

Neighborhood Development and School-Community Partnerships:

The Case of Barrio Promesa

by

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores community development initiatives and school-community partnerships that took place during the period 1998 - 2010 in Barrio Promesa, a Hispanic immigrant neighborhood within a large metropolitan area of the South Western United States. More specifically, it examines the initiatives and partnerships carried out through three main sectors of social actors: a) elected officials, public administrators and their agencies of the city; b) the neighborhood elementary school and school district administration; and c) civil society inclusive of non-profit agencies, faith-based organizations and businesses entities. This study is bounded by the initiation of development efforts by the city on the front end. The neighborhood school complex became the center of educational and social outreach anchoring nearly all collaborations and interventions. Over time agents, leadership and alliances changed impacting the trajectory of development initiatives and school community partnerships. External economic and political forces undermined development efforts which led to a fragmentation and dismantling of initiatives and collaborations in the later years of the study. Primary threads in the praxis of community development and school-community partnerships are applied in the analysis of initiatives, as is the framework of social capital in understanding partnerships within the development events. Specific criteria for analysis included leadership, collaboration, inclusivity, resources, and sustainability. Tensions discovered include: 1) intra-agency conflict, 2) program implementation, 3) inter-agency collaboration, 4) private-public-nonprofit partnerships, and 5) the impact of public policy in the administration of public services. Actors' experiences weave a rich tapestry composed of the essential threads of compassion and resilience in their

transformative human agency at work within the global urban gateway of Barrio Promesa. Summary, conclusions and recommendations include: 1) strategies for the praxis of community development, inclusive of establishing neighborhood based development agency and leadership; 2) community development initiative in full partnership *with* the neighborhood school; 3) the impact of global migration on local development practices; and 4) the public value of personal and civil empowerment as a fundamental strategy in community development practices, given the global realities of many urban neighborhoods throughout the United States, and globally.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xii
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Barrio Promesa.....	2
This Study .....	4
Research Questions .....	6
Overview of This Dissertation .....	8
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	9
Community Development.....	10
Historical Context .....	10
Models of Community Organization Practice .....	14
Asset-Based Community Development.....	18
Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities Movement.....	25
The Industrial Areas Foundation .....	28
Social Capital .....	29
Smart Growth.....	32
Sustainability.....	33
Summary: 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Community Development Practice.....	34
School-community Partnerships .....	40
Historical Overview .....	41
School, Family, Community Partnerships .....	47

	Page
The Community Schools Model .....	51
Benefits of School-community Partnerships .....	54
Roles of Teams, Councils, and Leaders .....	56
Summary: School-community Partnerships .....	62
The Centrality of Schools in Community Development.....	63
METHODOLOGY .....	67
Features of This Case Study .....	68
Bounding the Case, and Conceptualizing the Object of Study.....	68
Selecting Phenomena, Themes or Issues .....	70
Seeking Patterns of Data to Develop the Issues.....	71
Triangulating Key Observations and Bases for Interpretation .....	72
Selecting Alternative Interpretations to Pursue .....	73
Developing Assertions or Generalizations.....	74
Protection of Social Actors .....	75
Interview Process .....	76
Summary: The Epistemology of Weaving Tapestry.....	78
FINDINGS.....	83
Realities in Barrio Promesa, 1998 to 2010 .....	84
Demographic Realities: Immigration Data .....	84
Economic Realities: Income, Poverty, and Employment Data.....	87
Economic Realities: Housing Data .....	90
Social Realities: Cultural and Micro-economic .....	95



	Page
Social Realities: Civil and Criminal .....	98
Social Realities: Criminal Street Gangs.....	101
Educational Realities .....	103
Summary .....	108
Development Initiatives and Actors.....	109
Transitional Stage, 1998 through 2002 .....	110
City Initiatives 1998 – 2002.....	110
School Initiatives: 1998 – 2002. ....	120
Civil Society Initiatives: 1998 – 2002. ....	124
Virtuous Cycle, 2003 through 2008.....	128
City Initiatives: 2003 – 2008.....	129
School Initiatives: 2003 – 2008. ....	135
Civil Society Initiatives: 2003 -2008.....	141
Fragmentation, “Dismantling” of Initiatives: 2009, 2010 .....	146
City Initiatives and Events: 2009 – 2010.....	147
School Initiatives and Events: 2009 – 2010.....	154
Civil society Initiatives and Impacts: 2009 –2010.....	157
Roles Played by Key Actors .....	160
City Actors.....	161
School Actors.....	167
Civil Society Actors.....	170
Challenges and Accomplishments .....	176

	Page
The Politics of Immigration .....	177
Leadership Challenges .....	181
City.....	181
School. ....	182
Civil Society.....	184
“Picking Off” Leadership. ....	186
Accomplishments: Transformative and Facilitative Leaders .....	187
Growing Leadership in Barrio Promesa. ....	189
City Agencies.....	189
School Outreach.....	191
Civil Society Efforts .....	193
Youth Leadership Education.....	194
The Boys and Girls Club.....	196
Collaboration.....	196
Social Capital Analysis of Collaborations. ....	197
Bonding types of collaborations in Barrio Promesa. ....	197
Bridging types of collaboration in Barrio Promesa. ....	201
Linking types of collaboration in Barrio Promesa.....	202
Resources .....	205
Inclusiveness/Exclusiveness .....	208
Sustainability.....	214
A Brief Summary of Current Activities.....	219

	Page
Lessons for Research, Policy and Practice .....	222
Summary of Lessons in the Voices of the Confidants .....	224
City Actors.....	224
School Actors.....	226
Civil Society Actors.....	231
Faith-based Community Initiative. ....	234
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	236
Community Development and School-community Partnerships in Barrio Promesa.....	238
Reframing Development Practice .....	243
Reconstituting Public Administration.....	243
Extending School - Community Partnerships.....	245
Community Development with School Partnership. ....	246
Five Strategies for Community Development Praxis .....	247
Incorporating Political and Organizational Tensions. ....	248
Promoting a Shared Vision and Mission. ....	249
Leadership Styles, Development and Succession. ....	251
Active Social Capital Analysis. ....	252
Proactive Public Policy. ....	253
Concluding Remarks.....	255
REFERENCES .....	259
APPENDIX A.....	277

	Page
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION .....	281

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Case Study Rubric.....	72
2. Persons Moved In .....	86
3. Employment and Occupation Data (2010 census).....	90
4. Number and Type of Housing Units.....	92
5. Housing Stock by Type and Number of Units.....	93
6. Survey of Resident Identified Issues.....	100

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Sectors of Initiatives. ....	69
2. Types of Social Capital.....	197

## INTRODUCTION

This study explores community development initiatives and school-community partnerships that took place during the period 1998 - 2010 in Barrio Promesa, a Hispanic immigrant enclave within a large metropolitan area of the South Western United States. More specifically, it examines the initiatives and partnerships carried out through three main sectors of social actors: a) elected officials, public administrators and their agencies of the city; b) the neighborhood elementary school and school district; and c) civil society; i.e. non-profit agencies, faith-based organizations and businesses entities.

Where there appears to be little coordination of efforts across the community early on, a trajectory of more collaborative efforts eventually evolved. Informal individual organizing efforts led to formal partnerships establishing a neighborhood business alliance. Development interventions were established by members of the alliance in partnership with the Neighborhood Services Department of the city in response to blight, crime and day worker challenges. A change of leadership, and a grant from the Department of Education, engaged the elementary school as the center of community and educational outreach anchoring nearly all development collaborations and initiatives. Alliances and coalitions formed including: a) the inter-faith community, b) rental properties management, c) a homebuilder's alliance, d) a revitalization coalition e) and a short-lived parent group.

City agents, the school administration, and the newly formed alliances collaborated in development efforts and substantial progress accrued. The creation of the Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Action Alliance was a part of this process holding meetings monthly at the primary school. Over time, development agents, organization

leadership and alliances changed impacting the trajectory of development initiatives and school community partnerships considerably. Behind each of these development efforts are the actors whose stories are indicative of the promising trajectory of development interventions significant to this research study of the partnerships and initiatives that evolved in Barrio Promesa.

### **Barrio Promesa**

Barrio Promesa is roughly a square mile in size bordered by four arterial through ways on all sides giving a block like shape to the geography of the neighborhood. The area annexed by the city as part of a larger parcel of county territory and is governed by the city council, mayor and city manager's office. A reputation evolved in the 1990s given the challenges of poverty and crime within the neighborhood. The relative geographic shape of the neighborhood parcel led to a negative nickname as 'The Block'. This poor reputation appears to have been driven by a variety of economic and social realities that as one public representative commented left the area 'disenfranchised' by the city for some period of time. The isolation of the neighborhood as bounded by the four major avenues may be a partial explanation for the apparent blind eye of city agencies, representatives and public administrators. Complexity is added as the demographics of the neighborhood changed dramatically opening up an urban gateway for global labor migration from Mexico establishing a barrio of Hispanic immigrants.

