognized that they could organize around a common desire to reduce juvenile involvement in crime. City staff wrote a successful Weed and Seed grant application to the Department of Justice for community policing, youth recreation, and juvenile offender intervention programs (Zoe 12/17/03; Kylah 6/24/05). Residents' stories have been a key part of this learning. For example, they made clear the integrated nature of some problems that various units of city government had been coping with in discrete ways. A number of abandoned buildings or dilapidated homes sprinkled across the neighborhood were housing drug dealers, and policing responses alone were not successful in displacing the activity from the neighborhood. Together, the neighborhood association and the city's planning, housing, and economic development units surveyed 30 properties in Baxter and decided to place a moratorium on the sale of abandoned housing. This bought time for the city to purchase 9 properties and use them in a land swap to expand the neighborhood park to 2 acres, create a $5 million housing rehabilitation program with public funds, and hire and manage a reputable affordable housing developer to rehabilitate a group of other dispersed sites for dedicated affordable housing (Kylah 2/1/05; Zoe 4/4/05).

Data gathered for the master plan highlighted the extent of lead paint poisoning in the Baxter neighborhood. Through a series of COG discussions, the city came to house a new collaboration, Get the Lead Out!, that brought together 20 different groups, including nonprofit organizations, local college students from nursing and public health programs, and county and city health and housing departments – to do door-to-door education about lead paint poisoning risks and housing rehabilitation grants (Kylah 5/2/05; Elly and Rich, staff of organizations involved in lead effort, 3/5/09). The COG liaison recognized that a planned public works project to install an underwater stormwater retention tank could be relocated slightly to be combined with and help pay for the park's expansion and improvement. Although park improvements could have been made more quickly if they had not tied it with the stormwater tank construction, tying the projects together helped to expand the park by an additional city block. The park improvement culminated in a community-led redesign and collective rebuilding of the playground, funded by philanthropic resources secured by the city government (Ira, senior city manager, 6/26/08).

Defining density: The zoning ordinance revision

To implement the Master Plan, a major revision of the zoning ordinance was needed. Though the city's planning department staff could have rewritten the zoning code relatively quickly, they chose to use another public process so that the community would be continually involved in "implementing the overall vision of the Master Plan (Rachel 9/22/05)." Hundreds of residents were involved in the minute details of deciding on zoning definitions and maps, and the ordinance progressed smoothly to final adoption in 2008. In this section, we describe how this work was done.

Community members and the Planning Director worked on the zoning ordinance revision through a series of community meetings. One of her guiding principles in designing the process was, "Experts err too much on the side of providing information to the community, and making the assumption that you are going to educate the community is wrong." Instead, she decided to "ask what people like about the neighborhood, and then give them the technical explanations" about how zoning and planning could make or sustain those features (2/20/04). Following each meeting, a consulting team would develop and revise the zoning ordinance in accordance with the direction taken in the meeting. The planning director did not review and correct new drafts of the zoning ordinance before sharing it with community members. She explained, "Participation is how I get my work done," so that she preferred to evaluate and revise the draft language in concert with community members (8/10/06). At one such meeting, a discussion about how the neighborhood associations' efforts to decide how to map the new zoning codes on their areas were going turned quickly to a discussion of zoning definitions, particularly related to density (8/11/06 fieldnotes). Most planning professionals use a standard housing units/acre measure of density, in which the denominator is fixed (as acres) and the figure but not the unit for the numerator – housing units - is negotiated. In this meeting, a desired meaning of density was developed in a more open-ended way.

Jane, a community member, indicated that the structure of the code definitions – particularly restricting housing area choices to "single family dwellings only" or "mixed family residential" – was not really working for her neighborhood association. She asked whether they could think instead of something like "low density residential." The planner, who'd been bringing up some items for discussion and explaining the issues and politely listening to input, suddenly started engaging much more actively, making notes and conversing back and forth Jane about what she wanted to accomplish and what form the new definition would take. Though all but the single newcomer seemed to be following the discussion, at this point the planner stopped her exchange with Jane to give the whole group a "really brief primer on density," explaining its usual formula (units / acre) and typical low/ medium / high categories. The planner said that the old "R-1" residential district classification had used minimum lot sizes as its mechanism to achieve the desired "feel of the neighborhood," which is what "we have cared about" more than the mechanism or measure itself. Jane jumped in to help explain the terms and give an example of their problem: the minimum lot size per building would not prevent a small house on a small lot from being split up into multiple units.

The planner said it was an interesting idea and that she was "okay with either way," meaning sticking with the code measures they'd already been discussing or trying a new approach. She suggested one possibility would be to set density limit of units/acre and then combine that with a list of allowable uses (e.g., single family home only, multi-family homes, or mixed residential). When the newcomer protested that it was getting "so complex," the planner countered that it is not too complicated so long as we have clear labels and a common understanding. The planner explained that the zoning designation is where development control is, and that revising the zoning ordinance to make it work is going to require some new language. She laid out some possibilities: minimum lot size, maximum units / acre, maximum lots / acre. Another community member said that the intention is to be clearly understood, and that it doesn't matter to her group which way it is defined. Others agreed, saying that was exactly the point, and that the question is how to get the definition that best reflects what we want. No decisions about the right measure were made at the meeting, but it seemed implicitly understood that the planner would think about the different possibilities discussed and report back at a future meeting.

