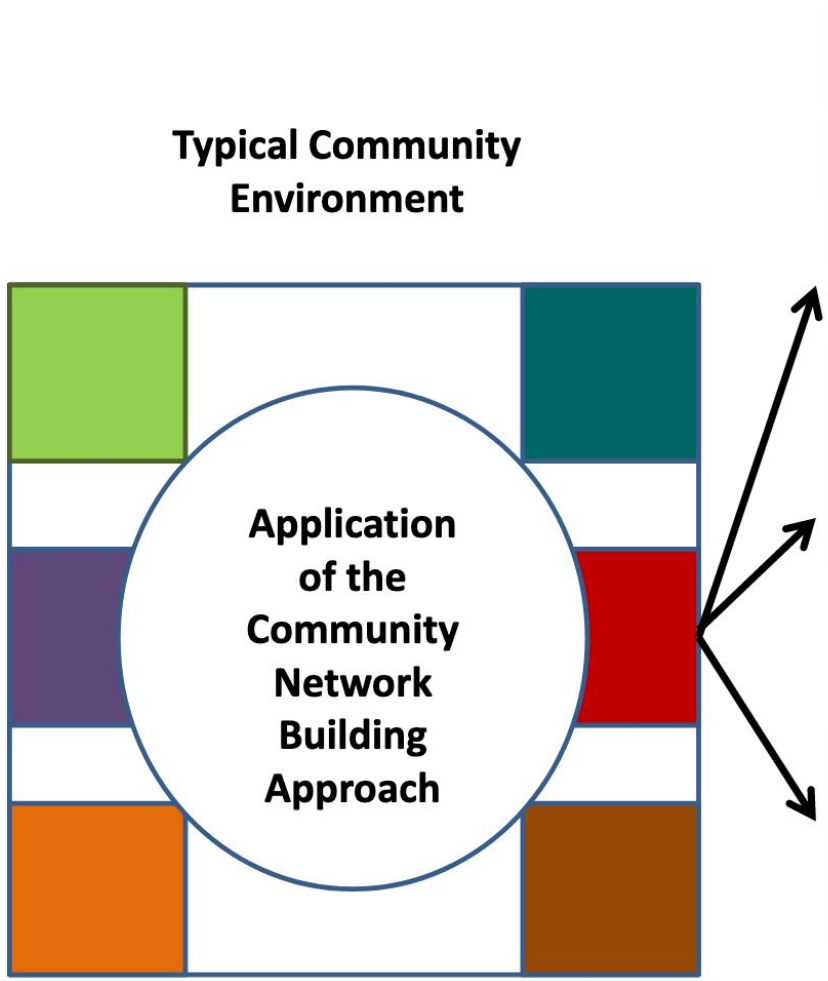
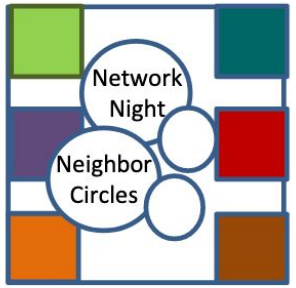
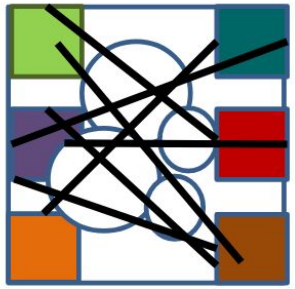
Building a Community Network for Affordable Housing

Community Networks for Social Impact

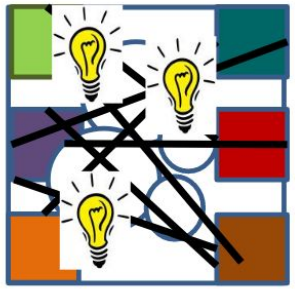




A Set of Intentional Spaces and Practices =
New Exchanges of Value and New Understanding