A sketch of the needs being reacted to in the neighborhood include: a) crime and drug issues, b) graffiti and gang activity, c) high rates of poverty, d) low levels of educational achievement, e) absentee landlords and urban blight, and f) the neighborhood school received a designation as 'underperforming' from the state. The Barrio Promesa



area is surrounded by a variety of franchised businesses along the four major traffic arteries that exacerbate the isolation of the neighborhood, as these owners do not reside in the neighborhood. An unusually high density of multiplex housing and rental stock are found within the neighborhood. The elementary school complex and an underdeveloped city park are centrally located and are the only amenities within the neighborhood. Little physical infrastructural improvements had been invested there leaving the previous footprint as a county island untouched without sidewalks, street lighting, and a maze of dead ends and cul-de-sacs' typical of mobile home developments.

Low cost rentals and poor oversight by absentee property owners had contributed to the blighted conditions found in pockets throughout the neighborhood. The deteriorated conditions negatively impacted the safety and security of residents. Evidence of crack houses and prostitution had complicated the quality of community and school life, in addition to blighted and insecure walkways to school, high rates of crime and transience in some of the residential complexes, and gang related criminal activities at the park next to the school. High rates of transience in the neighborhood also negatively influenced academic achievement and retention at the local school. Additionally, many students appear to have been of families whose parents are dependent on agricultural or low skill building trades, most without completion of a formal education. Residents spoke Spanish as their primary language publicly and in their homes. These social and cultural, economic and educational realities adversely impacted development and partnership interventions in the neighborhood. Such were the realities of undocumented immigrant life of the Hispanic residents there.

In the late 1990s, new initiatives established a transitional phase of development. The launch of the Rental Renaissance Program (RRP) sponsored through the agency of the Neighborhood Services Department placed department Coordinators, Community Prosecution Specialists and Community Action Officers in a shared office space at the City Services Center at the grocery strip mall on the northern boundary of the neighborhood. The RRP Team helped to establish the turn from a prior period of neglect to one of increasing resources focused into the neighborhood. The efforts by some business owners and a few residents in organizing the business alliance, neighborhood block watch, and the Day Worker Center began a sense of revitalization of the neighborhood. Changes of leadership at the school district and primary school, and receipt of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center federal funding coalesced into a virtuous cycle of development and partnership efforts with the neighborhood school at the center. Actors within the community, the neighborhood school and the city established a variety of collaborative development initiatives. Efforts within the school regarding achievement and retention, extensive after school programs and social as well as adult educational outreach improved school and residential life.

### **This Study**

I first became aware of the initiatives taking shape in the community in the spring of 2006. I attended the kickoff of the capital fund campaign for the building of what is now the Boys and Girls Club on the site of the Barrio Promesa Elementary school complex. My contact from the Boys & Girls Club introduced me to the Community Prosecutor Specialist for the City Prosecutor's office. From this meeting a tour of the neighborhood and discussion took place about the challenges within the neighborhood

and the efforts taking shape to address them. I chose to give the collaborations and initiatives underway in Barrio Promesa a deeper look resulting in a brief study that also served to complete the requirement of a final paper for a political economy course (Busch 2006, unpublished). In that preliminary study, I was able to witness the compassion, resilience and vision of four actors in their development efforts within the school and the surrounding community. The opportunity to engage much more deeply into the development dynamics and human agency taking place in the community was a motivation for my studies and candidacy as a doctoral student in public administration and policy.

It is my intention that this inquiry will further inform the discourse regarding community development and school-community partnership research, policy and practice. My strategy in working through this study is that a “deeper understanding” (Stake, 1978, p. 5) of particular events in the Barrio Promesa story may prove useful in extending the development efforts of this community and of other communities with similar challenges and aspirations. I also hope to contribute to the research, policy and practice in the fields of community development and school-community partnerships. If so, this research will have achieved its most stringent test of being useful: for the stakeholders and residents of Barrio Promesa; for community development practitioners be they public, private, or nonprofit agents; and for the academe.

The development initiatives and school-community partnerships undertaken in Barrio Promesa have resulted in various outcomes affecting the lives of the residents and the actors involved. The mix of initiatives, neighborhood agents, collaborations and agencies, and the social and political events impacting the neighborhood become the

focus of this dissertation. Overall, three main issues are at the center of the Barrio Promesa story. First, the leadership of the Promesa Primary Principal whose vision and tenacity engaged development actors in partnerships in moving the school to the center of social and economic life of the barrio while transforming the academic trajectory of her school. Second, the policies and agencies engaged in development and partnership initiatives. Third, the realities of global migration of Hispanic immigrants who transformed the neighborhood into a global urban gateway resulted in direct and indirect socio-economic, political and civil society effects. Strategies are suggested in the context of development and school-community partnership initiatives that address these and additional challenges impacting urban neighborhoods throughout the U.S. and perhaps globally.

### **Research Questions**

In this research, I undertook a case study with the purpose of exploring, describing and analyzing the development initiatives and school-community partnerships that have impacted the Barrio Promesa neighborhood from 1998 to 2010. The study is guided by four questions:

1. What were the main demographic, economic, social and educational realities of Barrio Promesa in the period 1998 to 2010?
2. What development initiatives were undertaken in the neighborhood during this time period and what were the roles played by the key actors?
3. What have been the most significant challenges and accomplishments regarding leadership, collaboration, resources, inclusiveness and sustainability of those initiatives?

4. What lessons can be drawn from the Barrio Promesa story for further research, policy and practice in community development and school-community partnerships?

Question one establishes an important baseline regarding the social, economic, cultural and educational realities of the neighborhood. This is significant in surfacing the realities of poverty, working and impoverished class levels of employment and education, condition of the housing stock and infrastructure of the neighborhood, and challenges being faced within the neighborhood school. Impacts of crime, much of it gang related are discussed. The social and economic realities of the Hispanic immigrant community are considered as well.

Question two chronicles initiatives and partnerships establishing three distinct phases of development; transitional 1998 - 2002, virtuous cycle 2003 - 2008, and a retrograde period of fragmentation and dismantling of initiatives and partnerships in 2009 and 2010. The roles of development actors, their partnerships and agential efforts are considered along with internal and external motivations.

Question three cuts across significant challenges reframed through the key criteria of leadership, collaboration, resources, inclusiveness and sustainability as it builds to the more promising discussion of achievements. The underlying challenges of immigration politics and the compassionate efforts of development actors to positively impact the quality of life of the residents surfaces in the responses of the confidants.

Question four draws on the wealth of experiences of the development actors and the lessons learned from mistakes and successes with consideration of their aspirations for what can come next in development and partnership initiatives for the neighborhood.

These admonitions present a rich (and at times personal) discourse regarding development and school-community partnership practices.

### **Overview of This Dissertation**

This dissertation is organized in five chapters. Chapter Two offers a review of two bodies of literature that are relevant to this study: community development and school-community partnership. In this review, I find the concepts of capacity development, neighborhood governance and democratic empowerment as common threads in both literatures. Weaving these threads of the literature a foundation for school centric development praxis is presented. Chapter Three describes the methodological approach. The chapter provides an explanation of this case study process particularly regarding the validity and features of the qualitative method as applied in gathering data, establishing the findings, and development of generalizations. Chapter Four discusses the main findings of the study in relation to the four research questions. Each question is fully vetted given the robust data gathered in the study and offers detailed descriptions across the themes and development criteria explored in the interview process. Chapter Five relates these findings to the literature discussed in Chapter Two. The chapter proposes: possibilities for the development initiatives and school community partnerships going forward in Barrio Promesa; a reframing of development practice across the three sectors of initiatives from the city, school and civil society; and offers five strategies for research and practice in community development going forward.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Two theoretical threads are reviewed in this chapter: community development, and school-community partnerships. These literatures are robust though within each is the recognition of the incomplete nature of their respective theories and applications. Practitioners in the fields of community development and in school-community partnerships speak to the unique circumstances of every community and school initiative and therefore the praxis each community's efforts may offer to the field. The Barrio Promesa story lies at the cross roads in the broad landscape of both literatures and has much to offer that may be fruitful in the two fields of practice or perhaps in adding support for the integration of the frameworks altogether.

The review addresses three major traditions of community development practice inclusive of Models of Community Organization and Macro Practice (Rothman & Tropman, 1987); Asset Based Community Development (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993); and the Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities Movement (World Health Organization, 1986). Contributions from several other frameworks are considered inclusive of the Industrial Areas Foundation, Social Capital, Smart Growth and Sustainability. The primary threads of the school-community partnership praxis are considered inclusive of the School, Family, Community Partnerships framework (Epstein, 1990); and the Community Schools movement (Institute for Educational Leadership/Coalition for Community Schools, 2003). Secondary themes are considered in this section; i.e. the roles of school of school and community actors in these partnerships. A historical context is offered as the overture to both literatures. A third thread in the literature is considered at the close of this chapter through the lens of

capacity building and shared governance as common strategies in laying the groundwork for a unified framework for community development inclusive of the neighborhood school.

### **Community Development**

To study the practices of organizing and governing in community provides a rich though complex study of social, political and economic forces that have combined to shape civil society in the United States. Not wishing to add to the muddle of terms regarding community development, organizing, building, planning and action this review offers a macro-view in order to capture the discourse from the perspective of “community practice”; e.g. active endeavor with the intention of improving community socio-political and economic trajectories (Rothman, 1964). A brief review of the history of community practice will provide a contextual foundation to the discourse that follows.