In a private talk with the two researchers afterwards, the planner explained that going into the meeting she hadn't been satisfied with the different zoning definitions. She thought "density" would be a dirty word so had tried to avoid it in the revised code, but that was causing some other problems and she and a consultant had been brainstorming some other kinds of measures. She explained that part of the purpose and content of this meeting – like the other zoning ordinance meetings – was about educating the group about the different zoning languages. Ongoing meetings are important for zoning decision-making it is quite technical, and with consistent participation she feels that the community members understand it and that she and they have talked over and worked through something together, not just voted. In the meetings, the planner wants to lay out the abstract concepts of zoning and then have concrete examples, because the nature of zoning is in the details and even when she knows the intent of the code she always needs the details to get to the decision.

The planner had known she needed some solution to the density question but she wasn't "necessarily sure what the answer [was]," so she'd "tossed up" a structure for the neighborhoods to grapple with. She hadn't thought of Jane's "low density residential" idea before and liked it: it seemed a more accurate description of what's on the ground in Jane's neighborhood – which the planner feels has quite sophisticated knowledge of zoning issues – and a better way to accomplish what that neighborhood wants. She was concerned, however, that other neighborhoods might want the "single family" designation because they want to avoid multi-family housing, so that they might not like the new definition, or get hung up by it later if they don't understand what it means. The possibility of setting density plus restricting the allowable uses might suit both viewpoints. She's willing to recommend a new system – even if the Planning Commission finds it complicated too work with – but "I need [the community members] behind me if we're going to forward." That is, she will do it only if the community members make the decision together, fully understand what it means after she has explained the potential downsides of different approaches, and support her.

Reformulating the cycling agendas

GGR (GGR) is the citywide master plan for environmental stewardship, created through an inclusive process involving key stakeholders and hundreds of members of the public over eighteen months in 2009-10 (Quick 2010). The planning department chose "green" as the theme for this update to the city's master plan because they discerned so much existing activity and interest in Grand Rapids in varied aspects of environmental stewardship. They wanted to use GGR to build better connections among those issues and people, both to bring more attention and support for existing efforts and to create new initiatives. The conveners of the process – the city planning department, city parks and recreation department, and a consultant – began by recruiting a group of diverse stakeholders to serve on a steering committee comprised of 28 members, including 6 senior city staff members and 5 elected or appointed members of city boards and commissions. Together they identified six broad theme areas for organizing the community discussion and work. Through the inclusive planning process, participants substantially reoriented the topics and outcomes of two of those theme areas: "connections" and "greening," the first of which we explore here.

The planning staff and consultants originally envisioned the connections theme to focus on improving mobility around the city and energy efficiency within the transportation sector. As they were gathering some initial data about community preferences and ideas for improving

public transit, disabled persons' access, and road infrastructure, however, the mayor, city commissioners, traffic safety department, and planning departments began receiving frequent and insistent calls from bicycle commuters to create additional, safer bike lanes around the city. These city offices decided to invite the bike commuters to participate in the GGR process, and directed cyclists towards the "connections" theme. The GGR organizers actively encouraged cyclists to come to the first communitywide meeting, held in June 2008, partly by advertising that they would distribute free bus passes or parking permits to anyone who arrived by bike, bus, foot, or carpool. They then steered people with cycling concerns to the connections discussion group, which overflowed with nearly 100 participants, almost half of the people in attendance for the whole event. Two of the GGR facilitators with the strongest skills for managing inclusive engagement assigned themselves to the connections discussion group, with the intention of taking up the energy that the cycling advocates had brought to the discussion and moving it forward.

Within a few meetings, it became clear to the GGR organizers and the cyclists that there was more than one cycling community within the city. Furthermore, there was limited alignment on priorities and connections among the groups of mountain biking enthusiasts, long-distance recreational riders, and bicycle commuters. The first two groups were internally well organized, but the bicycle commuters were not. The Steering Committee and consultants began intentionally thickening the opportunities to invite and gather the commuters' ideas through GGR gatherings. For example, the consultants prepared a set of illustrations of cross-sections of different options for incorporating bicycle lanes on city streets. These included options for narrow bike lanes on both sides of the streets with on-street parking, a wider lane on one side of the street with parking only on the opposite side of the street, etc. The commuters were able to immediately interpret the options and clearly express their opinions, based upon their experiential knowledge of riding on city streets. They were clear about avoiding getting "doored" by drivers opening their car doors into the bike lane, for example, and translated that easily into stated preferences for certain road cross-sections.

