**Neighbourhood Trust:** A collaborative project led by the East Scarborough Storefront designed to build local infrastructure to support the use of micro-granting to strengthen social cohesion in East Scarborough (2011-2015)

**21** resident led projects
**188** hours of shared learning and reflection
**1000** residents engaged
**14** donors and funders, $136,000 over 5 years

**Learnings:** The wind up process for Neighbourhood Trust included a reflection process with residents, partners and funders...here's what collectively we learned:

**Resident leadership matters:** In just 5 years there was tangible evidence of increased sense of belonging and trust, leadership capacity, sharing of skills, and opportunities for community celebration and civic engagement

**The social service system is poorly equipped to support resident leadership:** our systems are designed to keep leadership and control with organizations and institutions.  Supporting resident leadership means disrupting these systems

**Micro-granting is more successful when organizations are less invested in "what" activities residents engage in and more focused how trust and connections are built among residents and between residents and organizations/institutions:** Trust is not easily built.  A success of Neighbourhood Trust was that no matter what happened, we prioritized positive relationships and connection

**Shared learning should be prioritized and structured:** over the 5 years we experimented with various types of learning models: by far the one that worked the best was regular reflection session among all the players (residents articulated the need for more of this type of session with both organizations and funders)

**Frank conversations about power dynamics are critical:** it wasn't until later in the process that we intentionally addressed the power issues inherent in the micro-granting process; we believe had we had strategic and open conversations about power dynamics from the beginning, everyone would have been better equipped to manage them

**Residents who take on leadership roles find their relationships in the neighbourhood changed:** It is important to recognize, honour and support resident leaders as they navigate the complexities of community relationships

**Separate mentorship and accountability functions:** the need to hold residents accountable for the money and how it is used/reported on is antithetical to the mentorship role which seeks to foster autonomy in resident leadership.

**Supporting resident leadership is not an "off the side of the desk" activity:** no matter how skilled or talented residents are, community organizing is a set of complex interactions and processes, the people undertaking them need intentional and meaningful support