### **Historical Context**

As a point of departure Alexis de Tocqueville’s often cited observation of the uniquely American penchant for “association” provides an inspiration as to the efficacy of individuals in communities coming together to address their concerns and desires, and to access the resources and institutions required to bring about the requisite adjustments socially, economically, and or politically in benefit to their community, and to do so as a means of communitarian governance where representative formal government does not respond (de Tocqueville 2003/1835). The recognition of these communitarian forces at work in the greater civil society are manifest in the assumptions, principles and endeavors of community practices. This essentially American philosophy to associate drives the



policy and institutional events of the past century providing a compass for direction in understanding present community practices.

In *The Roots of Community organizing, 1917 – 1939* Betton and Austin (1990) discern two disparate assumptions of urban and social planning. Noting the “professional orientation” towards community planning as “...physical planning as practiced by city planners and social survey research as practiced by social planners.” The authors find that within these two approaches lie the “taproots” of modern community practices cited as the “emerging community-planning technology of the 1920’s and 1930’s (p. 12).” Significant events in understanding the trajectory of community practice through the first half of the twentieth century include: establishment of “federated” community finance such as the Community Chest; Progressive Era philosophies of education, social welfare and civic participation; publication of *The Community: An Introduction to the Study of Community Leadership and Organization* (Lindeman, 1921); national recognition of the vital role of community in protecting child welfare as established policy in the Social Security Act of 1939; as well the institutional grounding of community practice as social work in the Lane Report of 1939 (pp. 29 – 31).

These events bring an understanding of the complexity, the variety of technologies, and layers of institutions informing community practices after WWII. Betton and Austin suggest these post war years coalesce as the “...modern period of community organizing (p. 14).”

The economic crisis of the 1930s legitimated community organizing, and its advocates... identified many new directions for community organizing, including social planning. In addition the federal government recognized the important of community organizing and used organizing tools to implement and monitor government programs. [Betton and Austin conclude] The roots of community

organization practice in the 1980 and 1990s can be traced to the intellectual contributions of the key practitioners of the 1920s and 1930s. The education of future community organizers ought to include the ideas and experiences of the early conceptualizers of community organizing.<sup>1</sup> (Betton & Austin, 1990, p. 31)

In their criticism of community development history Fisher et al. (2012) contribute that in each “era” of community development a “dominant” practice emerges which has social, economic and political assumptions impacting community practices. “Eras characterized by more liberal reform foster and allow opportunities for the proliferation of more Left-oriented community initiatives. More conservative or reactionary eras produce...a decline of Left-oriented community efforts and a rise of not only highly moderated but especially reactionary forms of local organizing (p.191).” Their analysis of the period of development of the 1960’s thru the late 1970’s is instructive to this point. Noting the significant influence of the Civil Rights Movement, the authors note a shift in focus of community practices as a political movement and less that of economic and social improvements; i.e. as political and social action coalesced at the community level in order to drive various national agendas.

There was certainly broad interest in the local community, in and of itself, as the site of radical change and opportunities for democratic participation; but there was also a theoretical framework of community as inherently alternative and oppositional to mainstream society. ...Community was defined broadly to expand activism beyond the local and to offer a criticism of mainstream society’s anti-community features. Community was used both as a site and as an alternative....community leaders saw their overall work as more tied to movement

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<sup>1</sup> Betton and Austin offer a detailed immersion for practitioners and researchers interested in community practices. Their reviews events, institutions and publications in the formative years of community development. Interestingly, their study is organized around the community intervention framework (Rothman & Tropman, 1987) supporting the validity of the model and tacitly re-grounding the dominant paradigm of prescriptive social work intervention.

building, such as the civil rights , student, antiwar, or women’s movement, then to community per se. (Fisher et al., 2012, p. 196)

The social, economic and political policies of the Johnson administrations’ “Great Society” as significant to the growth of institutions, organizational capacity, flow of resources, and therefore access to power that fed this era of community practice. O’Neill (2002) reviews this explosive growth as centered in the nonprofit sector. It is also noteworthy that during this time so many city systems of government adopted the Council/Manager form of representative governance in a movement towards more responsive public administration (Svara, 2007/1994).

The rise of the HOA (Home Owners Association) of the 1950’s in homogenizing suburban development as supporting the premise of a recurring era of backlash manifest in socially conservative community practice following the more progressive socio-political and economic community practices of the New Deal is cited by Fisher et al. The authors expose these ‘reactions’ as the “anti-cannon” of development practices. They comment regarding the rise of the “New Right” as arguably “the most successful social change initiative since 1980.”

The fusion of disciples and proponents of free-market economics and anti communist/old War politics, on the one hand, with leaders and congregation members of Christian fundamentalist churches on the other, resulted in the most powerful political grouping of our era... .. New Right efforts were successful primarily because they straddled critical divides evident in the Left/progressive canon of community organizing. They blended issues of both political economy and culture... They understood the value of community-based organizing, but they understood even better the importance of national organizations, in concert with local efforts, fighting for state power. They always saw themselves as part of a broader social movement. (Fisher et al., 2012, p. 1990)

It is from this dynamic social-political-economic premise, and the historical/cultural contexts discussed above that this review turns to the focus of significant traditions in community practice, specifically: Model of Community Organization Practice, Asset-Based Community Development and the Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities Movement. Additional community practice models are considered for their contribution to the field.

### **Models of Community Organization Practice**

The theory and practice of interventions in social work is embedded in the main assumptions of the community intervention framework published by Rothman as *Models of Community Organization Practice* (1968). As Rothman established, “it was not until 1939 with the publication of the first Lane report that community organization practice was systematically studied by social workers ... what we will do in this instance is place community organization in the broader context of macro social work practice (Rothman, 1968, p 17; Rothman & Tropman, 1987, p.3).”

Revised and enhanced as *Models of Community Organization and Macro Practice Perspectives: Their Mixing and Phasing* (Rothman & Tropman, 1987) outlines three “models” as a typology from which to prescribe intervention strategies. The prescriptive language addresses community practice as prescriptive in the context of an intervention by social work professionals. The authors’ macro-framework conceptualizes community as “social sectors” for the “field of action” of community practitioners. These sectors are framed as the “targets” and “vehicles” for community practice. These “arenas” include community individuals, formal and informal organizations, and small groups serving a variety of functions as formal boards, and voluntary committees.

Additionally, three “core elements of practice” are assumed in the process of intervention by a practitioner in a community system. These practice processes outline the strategic tools of intervention to include: problem solving methodology; interpersonal influence ...and organizational pressure; [and] macro practice to support of micro practice (pp. 3 – 5).”

The intervention macro-framework delineates three models for consideration by the community intervention specialist. The core models of community intervention outline three approaches as strategies for community practice: locality development, social planning and social action. Rothman suggests each as a “serviceable framework for broad inquiry” where each strategy offers a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach across a variety of professional and academic disciplines. For descriptive purposes each of these models are presented as diagnostic strategies. They are in reality often blended across a mix of “practice variables” and “macro perspectives” of planning and intervention practices. The complexity inherent in community development is accommodated through a strategy of “mixing and phasing of approaches” at the discretion of the development agent. A brief explanation of strategies of each of the models and criticism from the development literature is summarized below:

Locality development:

- Broad based community participation in community action.
- Processes of economic and social progress inclusive of the community.
- Promotion of process goals inclusive of community competency in solving problems, and social integration; i.e. embrace of consensus across diverse members of the community.
- Leadership is locally driven, as is control of the development processes.

- Driven locally by faith based, settlement house, and other community based agencies.
- Praxis grounded in communitarian participatory governance theories of Dewey, Follett, Lindeman and Selznick.
- Criticisms include incremental and slow progress; consensus process elevated over development progress; push back of local community initiative may undermine initiative.

#### Social planning:

- Technical process of addressing social ills; i.e. delinquency, housing, mental health.
- Data and social sciences objectivity applied to planning and policy processes.
- Driven by problem focus and needs assessments, formal planning and policy processes become the primary focus for the delivery of goods and services.
- Leadership from a public or nonprofit institutional basis; i.e. city departments, voluntary service agencies, nationally based service agencies and federal agency orientation.
- Policy, administrative, and economic theories of Laswell, Keynes, Herbert Simon, Tropman; i.e. theories of rationality, pragmatism, interest group liberalism and pluralism.
- Criticism that external technical expertise takes precedent and that community engagement is secondary.

#### Social action:

- Mobilization of disenfranchised in conflict strategies to achieve social, economic, political and institutional gains; i.e. processes of mobilization of the poor and disenfranchised to seek social justice
- Militant political tactics applied to access resources and redistribution of power.
- Orientation to policy, political, and institutional change through confrontation.
- Practitioners engage militant empowerment strategies of civil disobedience.