Responding to the interests and commitment of those present, they transformed the connections theme into a platform for creating bike lanes on city streets, expanding bike safety education, and advocacy for complete streets (i.e., streets that facilitate a wide range of transportation modes). GGR organizers actively helped cyclists to legitimate biking as a public issue and to strengthen their group. Through GGR, cyclists who had never before been policy advocates, or who had been working solo or through groups dedicated to a particular biking interest (e.g., mountain biking, long-distance recreational riding, street commuting, child biking safety) came together. With encouragement from a city commissioner, senior city staff, and members of the GGR steering committee, twenty individuals formed a steering committee for a communitywide Bike Friendly City Summit to launch an application for a Bike-Friendly City bronze certification from the League of American Bicyclists. The committee clearly articulated that their principal objective was not to obtain the certification, but to use the process to understand the different perspectives and priorities within their group, to explore areas of alignment, to build awareness and ongoing momentum behind their concerns. For example, mountain biking advocates made it clear that they would not support the bike-friendly city application, and might interfere with its progress, if the committee did not incorporate a description and proposals for improving off-road cycling activities in the application, to which the other committee members agreed.

The summit committee members included mountain bikers, long-distance riders, and bike commuters, the chair of the local public transit authority, the city's traffic safety engineer, the planning director, and several current and former planning commissioners and city commissioners. The GGR Steering Committee assigned consulting support for designing the summit, outreach, and preparing technical materials, and co-sponsored the event. In May 2009, over 100 cycling advocates, senior city managers, and elected and appointed city officials attended the summit, which began with question and answer sessions with national experts on creating bike-friendly cities and by city staff on local initiatives and resources, incorporated a resource fair where biking organizations explained their work and recruited new members, and concluded with action-oriented break-out sessions focusing on various aspects of implementation. The summit received lots of positive media coverage. Based on input and support they had gathered through the event, and with the help of the GGR consultant, the summit organizing committee registered itself as a 501(c)(3) organization so that they would have an ongoing infrastructure for continuing to work together on policy-oriented activities, share information, coordinate recreational activities, and submit grant requests for bicycling improvements.

The new nonprofit submitted the bike-friendly city application, and received news just as the GGR process was ending in October 2009 that Grand Rapids had received a bronze designation. Members of the coalition, political leaders, and senior public managers from the city, transit authority, and county gathered to celebrate the news. They held their press conference at the trailhead for a new segment of a regional mountain biking trail. A few months later, the park and recreation department and mountain biking organization finalized a legal agreement for the mountain bikers to build and maintain a new mountain biking park on an unused public property in a low-income neighborhood of Grand Rapids where the city had long wanted to provide more recreational opportunities.

By this time, bike advocates were also noticing a gradual but meaningful change in the city's traffic safety engineering department: a shift from what they characterized as a "roads are for cars" to "road diet" and "complete streets" paradigm for thinking about how to use the city's roads for multiple users. Having iteratively worked together on different routing and street design options through GGR, the traffic safety engineering staff, GGR consultants, and community members had agreed to numerous routing and lane improvements, which they laid out in the final GGR documents.

When the changes had not yet been made a year later, cyclists began to complain about the lack of implementation or chalk up the delay to deep citywide budget shortfalls. The planning director explained, however, that the delay was because GGR was a "work plan" for her to then work internally within the city to institute regulatory revisions to the city code, request engineering and maintenance plans, and put other infrastructure in plan. She found it important to maintain communication with the advocates to explain that work was being done and progress was being made in order to maintain the trust that had been built. As of the second Bike Summit, held in May 2011, she could confidently assure the public and potential donors that the city government was completely "ready to go" with instituting the new infrastructure, and continue to ask for help to find resources to fund the work.

Boundary Work in the Vignettes

We analyzed how public managers approached the four commonly experienced sites of difference in these cases. Our focus was identifying the ways of enacting boundary work that create connections across inside/outside, types of knowledge, issues, and temporal sites of potential difference. Our analysis of the boundary work public managers do around these potential sites of difference is summarized in Appendix 1. Through this analysis, we noted several ways of managing potential boundaries that were illustrated in our cases. In the following, we describe these ways of managing difference briefly and provide an example of each. Appendix 1 provides a longer list of examples.

Modes of managing differences

Aligning Differences. When managers align differences, they find ways to connect across different kinds of competencies. Aligning involves acknowledging differences in areas such as organizational authority, knowledge domain, issue or temporal orientation such that these differences can complement one another in addressing problems or taking action. Groups with different temporal orientations, for example, could align themselves to produce sequences of action that enable a community to produce sustained efforts to address particular problems. An example of aligning differences related to organizational authority can be found in our discussion of the COG framework where we describe efforts to expand the Baxter community park. This effort required several organizations with different scopes of work and kinds of expertise to work on the problem. The coordination involved requires each of these organizations to alter what they would do on their own and required some of them to take quite novel actions. Public Works did the stormwater management engineering but modified their plan to relocate the site to support the park. The Planning, Community Development and Economic Development Departments orchestrated novel land acquisition and property swaps to enable expansion of the park. The Parks and Recreation Department oversaw the design and fundraising, and The Neighborhood Association mobilized volunteers for the community-build of the playground. The COG coordinators helped them see the potential for connections in their work and coordinate to amplify their efforts.