A New Form =
New Network of Trusting Relationships Across Lines of Difference



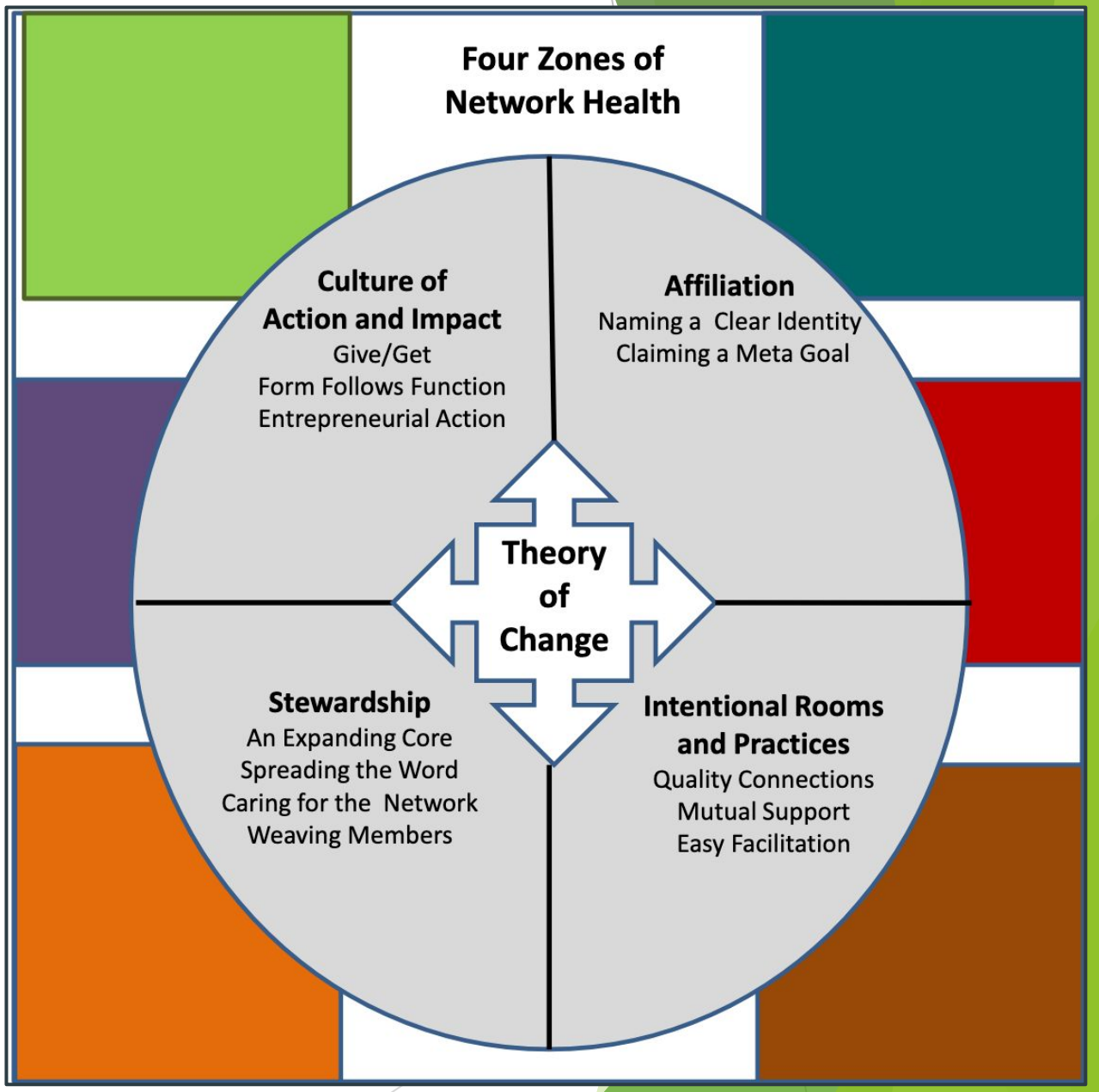
A Theory of Change =
If people of different backgrounds are connected in a clearly identified network, make small exchanges of value, and build new understanding, then they will be more successful at solving problems or sparking change and innovation.

Source: Trusted Space Partners

A Network approach brings system change through:

- Improving quantity and quality of *relationships*
- Mobilizing more *leadership*
- Providing a framework for effective *intentional networks*
- Generating more actions that lead to *breakthroughs*

Source: June Holley at NetworkWeaver.com



Source: Trusted Space Partners

Network Approaches are Particularly Useful when….

1. The Problem or Opportunity is Big
2. You Need New Ideas
3. The Solution is not Clear, or you need to Build a New System
4. You Need to Engage People from Different Backgrounds

Source: June Holley at NetworkWeaver.com

1. The Problem or Opportunity is Big

Networks work especially well when what you want to do will require more than just a few organizations in a partnership.

Dealing with large, intractable problems (such as poverty or affordable housing) or moving in ambitious new directions (building a green economy) requires the engagement of many individuals and organizations.