- Leadership tends to be impassioned and charismatic, grounded in consensus process; e.g. as in the development legacies of Dr. M. L. King, Cesar Chavez and Saul Alinsky.
- Praxis include consensus approach; e.g. communicative rationality of Jurgen Habermas, socio-economic agenda of Progressives such as Jane Adams, litigious strategy of Ralph Nader.
- Strategies that are more current include coalition building and political action to offset fragmentation and marginalization of communities; e.g. issues politics inclusive of civil rights, LGBT rights and immigration.
- Criticism includes capture of a community agenda's by external agents to the disadvantage of a more local focus in development governance.  
(Rothman, Erich, and Tropman 2001, pp. 28 – 35; Rothman, Tropman 1987, pp. 17, 18; Cnaan, Rothman 1986, p. 41, Rothman 1968)

Discussing the “mixing and phasing” strategy of intervention framework, Rothman and Tropman (1987) explain how “...community practitioner(s) should also become sensitive to the mixed uses of these techniques within a single practice context...” The authors suggest a mixed modal approach as an adaptive application of the three models. For example one model of intervention may morph into another model as a development effort evolves; i.e. “...as a social action organization achieves success and attains resources it may find that it can function most efficiently out of a social planning model.” Consideration of the complexity of organizational and/or practitioner mission and values is considered as such challenges may be inclusive of an economic development or social justice dynamic, “mixing may occur when more than one value is being pursued at a given time (pp. 24 -26).”

Comparative differences of the three models surface across many of the strategies. Locality development centers on a participatory approach whereas the social planning model is more technical, and the social action approach engages in mobilizing a disenfranchised community. Strategies of leadership and leadership development vary across the three models as well. Leadership is community driven in the locality model, external agency actors provide leadership in social planning, and an impassioned charismatic leader is suggested in the social action model.

The durability of the community intervention macro-framework may rest in the acknowledgement that systemic community intervention demands a comprehensive, creative, and perhaps entrepreneurial response by practitioners bridging across a variety of value sets from internal local voices to external institutional policies in attempting sustainable community practice.

### **Asset-Based Community Development**

The primary assumption of the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) framework is that communities have existing assets to bring to the intentional work of locally driven community development. There is a paradigmatic shift in this framework from the prescriptive models of the community intervention practices. The ABCD paradigm establishes the strategy of “a clear commitment to discovering a community’s capacities and assets.” Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) describe their framework as the “alternative path” of community development. The “Capacity-Focused Development” assumption is that taking this approach “leads toward the development of policies and activities based on the capacities, skills and assets of lower income people and their



neighborhoods.” From this assumption flows the principle strategies of the ABCD framework as “asset-based, internally focused, and relationship driven (pp.1 – 10).”

Kretzmann & McKnight offer a hopeful cycle of outcomes through their assets-based framework which revolves around a “capacity oriented emphasis”. Developing this strategy they cite research findings that support the significance of grassroots initiatives in community practice; i.e. “local community people committed to investing themselves and their resources in sustaining a successful development effort (p. 5).” The strategy of assets mapping provides a community with an internal locus of empowerment establishing a “regenerating” process whereby a “community can begin to assemble its strengths into new combinations, new structures of opportunity, new sources of income and control, and new possibilities for production.” The strategy considers three major layers of assets: gifts of individuals; citizen’s associations; local institutions. As the authors explain the model it is “asset based”, “internally focused”, and “driven by relationships” that are the bedrock of informal and formal community practices (pp. 6 - 8).

Kretzmann & McKnight make the case that the intervention approaches of the Rothman & Tropman framework have become the established tradition in development practice. Their criticism is that these prescriptive initiatives project a deficit or needs-driven set of assumptions that result in a dead end. The Assets Based Community Development strategy is clear that “... community building starts with the process of locating the assets, skills and capacities of residents, citizens associations and local institutions (1993).” In this way, ABCD reframes the locality development model. The authors explain how “communities cannot be rebuilt by focusing on their needs,

problems, and deficiencies...” Kretzmann & McKnight argue that the “needs driven” approach addresses only the symptoms of problems within that community establishing a dominant mindset that is counterproductive leading to policies and programs that are “deficiency oriented.” Their criticism proceeds that as a result a “client neighborhood” mentality can take root as a spiral of dependency is established where human service providers are oriented to treating problems, and neighborhood residents are cued to receiving these resources as long as they remain “clients” (p. 2).

...it is important to note how little power local neighborhood residents have to affect the pervasive nature of the deficiency model, mainly because a number of society’s most influential institutions have themselves developed a stake in maintaining that focus....residents themselves begin to accept that [needs] map as the only guide to the reality of their lives. They think of themselves and their neighbors as fundamentally deficient, victims incapable of taking charge of their lives and of their community’s future. (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993, p. 4)

This dependency on external expertise and resources sets up layers of misguided consequences including the: breakdown of a community’s problem solving capacities; funding resources funneled through service providers; disempowering local leadership; and undermining internal community relationships. “At best, reliance on the needs maps as the sole policy guide will ensure a maintenance and survival strategy targeted at isolated individual clients, not a development plan that can involve the energies of an entire community (pp. 2 -5).”

Kretzmann and Green (1997) take on the assumptions of the traditional model head on in *Building the Bridge from Client to citizen: A Community Toolbox for Welfare Reform*. The authors apply assets mapping practices in recommending a ‘tool-box’ for community building as strategic to addressing ‘welfare to work challenges’ from the inside. Leadership and planning are framed as driven by ‘community guides’ i.e. persons

within the community, and community councils. Their purpose is to bring the ABCD model to the policy debates regarding welfare reform. Recognizing this larger societal challenge the authors comment that, "...larger issues of justice and equity must also be addressed (p. 16)."

As if recognizing the gaps in the 'toolbox' regarding governance ABCD Institute released a position paper regarding mapping neighborhood associations as a capacity in community building. To strengthen this argument many communities are cited where block grants and community-based associations have been leveraged in addressing social and economic challenges from within (Turner et al., 1999). This effort is reprised in collaboration with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation as *Discovering Community Power: A Guide to Mobilizing Local Assets and Your Organization's Capacity* (Kretzmann & McKnight, 2005). Though appearing to cross purposes, the ABCD model can be understood within the community intervention macro-framework as mixing and phasing across locality development, social planning, and social action when addressing social policy issues such as welfare reform from the local level of analysis, with rationality to the greater political and civil milieu.

The home page of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute, located at the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University offers this concise summary of the ABCD framework for community practice.

The Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) is at the center of a large and growing movement that considers local assets as the primary building blocks of sustainable community development. Building on the skills of local residents, the power of local associations, and the supportive functions of local institutions, asset-based community development draws upon existing community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future. (<http://www.abcdinstitute.org/> )

The assets mapping and capacity building strategies of the ABCD model informs the frameworks of other community practice theorists. In *Building Community Capacity* (Chaskin et al. 2001), the authors define “community capacity” as having four community level characteristics (sense of community, commitment, mechanisms of problem solving, and access to resources). Community capacity is developed through three levels of social agency at the individual, organization, and network levels of analysis. Agential functions include planning, collective decision-making, advocacy and production. The authors summarize their framework in four “strategies for building community capacity” including leadership development; organizational development; community organizing; and inter-organizational collaboration (pp. 14 - 26).

In this way, Chaskin (et. al.) elevates capacity-building processes (complementary of the ABCD model) as the central focus of community practices. They conclude: “Community building ...consists of actions to strengthen the capacity of communities to identify priorities and opportunities and to foster and sustain positive neighborhood change (p. 1).” This model, as perhaps with Green & Haines, is an evolution of Community Intervention or ABCD frameworks as more recent theories of systemic dynamics (Senge 1990) and network governance (Goldsmith & Eggers, 2004) are embedded in these later model.

Green & Haines (2002) in *Asset Building & Community Development* extend the capacity strategy with radical political economic theories of forms of capital, sustainability, and participatory community governance. A variety of “community capital” re-founds the definition of community assets to include human capital; social; physical; financial; and environmental capitals. The authors infuse the values of

democratic civil society and universal education historically grounded in community practices in stating “community development is consistent with some of the ideals we [in democratic civil society] hold to be extremely important, such as democratic control and local autonomy... [and that]...community offers a place for people to learn the value of cooperation and civic virtue. Participation, like any other skill, must be learned through experience. The promise of community development is that these skills can be transferred to other walks of life (p. 15).” Green & Haines evolve their premise of democratic local governance, driven by participatory processes, as “public action” embedded in their development strategies of community organizing, visioning, planning, implementation and evaluation (pp. 34 – 58). In this way too, the ABCD model is extended across the models of community interventions to include democratic social action, though perhaps a more direct demos is suggested through the radical political economy underlying the Green and Haines model.

McKnight in concert with Peter Block elevates the assets philosophy in the premise of the Abundant Community (2010). They re-establish community practices in the wealth of human relationships and networks that bring a wholeness and satisfaction to life in community. Extending the ABCD model their philosophy turns on what is considered a life style of scarcity and consumption driven by consumer culture. McKnight & Block find against what they frame as “the consumer way” suggesting that within neighborhoods and communities lives of abundance and cooperation are possible and natural to an active form of citizenship; i.e. “the citizen way”. The authors explain, “...a competent community, one willing to capitalize on its abundance, has the ability to create satisfaction and cure our addiction to consumption (p. 63).” Human relationships

and communitarian values are essential to the philosophy put forth here. “Where the consumer society breeds individualism and its effects of entitlement and self-interest, an abundant community is marked by a collective accountability that can be created only in relationship to other people (p. 65).”

The ABCD model influenced community practices with the strategy of assets and capacities available to be leveraged for grassroots community development practice. Various initiatives in the U. S. and globally, as well as communities of practice, have applied assets mapping as a significant community practice. Applying an assets orientation within community college cultures positively influenced the service-learning mission of the Campus Compact National Center for Community Colleges (Glasson, 1997). Similarly, asset-mapping strategies have been advocated for adult and community education program planning (Kerka, 2003). McGinty (2002) applies the community assets and capacity building model to education initiative in a paper presented at the annual conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education.