Translating across differences. Translating across difference involves creating a new space of understanding by interpreting across zones of difference. While this kind of boundary work is most easily associated with knowledge boundaries, it may also occur across other kinds of difference. Translation across short-term and long-term perspectives or across different organizational or issue orientations would also allow people to establish connections. In the discussion of defining density for the zoning ordinance, the Planning Director recognized that her planning staff, developers, neighborhood organizations, and planning commissioners had unique perspectives, interests, and responsibilities for implementing the definition of density. She also acknowledged that not everyone who would use the ordinance was present for the discussion. Her goal was to create zoning ordinance language that everyone could use and apply consistently across different perspectives, neighborhoods, and over time. The process involved translating the standard definition into what that feels like in the neighborhood, and also translating the kind of neighborhood people wanted into language that could be used in an official zoning document. The process also involved reassuring people that it was all right for the discussion to become somewhat complicated as they worked out the new language required for this translation to occur.

Changing the meaning of differences. Changing the meaning of differences involves legitimating different meanings for acknowledged sites of difference and often involves changing the power dynamic by flipping the site of privilege. Privileging lay over expert knowledge or long-term perspectives over short-term ones, for instance would be examples of this kind of change. The Planner who says "participation is how I get my work done" rather than "participation is another kind of work I have to do" provides an example from our cases of changing the meaning of difference. This move alters the meaning of both the outside/inside and the knowledge differences. Through this move, residents are no longer outsiders to the work process, but are integral and essential to the way the work of planning is accomplished. It also changes the meaning of the expert/lay difference. She recognizes the difference between, on the one hand, knowledge that is expert and generalizable and, on the other hand, knowledge that is lay and specific, but flips the usual privileging of expert over lay to incorporate both. She also flipped meanings by even using a participatory process for developing the zoning code, recognizing the zoning task as an opportunity to build community rather than simply an end in itself.

Creating zones of difference. Creating zones of difference often involves creating new entities, such as organizations or associations. As discussed in the introduction our view of boundaries does not assume that these entities come first, but that actions create sites of difference, which then constitute boundaries, which are then linked together to create entities. The emergence of new entities is, thus, often a sign of the actions that have created zones of difference. Consistent with our interest in inclusive management, this move is not simply a move of finding commonality and institutionalizing it, but of finding commonality across differences and creating a "zone" in which these difference can work together. Many different kinds of cyclists including bike commuters, mountain bikers, and long-distance recreational riders applied for the distinction of being a bike-friendly city, coming together in the bike summit committee and the Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition. They are an example of this way of managing difference to produce connections that allow people to address problems and take advantage of opportunities in their community.

Rendering differences inconsequential. Rendering differences inconsequential often involves reframing or finding new ways to address issues that simply do not assume the differences are important. This move does not involve ignoring differences, but involves actions that alter their usual consequences in terms of authority, power, or problem definition particularly relevant for the process. Rendering inconsequential is different from "either/or" practices that establish, harden, or reify boundaries, hierarchies, or dichotomies, and from "both/and" practices that blur, move, or bridge boundaries, hierarchies, and dichotomies. For instance, finality is an important feature of temporal boundaries, the same actors presented in our cases in this paper have shown us that tasks can be presented as simultaneously finished and open for revision (Quick and Feldman, 2011). Similarly, these same people have rendered the outside/inside difference inconsequential when they reframed budget decisions by asking "what kind of city do we want?" In the cases presented in this paper adopting "complete streets" as a new common framework for city traffic safety engineers, bike advocates, pedestrian advocates, planners removed some of the oppositional contests over whether busses, cars, pedestrians *or* cyclists would get the upper hand. This new framework allowed people to connect across their statuses as organizational insider or outsider, across their different kinds of knowledge and different orientations to the problem because it rendered these differences inconsequential.

Key boundary objects and experiences

Boundary objects and experiences are important to boundary work and the ability to enact the ways of managing difference we have just described. By boundary objects and experiences we are referring to opportunities for direct immersion in a problem or dilemma mediated either through objects such as maps or prototypes or through experiences such as field trips or deliberative processes. Creating ways for people to engage in hands-on, messy, practical problem-solving creates opportunities for managing difference in ways that produce connections across inside/outside, local/expert knowledge, issue, and temporal sites of difference. Boundary objects and experiences, where participants have to tussle with the intricacies of solving a problem they have identified as a priority (e.g., reducing juvenile crime in Baxter), or of trying out policies or guidelines in a specific setting (e.g., various density definitions in Jane's neighborhood), tends to validate the solution to the problem over validating certain types or sources of "expert" or "local" knowledge. Removing barriers to understanding one another's perspectives (e.g., interacting around cross-sectional diagrams of street lanes), collectively building a foundation of information and a picture of the problem (e.g., through storytelling about the "problem area" of north Baxter), asking different questions and eliciting different information (e.g., starting with desired neighborhood characteristics instead of density definition), building relationships over time (e.g., through Bike Summits 1 and 2 and the new street corridor plan), being explicit about how everyone's input is shaping the next steps (e.g,. through the COG coordinators' and planning director's follow-up calls to give status updates to other stakeholders), and interpolating between big picture goals and specific applications (e.g., creating zoning ordinance language that everyone could use and apply across different perspectives, neighborhoods, and over time) are all rich opportunities for reconstituting connections across boundaries.