Network mapping helps identify who is interested in or already working in this area, and a network weaving strategy enables you to engage them effectively.

2. You Need New Ideas

Most big problems require fresh thinking. For this, you need to draw new ideas from all over the world and identify and draw in people likely to have those new ideas.

Network mapping enables you to identify local people who know innovators outside your immediate area and network strategies offer ways to engage these resources locally.

3. The Solutions is Not Clear, or You Need to Build a New System

When a lot of experimentation, innovation, or system building needs to happen, a network strategy is appropriate.

Partnerships or coalitions are fine for well-defined projects or actions. Networks are appropriate for situations where the solutions are unclear.

Networks encourage self-organizing to explore the problem or situation.

4. You Need to Engage People from Different Backgrounds

For big problems or opportunities, you need to bring people together who may not have worked together before.

Network mapping helps identify connectors – those individuals who already have relationships across these divides - and engage them in bringing groups together.

HSN's Community Network Practices

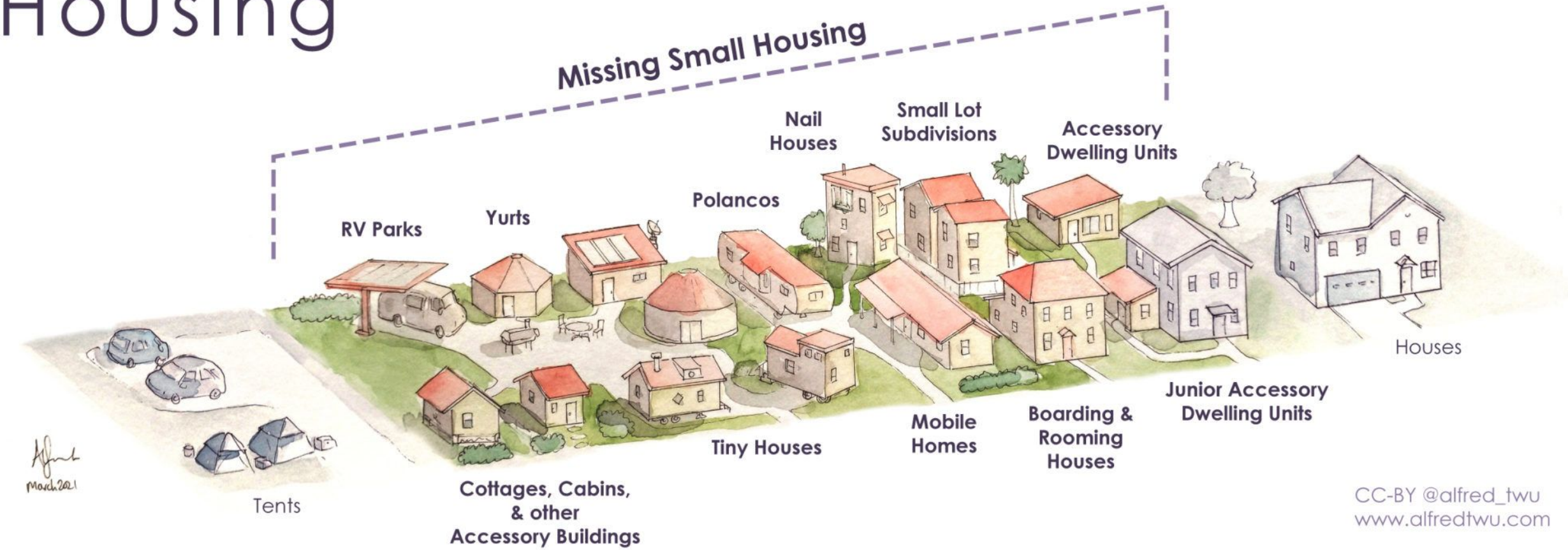
- **Dispersed Leadership:** *We collaborate freely and use our relationships to strategize on how to make our work effective. No one directs anyone else's work.*

- **Many Voices:** *The network provides a place for people to build a more common understanding of both the problem and the various solutions we are each working toward, and to engage in housing advocacy as individuals.*

- **Many Solutions:** *We see and support many types of solutions for affordable housing. We offer the community a forum through which to imagine their own solutions and then engage with each other to experiment, learn, and most importantly, take action.*