“As community assets, schools are central to a community’s learning and development, and therefore are best placed to provide a learning community that has the potential to build the capacity of the whole community to address collaboratively educational disadvantage (McGinty, 2002, p. 2).”

In a similar fashion, Pinkett (2000) addresses technology and community in his paper *Bridging the Digital Divide: Sociocultural Constructionism and an Asset-Based Approach to Community Technology and Community Building*. More along this line of thought will be offered in the summary and findings discussion that closes this review.

## **Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities Movement**

The Healthy Cities initiative turns on a shift in concept of reactive response to public health challenges to a proactive promotion of wellness and illness prevention. Much like the turn in philosophy of the ABCD framework, the Healthy Cities movement shifts the community health regime from prescriptive interventions against health threats to mobilizing a comprehensive community wide promotion of good health and wellness practices. Sponsored thru the vision of the World Health Organization (WHO) the 1986 conference convened in Ottawa, Canada November 1986 was the site for the first of what has become an international movement to address urban health challenges through “inter-sectoral action for health.”

The basic principle of wellness, and of networking community assets in health promotion have become adopted as the *Ottawa Charter*. The Charter finds its universal appeal anchored in the assumption of empowerment of the individual to reach their most full possibilities assuming wellness as a basic condition of life. Health becomes a right of every individual as good health is considered an asset towards self-realization and by extension community ecology. In this way the charter advocates:

Good health is a major resource for social, economic and personal development and an important dimension of quality of life. Political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, behavioural and biological factors can all favour health or be harmful to it. Health promotion action aims at making these conditions favourable through advocacy for health. (World Health Organization, 1986)

In redefining wellness “as a resource for everyday life, not an objective of living” the Charter establishes a systems strategy in supporting the principle of comprehensive health promotion. The inter-sectoral approach assumes health promotion that “is not just the responsibility of the health sector” establishing a facilitative role for leadership to

network across urban and community sectors and agencies advocating for “a strong public health alliance.”

The prerequisites and prospects for health cannot be ensured by the health sector alone. More importantly, health promotion demands coordinated action by all concerned: by governments, by health and other social and economic sectors, by nongovernmental and voluntary organization, by local authorities, by industry and by the media. People in all walks of life are involved as individuals, families and communities. Professional and social groups and health personnel have a major responsibility to mediate between differing interests in society for the pursuit of health. (World Health Organization, 1986)

The *Ottawa Charter* secures the following action agenda as a pledge to health promotion:

- to move into the arena of healthy public policy, and to advocate a clear political commitment to health and equity in all sectors;
- to counteract the pressures towards harmful products, resource depletion, unhealthy living conditions and environments, and bad nutrition; and to focus attention on public health issues such as pollution, occupational hazards, housing and settlements;
- to respond to the health gap within and between societies, and to tackle the inequities in health produced by the rules and practices of these societies;
- to acknowledge people as the main health resource; to support and enable them to keep themselves, their families and friends healthy through financial and other means, and to accept the community as the essential voice in matters of its health, living conditions and well-being;
- to reorient health services and their resources towards the promotion of health; and to share power with other sectors, other disciplines and, most importantly, with people themselves;
- to recognize health and its maintenance as a major social investment and challenge; and to address the overall ecological issue of our ways of living.

(World Health Organization, 1986)



Much of the strategies of the Healthy Cities framework are parallel with community practices ongoing in the United States at that time as the movement morphed into the Healthy Communities initiative in the 1990's. Parallel practices inclusive of the strategies of coalition and capacity building, shared decision-making and networking, individual and community empowerment were found to be a good fit (Feighery & Rogers 1990; Wolff 1992/1993; Hancock 1993; Linn 1994). The interdisciplinary and across sector/systems ecology of community organizing around health promotion inspired other forms of community wide promotion efforts in the U.S. inclusive of youth development, strengthening families, strengthening communities; and perhaps adopted in school reform initiatives ascend in the community practice literature (Blythe, Rochlkepartain 1993; Fawcett et. al. 1993; Epstein 1992; Davies 1993).

Essential to the Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities movement is the “socio-ecological” approach to health promotion from which the community wide framework flows. Embedded in this set of assumptions is a community practice that is educative, comprehensive, and communitarian. The movement cuts across all models of the Community Intervention Framework subsuming the ABCD model as well. The Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities movement engages and elevates community practices. As the Charter advocates across individual, agency, and community leadership and governance it bundles the locality, social planning, as well as, community capacities strategies. In achieving the momentum of a movement the Charter establishes a social advocacy, policy, and social justice set of modalities.

Other agencies have echoed the World Health Organizations efforts. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation has been a partner in funding and research through the foundation's

Turning Points Community Health Initiative (2002, 2003). Similarly, the Community Tool Box resource by the Work Group for Community Health and Development, University of Kansas applies the mission to “implement promising processes for community change and improvement ([www.ctb.ku.edu](http://www.ctb.ku.edu), 2013).” The Seattle Partners for Healthy Communities (Krieger et al. 2002; Seifer, 2006) and the St. Lukes Health Initiatives, Resilience: Health in a New Key (2003) of Phoenix, Arizona is exemplary of efforts in health promotion. Both of the Seattle and Phoenix initiatives cited above employ a participatory research methodology in partnership with the respective major university of that city; i.e. University of Washington Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (<http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/>): and Arizona State University Resilience Solutions Network. The Resilience Solutions Group, an apparent evolution of the capacity building initiative of ABCD, states their mission is “... an interdisciplinary team of researchers, educators and public health-minded citizens united in their commitment to helping individuals and communities become more resilient (<http://resilience.asu.edu/>). The strategies of Strength-Based and participatory research for community practices are considered in the closing section of this review.

### **The Industrial Areas Foundation**

The Industrial Areas Foundation (I.A.F.) evolved out of the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council community organization effort in Chicago of the early 1960’s, established by the community organizing pioneer Saul Alinsky in 1940. The I.A.F. organizing strategies include leadership, collaboration of local faith based institutions, and when necessary nonviolent confrontation as a means to social and economic justice for disenfranchised communities. The community practices assumptions of the I.A.F.

model is based in building capacity for community self-governance. In this way the model ties in with locality development of the Rothman/Tropman model and the ABCD framework, however as a means to policy and social welfare the models of planning and social action are implied. Warren (2001) clarifies the key strategies as local policy “actions”, and leadership development through “consensus-building processes”, as essential to the role of the professional community organizer.

The Alinsky legacy is one of “speaking truth to power” that still informs community practices and rhetoric for and against his strategies in achieving needed resources, services and empowerment. His work achieves historical significance and informs the community intervention model as cited in this review. Alinsky asserts, “the imminent prospect of urban renewal frequently results in the mushrooming of tiny articulate groups vociferous in both their demands and their claims of community representation (1962).” The I.A.F. exalts that “As a social entrepreneur Alinsky managed to bridge division of ethnicity, religion and political philosophy in the interest of community improvement.” This approach is coalesced in the mission statement of the IAF: “In seeking to embody Judeo Christian and democratic values IAF invests heavily in the identification, training and connecting of leaders whose capacities and skills may be further developed with careful mentoring and challenge.” (IAF web site)

### **Social Capital**

Considerations of human relationships in community practice is an enduring thread throughout the literature and has since the beginning of the last century been formally recognized as social capital (Hanifan, 1916). The concept resurfaced in the context of civil society; i.e. the trust and reciprocity between people and their

associations (Putnam, 2000); and as a fundamental strategy of global development practices at the World Bank (Dasgupta, Serageldin 2000).

Hanifan (1916) appears to be the first to suggest the use of the term social capital in his description of the significance of the local school functioning as a community center in rural life and the resulting positive effects on school relations and student performance. Though careful to separate the use of the concept from any inclination of economics, Hanifan (pg. 130) explained the concept as:

...those tangible substances that count for most in the daily lives of people; namely good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families that make up a social unit...if an individual comes into contact with his neighbor, and they with other neighbors, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community. (Hanifan, 1916, p. 130)

A functional definition of the concept derived from these theorists' efforts comes from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development defining social capital as "comprising the norms and networks that facilitate joint and other collaborative actions (Hjerpe, 2003, pg. 4)." The OECD framework considers three forms of relationship as significant types of collaboration between persons, agencies and institutions.<sup>2</sup> Development theory and practice at the World Bank (Grootaert, 2004) operationalized the three types of social capital as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> The form of social capital applied here is not the social capital of Bourdieu (1983) regarding access to power generally through social privilege. Nor does the form applied engage Putnam's (1995) framework which focuses on civic participation in civil society. Both of these forms have their value. What is significant are the global realities of Barrio Promesa Primary compared to the social capital framework applied through the development initiatives of the World Bank (Dasgupta & Serageldin, 2000).