Connecting through objects. Our three cases provide examples of many different kinds of boundary objects. We focus here on three: maps and diagrams, questions and applications. Maps and diagrams are commonly used boundary objects, as they were in our cases. In the Baxter neighborhood example within the COG case enabled residents and people working for the city to recognize both the extent and the overlapping nature of the problems in the neighborhood. In the case of reformulating cycle agendas, diagrams of streets were useful in enabling discussion of different ways in which pedestrians, cyclists and drivers use the streets. Questions, though less obviously as objects, can also perform powerful boundary work. This is clearest in our case of redefining density in which the question "what do we want this neighborhood to look like?" allowed residents and planners to translate between expert and lay knowledge of density and develop a new language for describing how to produce the look of the neighborhood. Applications also served as powerful boundary objects in two of the cases. In the Baxter neighborhood part of the COG case, many actors came together to apply for a Department of Justice Weed and Seed Grant. In the Reframing the Cycling Agenda case many actors came together to apply for Grand Rapids to be designated as a bike friendly city. In both instances, the application process provided opportunities for people to appreciate the strengths of the different orientations to the problem and incentives for people to combine these strengths.

Connecting through processes and frameworks. The cases we have analyzed suggest that simply seeing frameworks and processes themselves as sites for building and sustaining connections might be one of the important things that takes place in Grand Rapids. In all of these cases, frameworks and processes serve as sites of connection. In COG the framework is set

up as an opportunity to find connections that enable the city to address residents' problems. Indeed, COG is really nothing more (or less) than a framework for making connections. In Redefining Density the discussion of density is a site for exploring ways of connecting the zoning code and the feel of the neighborhood. The planner manages it not to be oriented towards a predefined outcome, but rather as an opening to see what connections can be made. This process could easily have had a predefined outcome, namely a number of housing units per acre for several zoning categories. When density was treated as an open issue – as a question rather than as an answer – the participants had little difficulty moving from the standard definition and exploring other definitions that had utility for accomplishing their goals. In the transportation agenda case, the connections subtheme of GGR, then the bike summit, then the bike-friendly city application process, then the celebration, and then the 2nd summit are opportunities for finding connections across kinds of bike enthusiasts. Sustaining the issue over time, while offering new ways of understanding or applying the issue and of building relationships among new and continuing enthusiasts is a rolling, moving process of building energy.

In each of these cases, the engagement process is a context for public managers to use their expertise to support emergent opportunities. They bring their knowledge to respond to how participants steer the deliberations. In reformulating the cycle agenda, they provide technical assistance to organize the Bike Summit, prepare the bike-friendly city application, and revise city policies to reflect the new norms for bike lanes. In the zoning case, the planner helps to translate desired neighborhood character into zoning guidelines, and presumes that residents want her to warn them about downsides she perceives in their approaches. In COG, the three COG liaisons serve as go-betweens connecting the units within government with the relevant responsibility, resources and expertise with the concerns, knowledge and resources of the residents. Master plan meetings and quarterly COG meetings provide opportunities to bring forward new concerns and support efforts to address concerns.

Managing Boundaries for Inclusion

Defining inclusion as making connections

Boundary work is an important set of practices that public managers facilitate. In the preceding analysis, we identified several discrete ways of describing the boundary work they do. We suggest that broadening the schemas for exploring and describing boundary work can help public managers to maintain an orientation to making connections, which is what inclusive public management is about.

Public managers can act in ways that encourage or inhibit people from playing with boundaries. Frequently, of course, managers act as keepers of values about where the boundaries of the process are or should be. They may shape the integration or separation of different possible streams of public issues, the timeframe for decision-making, the relationship among past and present and future actions, who participates and how, the hierarchies of decision-making influence, and the kinds of knowledge that bears on the problem. When these practices simply take boundaries for granted and reinforce the separations they represent, rather than opening the sites of difference to a range of actions, we define this as an exclusive pattern of management.

Inclusive boundary patterns are harder to pin down. Inclusive management is distinguished by expansiveness, an effort to build ever more opportunities to build relationships

among people / things with various relevancies, and to build ongoing communities. Thus inclusion is about making connections. There is no formula for how to engage boundaries to produce inclusion, however. Instead, what produces inclusion is keeping boundaries in play. This involves attention to boundaries and work around them, including bringing sites of difference or entities into contact.