Missing **small** Housing

Low cost options for homeownership and rental housing



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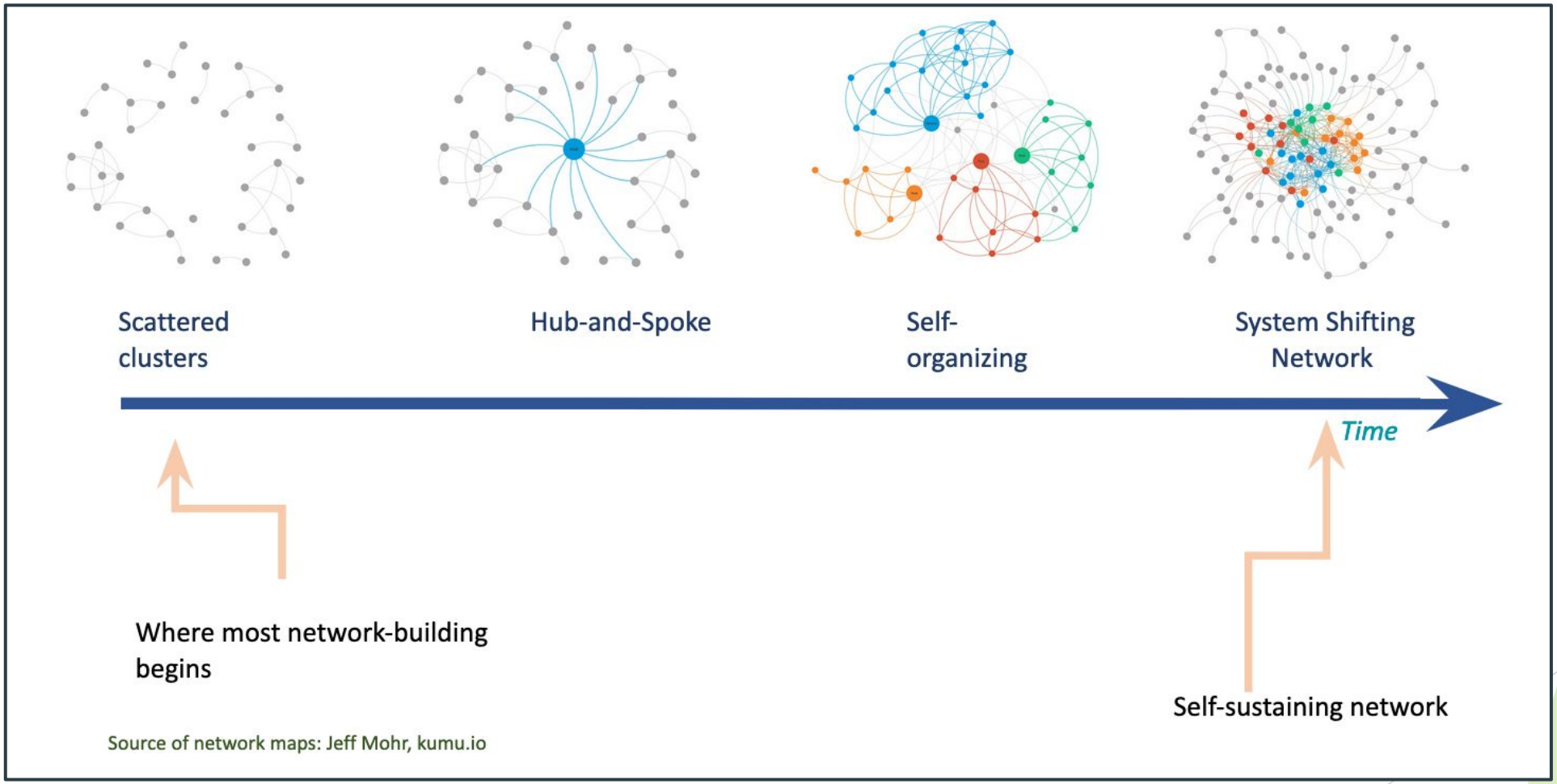
Strengthening HSN as a Network

- **Developing Network Hubs:**
  - **Formal:** Facilitating connections across HATs
  - **Informal:** Opening up more spaces where new people can learn and get engaged

- **HSN's Identity:**
  - We are a network of housing champions
  - We can all be network builders and network weavers
  - Focus on workforce housing, but in an inclusive and responsive way

- **Fundraising:**
  - Supporting entire housing landscape
  - Individual donations = Community ownership of HSN
  - Housing Micro-Fund possibility

Development of a Community Network



Source: June Holley at NetworkWeaver.com

Thank You!