- Bonding social capital: as ties to people who are similar in terms of their demographic characteristics, such as family members, neighbors, close friends and work colleagues [i.e. family, ethnicity, culture; e.g. homogeneous groups are exemplary]
  - Bridging social capital: as ties to people who do not share many of these characteristics [i.e. business alliances, coalitions; e.g. collaboration across boundaries horizontally]
  - Linking social capital: as ties to people in positions of authority, such as representatives of public (police, political parties) and private institutions (banks) [i.e. public resources, foundations, nonprofits, private lenders; e.g. collaboration across boundaries vertically]
- (Grootaert, et. al., 2004, pg. 4)<sup>3</sup>

It does seem clear that social capital facilitates economic development. According to Grootaert and Van Bastelaer (2002) this facilitation manifests in three forms:

- Participation in social networks increases the availability of information and lowers its costs.
  - Participation in local networks and attitudes of mutual trust make it easier for any group to reach collective decisions and implement collective action.
  - Networks and attitudes reduce opportunistic behavior by community members.
- (Van Bastelaer, 2002, pp. 8, 9)

Gittell and Vidal (1998) set out to study the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) initiative to test consensus theory as a community organizing strategy within Community Development Corporations (CDC's). In their research they find a value of

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<sup>3</sup> The three categories of social capital as described above are taken directly from the literature of the World Bank SC-IQ as cited in Grootaert (et al. 2004). Woolcock (1998) identified the various functions of social capital informing the definitions above. [Conceptualization within brackets are my own clarifying criteria for purposes of this study.]

social capital theory as a process of building community capacities (p. 25). Gittel & Vidal explain bonding, bridging and linking forms of social capital as: 1) individual capacities; i.e. neighborhood-based leadership, technical and organizational skills, 2) internal neighborhood organizational capacity; i.e. the capacity of community development corporations, and 3) network or “linkage” capacity. The authors find “these were key characteristics of...social capital and network theory as it relates to community development (p. 25).”

Social capital also manifests as an asset strategy for capacity building in the ABCD model as “associational life” (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993, p. 6). Application of the concept is alluded to in the Smart Growth model of development and a central feature of the Sustainability framework. The concept is cited as significant within the community schools literature as discussed below.

### **Smart Growth**

Frumkin et al. (2004) offers a framework parallel to the healthy communities’ model thru the philosophy of urban planning. The authors give a lengthy criticism regarding the community health impacts of urban and suburban land development in establishing the framework for Smart Growth. The Smart Growth framework combines development and conservation strategies in planning for communities that are more attractive and more diverse economically and socially.

Citing the efforts of the Environmental Protection Agency in establishing the Smart Growth Network Frumkin et al. cite Smart Growth Principles as a fundamental response to sprawl and engaging the built environment as a strategy for healthy community practice.

1. Mix land use.
2. Take advantage of compact building design.
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
4. Create walkable neighborhoods.
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
7. Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities.
8. Provide a range of transportation choices.
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

([http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sg\\_network.htm](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sg_network.htm))

The authors find that the deleterious effects of poorly planned environments undermine relationships in those communities. “Urban sprawl seems to undermine social capital. Much of this effect may occur in direct ways—an absence of sidewalks and public places where one can encounter neighbors, and absence of “great good places” as destinations for socializing.” Frumkin et al. consider the socio-economic impact of sprawl and find “...there is an additional contribution if sprawl reinforces the effects of income inequality ... [concluding] ...the decline in social capital is worrisome, since social capital is an important contributor to good health (pp. 184, 185).”

### **Sustainability**

The sustainable community model is perhaps a derivation of the Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities movement, as well the Smart Growth initiative framed above. A strong strategy of this model is the reliance on data and indicators for informing practice, policy and resource use. This framework appears based on a radical political economy establishing a “triple bottom line” of balancing Planet (environment), People

(social equity), and Profits (economic and financial security) ...(Flint, 2013, p. 69). The model flows then from the “Three P’s” to incorporate strategic considerations of community capacity, development and environmental stewardship. Acting sustainably implies concurrently limiting waste and pollution, improving the opportunities for disadvantage peoples, conserving natural resources, making valuable connections among groups, promoting cooperation and efficiency, and development local assets to revitalize economies. (p. 43)

The following list for engaging in sustainability planning offered in *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader* outlines the following themes for stimulating discussion and participation in community practice.

- meeting the needs of future generations
- carrying capacity of ecosystems
- maintain natural capital
- maintenance and improvement of systems
- positive change
- sustaining human livelihood
- protecting and restoring the environment
- oppose exponential growth

(Wheeler & Beatley, 2004, pp. 321, 322)

### **Summary: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Development Practice**

Summarizing community practice the Rothman & Tropman models of intervention provides a meta-approach for understanding the nuanced and overlapping strategies. Their framework established a typology that is inclusive across a large landscape of community practices falling in under the umbrella of the models: locality



development, social planning and social action. The framework attempts then to move past the rigidities of the model to a more realistic perspective of mixing and phasing leaving quite a bit of flexibility to community practitioners. The beauty of the intervention framework is that it offers a theoretical framework and practice regime which achieves the original intent of the exercise.

In the discourse of this review, criticism and response to the model surfaced though apparently without radically changing the framework over fifty plus years of practice. A salient criticism of the diagnostic approach of the intervention framework is that it establishes a blind spot inherent in the prescriptive assumptions of the models. This outside/in approach manifests consistently throughout the macro-framework as each model proposes an agent or agency that brings the palliative through inspiring local organizing, evolving policy and planning, or lighting the fire of social action.

The ABCD model turns on this philosophy as is suggested in “building communities from the inside out” foregoing the needs map for an assets orientation. Clearly this strategy has been useful across a variety of community organizing endeavors nationally and globally with its appeal of grassroots endeavor and possibilities. Kretzmann and McKnight have collectively advanced their ABCD framework reflective of contemporary perspectives and criticism. Elevating their focus to community associations as a focal point of their assets and capacity development strategy is indicative of their response.

There are those who fault this model as ripe for capture by elite local agents and “that the sustainability of community-based initiatives depends crucially on an enabling institutional environment, which requires government commitment, and on accountability

of leaders to their community to avoid “supply-driven demand-driven” development (Mansuri & Rao, 2004).” This seems to reflect a possible gap in the ABCD philosophy for at its inception lies a reaction against the “traditions” of community practices focuses almost exclusively inward in its grassroots based practice. One criticism exposes the ABCD model as a neo-liberal “palliative, serving as a rationale for maintaining the status quo, rather than as a genuine catalyst intended to spur social change (Hyatt, 2008).”

Others however, have found the grassroots basis of the ABCD model to offer flexibility, plasticity for layering strategies and purposes such as social capital and social networking, participatory democracy, themes of civil society, and social justice; i.e. the “...ABCD both reflects and integrates trends ... (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).” This plasticity in integrating strategies such as social networks is cited in Ennis & West (2010) who suggest that a “great value is in explicitly including the mapping of relationships, as well as assets as a key part of the model.”

By locating where actors are positioned within networks (in relation to each other and to the identified assets), communities and workers can gain an understanding of who does and does not have access to various resources or assets in that network. Such an understanding allows for strategic community action. (Ennis & West, 2010, p. 411)

Mathie (2006) finds that the ABCD model does “deliver on social justice” as his argument takes shape and finds the model “...has a transformative effect on the individual, on the social relations between and among individuals, and on the relations citizen groups have with external agencies (p. 1).” Additionally, there is the possibility of the model being of influence on the community prosecution movement as a proactive strategy of community wide crime prevention.

Reviewing the Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities health promotion as a ‘movement’ appears to apply an eclectic mix of strategies into community practice. The WHO initiative seeks to develop a systems ecology that is balanced across internal actors and agencies in collaboration with external sources of funding and policy implementation. In this interdisciplinary approach a collaborative governance and leadership strategy is called for if the process is to take on a virtuous cycle of wellness promotion. The Ottawa Charter appears to have struck a nerve in urban settings globally as the movement has found a base across every continent, and influenced community practice theories regarding strength based research on strong communities and theories of empowerment and social justice. Coalition building is cited as a guiding principle of the Healthy Communities model as “one pathway to creating more competent helping systems in communities (Woff, 2002/1996, p. 3).”

Both the Sustainability and the Smart Growth models are based on a planning and policy milieu that applies the strategy of inclusion of all stakeholders in leveraging local participation. This strategy is similar in theory and practice in the public administration literature regarding public value (Moore, 1995), and public leadership (Svara et. al. 1994). Both theorists work supports the principle of an inclusive participatory approach facilitated through public leaders in community planning and policy processes. Social action frameworks such as the IAF evoke a consensus organizing strategy that is based on inclusive principles in regenerating community trust, mutuality of purpose, leadership action and governance (Ohmer, DeMasi 2009, p. 15). Similarly, Boehm & Cnaan (2012) advocate for empowerment strategies as they criticize that the “community practice models are often less community-oriented and conceptually more top-down... [finding

that]...today an increasing number of communities insist on being involved in decision making (p. 143).”

As suggested earlier in the review of the literature and history of community development the pendulum of development praxis has swung back and forth between conservative and progressive value systems. In this new century unfolds economic, social and global dynamics are challenging the assumptions of existing development strategies. Sites et al. (2012) suggest globalism and postmodernism as two theoretical challenges to existing development practice. The authors conclude that “what unites community organization across the various models...is not simply a common field or site of practice but a larger *social project or mission* (p.45).” Fisher (1999) makes the point in this way that “while neighborhood organizing projects have a significant origin, nature, and existence of their own at the local level, they are also the products of national and even international political and economic developments (Fisher, 1999, p. 340).” DeFilippis & Saegert (2012) consider global immigration trends as an overarching challenge to assumptions about communities and community development practices (379, 380). Pilisuk et al. (1996) make this point in a more general reference to global impacts on development commenting that global social and economic realities are creating direct and unprecedented effects leading to a reassessment of community and the very praxis of community practices.