In inclusive management, the potential work around zones of difference goes well beyond the "boundary spanning" language commonly found in discussions of collaboration and network governance. The cases we analyze do illustrate practices for aligning and translating across potential boundaries. This is often found in collaborative arrangements that utilize the competitive advantages of the constituent members for mutual advantage, reifying their boundaries in a both/and arrangement. In inclusive management, these dynamics are found, but zones of difference that are frequently experienced as boundaries in public management are also sometimes managed to have different effects, to have been moved or subsumed, or even to be absent. When inclusion is being practiced, these zones of difference may be activated or enacted in ways that acknowledge the potential boundary, but do not make them or their usual consequences in terms of authority, power, or problem definition particularly relevant for the process. The practices we observed in these cases that avoid reifying boundaries include involve translating, changing the meaning of, creating, or rendering inconsequential these zones of difference.

Further, our data suggests that providing clarity – using boundary objects and experiences to make it clear that boundary play is invited and is occurring – is a key aspect of inclusion. Boundary objects and experiences mediate zones of difference to make new connections and sometimes to stabilize them for a time into a recognizable entity. That entity need not be unified. The boundary experiences of formulating a concerted plan to improve Baxter neighborhood or determine priorities for different users of roads might at times produce cohesion and dissonance among different stakeholders, perspectives, issue priorities, and timeframes. However, boundary objects and experiences are frameworks that stabilize those differences by bringing them into a common arena for friction, alignment, and play. They provide opportunities for making connections: exposing the permeability of potential boundaries allows practices and individuals to move from one arena to another, bridging or creating new domains.

In a public engagement setting, boundary objects and experiences are thus a means for enabling new understandings of problems and discovering new resources for addressing them. When practices enact boundaries that are fixed and impermeable, absent a deliberative conversation that has surfaced the existence of the boundaries and brought them into scrutiny by the collaborators, learning cannot occur. Inclusive communities of engagement are communities that engage boundaries as a way of learning, with or without transforming those boundaries. Learning how to be a member of an inclusive community of engagement is, in part, learning how to question and explore boundaries and how to engage with them expansively.

Complex boundary relationships and resiliency

A hallmark of the inclusive management pattern we have observed in Grand Rapids is that managers expect that they can put things together in all kinds of ways. They find that boundaries are not that hard to move, to use, or to overcome. In terms of producing inclusive processes this may outstrip the importance of their mastery of a given area of technical expertise or process for engagement. Stewarding an inclusive process requires skill because the boundary

dynamics we have just described are so complex. Many potential boundaries may be moving at once. In the learning communities we describe, everyone is doing boundary work. Furthermore, relationships among the different kind of boundary zones are diverse and unpredictable. Sometimes boundary zones stack up into neat silos, as when organizational and knowledge boundary domains neatly align into expert-government and lay-public arrangements, or when issues coincide neatly with governmental units. Such alignment can provide clarity and stability to structure complex inter-organizational relationships, but as our examples demonstrate, it is not only factually incorrect but limiting to presume that the alignment is necessarily in place.

The very notion of this kind of dynamism and lack of a locus of control may be unsettling. Is all of this complexity a desirable means and ends? We suggest that it is. While retaining rationalist control over decision-making amongst a small body of technocrats or political decision-makers may seem efficacious, such an assemblage of actors and perspectives arguably exercises less power in terms of its causal impacts than a more extended collection of individuals gathered through a task-oriented network to act upon a particular issue. For example, problem-solving about the Baxter neighborhood not only generated a list of tasks and responsibilities for government and nongovernmental agencies to take on, but also generated a deep web of relationships that have translated into an investment by and with the neighborhood in its ongoing well being that goes well beyond material commitments. The zoning ordinance revision simultaneously reserved particular roles for city staff (providing expertise and services) and the public (customers) *and* opened a new space for engagement, across many roles and positions, in not only envisioning but also implementing a desired future. The bike-friendly city designation was equally an accomplishment realized at a discrete moment in time and a frame for organizing continuous and ongoing improvement in diverse experiences of cycling in the community.

In other words, the connections-building orientation of inclusion supports resiliency in communities addressing complex challenges. This finding is consistent with theorizations of boundaries and entities presented at the beginning of the paper. Abbott (1995) argues that entities that emerge from yoking together long, complex chains of boundaries are more enduring and consequential than entities created from closely circumscribing a more compact or internally homogenous set of factors. The powerful consequences of boundaries do not necessarily ensue from their having rigidity or stability. The implication for public managers is that they can glean benefits from managing potential boundaries to make them more or less flexible and malleable, and to bend their consequences in different ways.

[1] These materials include records of community participation (e.g., committee meeting minutes, compilations of data from public input), government documents (e.g., plans, budgets, project proposals, staff reports), community organizations' websites, and media coverage of these events.

[2] We use a theoretical sampling strategy (Glaser and Strauss 1967) through which we sought participants with knowledge of and opinions, both positive and negative, about the engagement processes we were studying. Participants are identified through references from other study participants, observing community meetings, and reviewing meeting minutes and media coverage. They are invited to participate and then interviewed by one or both authors, usually in person and sometimes by phone, primarily individually but occasionally in groups.

[3] First, the data are longitudinal, allowing us to contextualize the vignettes highlighted here in terms of the longer engagement processes of which they are a part, and take a process-based view of the unfolding events (Mohr 1982; Eisendhardt 1989; Van de Ven 1992; Sewell 1996; Langley 1999). Second, our interview process and the extensiveness of our interviews provide us with an insider, or emic, perspective (Goodenough 1970; Geertz 1973; Miller and van Maanen 1979; Agar 1986). We conducted confidential, unstructured, active interviews (Holstein and Gubrium 1995; Spradley 1979) in which we engaged the study participants not only in accounts of what they observed or experienced, but in sharing their interpretation of those events. Third, the diversity of study participants and our other data sources provide us with many different perspectives, allowing us to triangulate among various interpretations of the processes and events (Denzin 1978; Altheide and Johnson 1994; Janesick 1994; Yin 2003).

[4] In 2009, Grand Rapids had an estimated population size of 193,700 in a metropolitan region with a population of over 1.2 million. Michigan's second largest city after Detroit, it has continued to grow or fared better than statewide patterns of economic and population decline. Manufacturing dominated the local economy through the 1990s, but recently there has been large-scale private investment in medical services and research. Charitable foundations established by local families support human services, recreation, and cultural programs and facilities (Garcia 2009). In the 2000 census, 67% of residents identified themselves as white, 20% as African American, and 13% as Latin. Approximately 10% were foreign-born, and over 50% had moved to their current residence within the previous five years. Less than 25% of adults had a bachelor's degree and 16% lived below the poverty level. The city electorate has repeatedly affirmed a council-manager form of government in which the city manager plays a central role in allocating and managing the city's budget and human resources (Zeemering 2010). There has been a high level of stability in the manager's office, with a single city manager, succeeded by a long-term member of his executive team, holding the position from 1998 through the present.

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Appendix 1. Boundary work in the vignettes across boundary zones commonly found in public management.

Community-Oriented Government	Defining Density in Zoning	Reformulating the Cycling Agenda
Inside/Outside Organizational Boundary Zone		
The intention of COG was to create a framework for creating connections across the inside and outside of the city government, including among internal organizational units.	"Participation is how I get my work done," is a framework through which the planner convenes stakeholders through her city department, but regards the work as being neither hers (the planning department's) nor theirs (the stakeholders'), but rather ours collectively.	New organizational arrangements were created within and across the city organization and others around biking issues, e.g. to organize and sponsor the Bike Summit, submit successful application to be a bike-friendly city, and create a new mountain biking park. These employ an array of organizational arrangements, including creating a new organization (the bike coalition), volunteers' designing, building, and maintaining a bike park on city-owned land through a legal contract with the city, and the city providing technical assistance to start the new profit in which it is a partner.
City managers recognized that inside customer service and outside customer service are related. Connecting the city with outside parties helped to create connections between units inside the government.	Different bodies – the planning department, neighborhood and business organizations, the planning and zoning appeals boards, developers – are recognized as having different engagements with zoning and work revising the zoning ordinances together.	
Government units retained sectoral roles (e.g., stormwater engineering by Public Works, playground development by Parks and Recreation, affordable housing by Community Development) but aligned them to amplify resources for projects or meeting goals.	The planner enacts a distributed notion of who has authority for zoning policy-making and implementation. She sought a definition of density that her staff and all of the other actors could consistently interpret and coordinate implementation of in the future.	The transportation plan generated through public engagement in GGR was a "work plan" for the city's planning department to then lay the groundwork for implementation inside the city government (e.g., establishing the regulatory frameworks, securing buy-in from several city departments and commissions) to do the work. Once that was established, the planning department invited cycling interest groups, the public, philanthropists to re-engage to find resources to implement the plan, through the city and/or other agencies.
New organizational arrangements were created. Changes included creating new organizational units, e.g. Get the Lead Out, a new supra-organization coordinating the efforts of multiple organizations. Sometimes new connections were created around project needs, e.g., city-county-college connections in Get the Lead Out, and Parks and Recreation-KaBoom! relationship for designing and providing materials for the playground.		Cyclists refuted being grouped into a single homogenous interest group, prompting recognition of different individuals, motivations, and needs related to mountain biking, bicycle commuters, and recreational long-distance recreational riders.