It would appear that local development challenges are taking on global dynamics. Perhaps the literature of development in emerging economies of the Third World offers strategies that can inform local development practices. The Nobel Prize economists Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz have contributed significantly to the praxis of

development on the contemporary global stage. Their ideas may be very useful considering the dynamics of immigration impacts on local social, economic and political realities as these realities impact neighborhood development initiatives, partnerships, and the development resources.

Stiglitz (1998) explains that there is a causal relationship “between participation and development effectiveness” and articulates the process of building community institutions and capacities through participatory strategies in this way:

“...much of life centers around communities, and communities are often the most effective vehicle for bringing about the transformation of society...participation at the community level allows the project choice to reflect the needs and preferences within the community, and the project design to reflect the local information, ensuring that local conditions, preferences, and circumstances are taken into account. Equally important, local participation engenders commitment, which is necessary for project sustainability over the long run. And participation in the project itself becomes part of the transformation process.” (Stiglitz, 1998, p. 26)

The transformative vision of Sen’s thesis may be instructive at the local level of development practice with the school in full partnership as articulated through the concept of transcending “un-freedoms” in establishing capabilities. Sen addresses the concept of individual agency as a function of “instrumental freedoms” including: a) economic opportunities, b) political freedoms, c) social facilities, d) transparency guarantees and e) protective security. He explains “the removal of substantial unfreedoms ... [of poor health, poor education, poverty, hegemony]...as constitutive of development.” Sen establishes educational initiatives in the position of development catalyst (2000, pp.34, 35). Sen’s project parallels a thread in the more conventional development literature as Jasek-Rysdahl (2001) finds the capabilities framework of Sen to compare favorably to the asset mapping strategy of the ABCD framework.

Stiglitz & Greenwald (2014) place education as the essential driver in economic development giving shape to their thesis for *Creating a Learning Society*. The authors find that “...a focal point of policy ought to be increasing learning within the economy...increasing the ability and the incentives to learn, and learning how to learn...[that] creating a learning society should be one of the major objectives (p.6)”

### **School-community Partnerships**

The two dominant frameworks in the literature regarding school-community partnerships School-Family-Community Partnerships (SFCP) and Community Schools (CS) are explored here. Consideration is given to the roles of school actor’s in the school community partnership milieu; i.e. the school principal and superintendent. As this thesis considers community practices, an attempt is made to sort out the education reform literature from the school-community partnership literature. There is some overlap where school relationships engage students and parents at the interface of their general well-being impacting the wholeness of community life and development practices.

Schools, and the communities in which they are located, have a long history in the social, economic, and political fabric of community life in the United States. From the one room schoolhouse of colonial American life to the contemporary urban and suburban school district life the notion of the primacy of the local school as a “neighborhood anchor” of communities has been the norm. The roles of schooling in America have been central to local events, adult education, recreation, and the exercise of voting. The mission of schools also anchors both the local and national social, economic and political milieu through civics education, work force preparation, and acculturation of diverse peoples into civil society as a whole. The governance of local schools has also been

“anchored” in the realities of local community life. Though the practice of partnership may have suffered as the focus of schooling turned inwards there are renewed efforts and policies reframing school partnerships with neighborhoods and community (Pardini, 2001).

The literature appears to move in this same way from the earlier musings regarding school and family connections of the 1980’s, to a more holistic systems understanding of schools in the literature of the 1990’s and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The more current thread changes focus from a school reform discourse to a community services, capacity building, and governance framework found in the community schools movement flourishing today.

### **Historical Overview**

The local school has been a “hub of community life with families at the center” in their earliest manifestations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The rise of industrial and corporate entities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought a technical language of organizational efficiency that affected all bureaus engaging with the public as imbued with an “administrative and political rationality,” increasingly managerial framework, and centralized core of professional class administrators (Stivers, 2000, p. 5). The openness of community and school relations suffered from this “closed system” form of professional administration that has “buffered” schools from external community influence (Auerbach, p. 30). The relationship for administrators, families and the community in general became more formal. The expectations put upon the schools regarding their social, economic, and political roles has become more complex inclusive of academic achievement, services

provision, school administration responsiveness to constituents, and efficient use of public funds.

Twentieth century social and political support of universal education arose on the national agenda during the years of the Progressive Era. Initiatives of the Settlement House movement of Jane Adams and others, and the democratic philosophies of John Dewey advocating education and social welfare, were considered as a means to balancing the social limitations of capitalism. This socio-political policy proved to be an early manifestation of “social work education”, hopeful of impacting democratic civil society (Stivers, p. 61). Promotion of “lifelong learning” through local school systems became a formal movement during the years of the Great Depression. It is worth noting the influence of foundations in supporting such efforts as was the case with the “community education” initiative sponsored by the Mott Foundation.

These early initiatives inform national policy during the 1970’s, and led to further innovations at the state, regional and local level of education policy efforts in the 1980’s. As the federal government walked a balance between reverence for local school governance and a rising criticism for national school reform various innovations of policy (i.e. funding through block grants) encouraged state and local innovation and a decentralization of governance (Blank et al., 2003). Deserving of mention here, though well ahead of the curve, is a thought piece produced in 1976 out of the Northwest Regional Educational Lab entitled *Building School-community Partnerships*, which called for a collaborative form of school governance and policy implementation (Engle et al., 1976).



Decentralization and restructuring through site-based management ideas “opened schools to greater stakeholder participation as well as more collaborative forms of leadership. The landmark 1988 Chicago school reforms gave parents and community members a majority stake on Local School Councils (Auerbach, p. 30).” As Blank (et. al.) summarized:

...Congress provided important seed money for the movement with the passage of the Community Schools Act (PL 93-381) and the Community Schools and Comprehensive Community Education Act. Although this funding was folded into a block grant during the early years of the Reagan Administration ...since the late 1980s, various local, state and foundation-funded efforts have produced new model that further developed the key features of community schools ...Approaches designed to mobilize the assets of communities and address barriers to learning resulting from poverty, changing demographics and other contemporary facts of life emerged alongside more established community education programs.” (Blank et. al. 2003, p. 3)

A variety of social welfare programs developed out of a social services provision regime driven by national, state and local policy. Family support centers, ‘latch-key’ programs, various health services, , and partnerships with business and nonprofit entities encouraged a “school facilities as community centers” evolution of the local school.

As the social mission of public schooling grew at the local level of impact, so did a parallel call of for school performance to meet the challenges of global economic competition. The National Education Goals (1989) under the sponsorship of the nation’s governors and the Executive Office of the President issued the first six goals. Early childhood education, retention and graduation, student achievement and citizenship, science and mathematics, adult literacy and lifelong learning, and safe and drug free schools round out the first six; throughout which engaging parents, families, business and

community entities is stated as essential in achieving these goals (Swanson, 1991, pp. 1, 2).

The discourse on engaging parents and community in school reform efforts received a great deal of energy from The Department of Education Strong Families, Strong Schools: Building Community Partnerships for Learning (1994): “research indicating that the starting point of American education is parent expectations and parental involvement in their children’s education.” This praxis caught on and the socio-political process evolved with the U.S. Congress adding additional goals engaging parents, families and communities. Goal number eight is of specific interest: “Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children (1994, abstract).”

National initiatives such as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Initiative (1998) and the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) encouraged education strategies elevating the role of the community in partnership with schools for student achievement still further. The policy established community school program strategies including: “...parent involvement; after school programs; violence prevention; service learning; and coordination of a variety of public, private and nonprofit service (Blank et al., 2003, p. 3).” The National Education Goals Panel (1995) solidifies the goals for education as benchmarks for the year 2000. Goal eight is further articulated that “every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children...providing family-oriented learning activities...time off to volunteer ...[and] providing resources to a school for academic reform...(pp. 15 – 19).”

The byline on the No Child Left Behind Act of 2000 (PUBLIC LAW 107–110—JAN. 8, 2002) ensconces school reform as the primary thread throughout the policy: “An Act: To close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind.” Title IV Part B of the Act entitled 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers is significant for the breadth of innovation it inspires. The 21<sup>st</sup>CCLC supports enrichment and tutorial services in achieving academic standards and a wide array of youth development services. Adult education for “families of students served by community learning centers” includes literacy and related educational development. The 21<sup>st</sup>CCLC portion of the ‘Act’ was reauthorized in 2002 expanding community outreach activities and requirements. The reauthorization emphasized improving academic achievement for low-performing schools with high percentages of low-income students (Department of Education, 2010).

The discourse of school community partnerships appears to reorient itself in response to the education policy interpreted in No Child Left Behind as based essentially within the vein of school reform. To generalize these policy implementations embrace families and communities from the “agenda” of the school leaving suspect the inclusiveness of the aspirations and goals for families or communities in the bargain. Auerbach (2012) criticizes this view of participation as undermining of the authenticity of these partnerships. “This raises question about who sets partnership agendas and what counts as family and community involvement (pp. 30, 31).”