Community-Oriented Government	Defining Density in Zoning	Reformulating the Cycling Agenda
Knowledge Boundary Zone		
COG liaisons were selected because they were unconstrained by "bureaucratic" thinking, and were told to find and figure out how to "solve problems." When residents circled all of north Baxter, their lay, local knowledge surprised the attention of those with expert, specialized knowledge. It allowed experts to see the extent of concern neighbors had about their community. Expert knowledge was transformed by awareness of depth of issues and the connections that residents made visible. For example, residents' stories revealed connections between run-down and abandoned properties, poor recreation facilities, drug sales, and feeling unsafe in the neighborhood. These perspectives allowed city departmental staff to see the place-based interconnections among these issues, and to apply their knowledge and resources in new ways, e.g., by managing the run-down and abandoned properties to clean them up, expand the park, and sustain affordable housing.	The planner needs other perspectives to do her job. She considers it wrong to assume learning will occur only by teaching residents, not also by learning from them. She knows that defining density is a question but needs residents' help to discern the answer. The density definition evolved through lay and expert knowledge. The definition was developed to accomplish what residents wanted in their neighborhoods. The planner also exercised and the community relied upon her expertise, e.g., she gave a "primer" on density, explained the downsides of different definition that residents might not see, and interpolated between what they wanted and said and how it could be realized in the technical measures and language of the final ordinance. The planner utilized process as well as content expertise in the density discussion. In terms of process, she facilitated a discussion that was led by the questions and priorities raised by the other participants, even as she provided shape to it, e.g., by being the timekeeper, explaining some density concepts, and encouraging discussion of some ideas and passing over others.	Lay perspectives challenged expert preconceptions of the problem, leading to a transformation of the GGR "connections" theme from public transit to incorporate cycling, and variegating "cycling" to include several kinds of cycling. The planning process validated and utilized knowledge gained through lived experience. For example, cyclists' fear of "getting doored" contributed to understanding the road design problem. Discussion tools were designed to bring lay and expert knowledge to bear. For example, using cross-section diagrams to explore various road lay-out options helped to bring together perspectives on legal and street maintenance requirements for minimum lane widths, cyclists' preferences for safety, and business owners' concerns about on-street parking. Expert knowledge was articulated by parties in both traditionally "lay" and "expert" roles, e.g., cyclists the pushed shift from "roads are for cars" to the "road diet" and "complete street" paradigms that both city staff and cycling advocates now use for thinking about multiple uses of roadways.
Issues Boundary Zones		
COG was created through the community-oriented policing model, which arose from police dealing with "non-policing" issues. City managers recognized that neighborhoods *and* city departments were appropriate organizing frameworks for government services. COG coordinators were oriented to "fix the	The "density" problem was defined as an open question. The planner allowed the definition to be messy and invited the public in to clear it up. The discussion redefined what the density issue is about. It shifted from the conventional definition of # of units / acre to the feeling of the neighborhood and street. The measures for achieving those goals	Connections theme is about transit -> connections theme is a home for cycling The GGR "connections" theme was transformed several times, from just public transit, to being a home for people complaining about street cycling, to being a platform for a broader agenda on complete streets and several different kinds of cycling.

Community-Oriented Government	Defining Density in Zoning	Reformulating the Cycling Agenda
problem" and facilitate connections within the city government to do so, not to be limited by framing problems and solutions in terms of the role of a given unit of the city government. Public manages deliberately coordinated the Master Plan and COG so that non-planning issues had a home at Master Plan neighborhood meetings. The multiplicity and interrelationships of many issues were recognized in Baxter neighborhood, including poverty, recreation, crime, and property management. COG partners sifted through issues to find common ground for action, e.g., by focusing on their common interest in reducing juvenile crime through the Weed and Seed application.	expanded beyond units/acre to incorporate lot line setbacks and minimum lot size options. The density issue was shifted from a problem of having a uniform standard to apply across the city to a neighborhood-specific approach that legitimated different preferences and created different structures for regulating density.	Cycling was redefined as not just on-street commuting, but as a multi-faceted issue also including mountain biking and recreational long-distance cycling. The issue of how to design and manage roads was redefined from "roads are for cars" to the complete street paradigm of designing and managing them for multiple uses. The purpose of working together was redefined from enhancing connections for moving efficiently around the city to becoming a "bike friendly city."
Temporal Boundary Zones		
The "evolution" of city managers' thinking involves learning from previous community-oriented policing to create the COG model. COG and planning staff anticipated neighbors would bring up both "immediate" needs and desires for the future at the Master Plan neighborhood meetings, and brought staff to respond to both orientations instead of deeming immediate issues off topic. "Sorry for the delay, but we're working on it" follow-up phone calls from COG coordinators to apprise residents of how the city was handling a complaint broke the previous pattern of issues being handed off and disappearing for residents once they'd reported them to the agency. The neighborhood planning process was not the end of interactions; coordination on ongoing action continues through present.	The zoning ordinance connected backward to the Master Plan, which anticipated a zoning ordinance revision would be needed to implement the Master Plan vision. The zoning ordinance was formulated in terms of future implementation, e.g., the planner would advocate density definitions only if she believed that citizens, her staff, commissioners, and future project proposers will be able to understand, stand behind and implement them in the future.	The bike-friendly city application and bronze certification were envisioned as tools for building ongoing awareness and support, organizing ongoing coordination, and aiming for continuous improvement, not as a moment to be reached. The planning director actively managed the time lapse between adopting the GGR plan and being ready to implement it. Recognizing frustration and the potential loss of trust from the delays, she communicated that the city was actively making progress to sustain cooperation and momentum. Relationships, knowledge, and priorities developed through GGR are rolling forward into a new public process to design transportation service planning and financing for a congested street corridor. Cyclists who came forward through the GGR and Bike Summit are serving on the steering committee for this 2011-13 process.