Lutz & Merz (1992) discuss school and community partnership through the lens of politics and relationships between schools and their communities.<sup>4</sup> The authors cite two trends of the past half century that have served to undermined a consistently responsive relationship between the governance of public schools by their elected boards and the values of the communities served. Consolidation of school districts has distanced school board members from increasing numbers of constituents. And, the diversity of values of constituents within communities (in particular urban communities) distance board members further. An issue raised here considers the widening gap between board members and the larger and more diverse communities they serve, the capture of school policy and priorities by special interests (local or national perhaps), that may further undermine the traditional linkages of schools with their local neighborhood communities (p. 10). The authors discuss “site-based” school governance as a response to the dissatisfaction of local communities. This devolution of centralized governance of school districts has its historic precedence. “Public education began in colonial America as site-based, community controlled schools. No colonist could have imagined it otherwise (p. 146).” Lutz & Merz find the political motivations behind school and public relations rhetoric to function as a form of damage control especially when pertaining to school performance and reform.

The purpose of a good school/community relations program is to avoid extended dissatisfaction. .... it is not necessary to “satisfy” each group (active and potential) making demands for resources. It is necessary to prevent things from

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<sup>4</sup> The authors critical assessment of school governance is that of a strategic response to political pressures on school boards and leadership to be responsive to a variety of dissatisfied constituents’; all the while protecting the professional functioning of public school education. In this way the rhetoric of partnership can flourish without bringing real change within the school and district.

becoming dissatisfying enough to disrupt the normal function of schools. (Lutz & Merz, 1992, p. 152)

### **School, Family, Community Partnerships**

Throughout the 1980's Dr. Joyce L. Epstein, a sociologist by training focuses on the family system and the impact of parents on the success of children in school and life in general. Her contribution to the literature has helped to establish if not direct the partnership discourse. As director of the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University her contribution continues to be significant and evolving. It is interesting to note that Epstein frames her discourse in the language of "connections" in her earlier work. Her mission and praxis is clear from the opening sentence of *School and Family Connections: Theory, Research, and Implications for Integrating Sociologies of Education and Family*.

All the years that children attend school, they also attend home. The simultaneous influence of schools and families on students is undeniable, but too often ignored in research and in practice... [and in the second paragraph her focus is clear]...Most schools leave it up to families to decide whether and how to become involved with their children's schools...[revealing the principle strategy]...schools are changing their laissez-faire practices concerning the family by designing and conducting programs to help more families become "knowledgeable partners" in their children's education. (Epstein, 1990, p. 99)

Epstein's framework is grounded in her theoretical discussion of the "overlapping sectors of influence": school, family and community; and in some of her earlier literature the peer group is included. This piece on connections outlines five types of parent involvement of which Type 5 cites: "parent involvement in governance and advocacy"; i.e. in decision making roles "at the school, district, or state level (p.114)."

In a paper presented at the Milken Family Foundation's National Education Conference held in Los Angeles, California in March of 1993, Epstein outlines the praxis of the framework of school and family partnerships in her paper entitled *Theory to Practice: School and Family Partnerships Lead to School Improvement and Student Success*. The prologue suggests a sociological lens to "thinking about schools, families and communities." In addition, in discussing the conceptualization of the term "partnership" she finds "...the institutions share the major responsibilities for children's education and development and that all -- school, family and community [institutions]— are needed to support children as students." Clarifying the responsibilities of community in partnership with public schools Epstein outlines:

The term makes room, too, for community groups, individuals, agencies and organizations to work with schools and families to invest in the education of children whose futures affect the quality of life of the community, of the family, and of the child. (Epstein, 1993, p. 39)

Epstein reprises her theoretical model of Overlapping Sectors of Influence in anchoring the strategy of partnership across the institutions of school, family and community.

The sectors of influence on children's learning and development include the family and the school, or, in full form, the family, school, community and peer group. The sectors can, by design, be pushed together to overlap to create an area for partnership activities, or pushed apart to separate the family and school based on forces that operate in each environment. (Epstein, 1993, p. 40)

This philosophy of partnering families and communities with schools is consistent throughout the literature by and about Epstein's model. The metaphor is powerful as a comprehensive praxis about schools and the civil dynamic in which they function as the model works in both a collaborative or segregated dynamic for as the 'sectors of

influence” are separated so too are the efforts of schools from their communities. Perhaps this reflects the norm of school systems as “buffered” or “closed” as suggested by Auerbach.

From the ‘sectors of influence’ concept flows the praxis for partnership presented as practices for partnering with families and communities outlined in *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. The Six Types of Involvement for Comprehensive Programs of Partnership are enumerated below:

1. Parenting: Help families establish home environments supportive academic success.
2. Communicating: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and the each student’s progress.
3. Volunteering: Recruit and organize parent help and support.
4. Learning at Home: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
5. Decision Making: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
6. Collaborating with the Community: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

(Epstein et al. 2002, p.14)

A valuable analysis by Henderson (et al. 2007) regarding the complexity of partnerships between school and family codifies this relationship. In a discussion entitled *Four Versions of Partnership*, they suggest this dynamic to manifest in four different levels of collaboration. The authors ask the question: “...what might a school look like that has created a genuine culture of school-family-community partnership, *and* has made

real progress toward high social and academic achievement for all students?” In framing their answer they offer this “rubric” as “four levels of achievement” for capturing the variations of this partnership dynamic: Partnership School; Open-Door School; Come-If-We-Call School; Fortress School. Henderson describes a Partnership School as engaging community in the follow ways:

- **Building Relationships:** building is open to community use and social services are available to families.
- **Linking to Learning:** community groups offer tutoring and homework programs at the school.
- **Addressing Differences:** PTA includes all families. Local groups help staff reach parents.
- **Supporting Advocacy:** There is a clear, open process for resolving problems. (note this criteria is school and student performance focused entirely)
- **Sharing Power:** staff works with local organizers to improve the school and neighborhood.

(Henderson et al. 2007)

It is important to note the emphasis of Epstein’s framework centers the trajectory of reform in the direction of the school and student performance; i.e. partnerships from parents, and communities, and as added above; peer groups are embraced in lieu of their contribution to the central purpose of educating and fully supporting the development of children. There are structural limits of the partnership as it is construed predominantly in one direction. Auerbach criticizes the SFCP model arguing that “the well documented position associated between family engagement and student achievement is now a taken for granted, commonsense aspect of education... However, if the focus is solely on raising achievement, partnerships are framed narrowly... (2012, p. 4).”



Involvement of parents is based on a set of assumption for public schools with U.S. based families and the place of education in the “American Dream” of upward mobility. The same set of assumptions by educators if projected upon globally based families, especially Mexican immigrant families, can set up a mix of disconnect between the families culture and expectation for their children and the place of public schooling in family life. Parent education courses as prescriptive interventions to engage parents in their child’s educational achievement runs the risk of projecting a sense of failure on the part of parents for the well-being of their children and project middle class white values at functioning Mexican family mores with the result of alienating parents and their children further. School administrators, teachers and program outreach specialists who engage parents with an open appreciation of the mores of the family, their expectation for their children oriented towards family, and their respectful deference for the teacher and school as a revered professional environment a collaborative and promising dialog can occur to the benefit of all concerned (Jacobson, 2005; Pena, 2000; Valdes, 1996).

The SFCP framework may be flawed, or perhaps entrenched in the traditions of public education as an institution. None-the-less there are school administrators, researchers and policy practitioners who in the desire to fulfill the model strive to engage communities more inclusively. These innovations are perhaps the gist of the story behind the Community Schools movement.

### **The Community Schools Model**

The Community Schools framework recasts school reform embracing a comprehensive community system model placing the school, and all its resources, in the center of a community’s ecology. The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) has

created through the research arm Coalition for Community Schools (CCS) a vital resource for the praxis of partnership between schools and communities. Michael Usdan, at IEL, reconfirms the teaching and learning mission of schools while placing the institution in the center of the social dynamic of communities. “Since the school has social penetration and community outreach unrivaled by any other institution, it is logical to expect it to play some role...not suggesting that the primary educational mission of schools should be compromised. Rather, we are suggesting that there is a need for new financial, governance and program partnerships between schools and community groups (Jehl et. al. 2001, p. i).” The vision statement of the Coalition for Community Schools (2003) is significant in outlining an interdependent form of partnership with benefits to students, families, schools, community and civil society as well.

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between school and community. It has an integrated focus on academics, youth development, family support, health and social services, and community development. Its curriculum emphasizes real-world learning through community problem solving and service. By extending the school day and week, it reaches families and community residents. The community school is uniquely equipped to develop an educated citizenry, to strengthen family and community, and to nurture democracy in the twenty-first century. (Coalition for Community Schools, 2003, p.3)

Harkavy and Blank (2002) cite policy provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind, 2001) regarding a “realistic view of what it will take to educate all children to succeed as workers, family members, neighbors, and citizens.” They highlight a more comprehensive view brushed aside by the focus on “high stakes testing.”

High academic standards, aligned tests, clear incentives, and strong professional development are important, but they're not sufficient to meet the lofty goal of educating all children to their full potential. Extensive research and experience

confirm what common sense suggests: What happens outside the classroom is every bit as important as what happens inside. (Harkavy and Blank, 2002, p. 1)

From this vision statement follows the Guiding Principles for Community Schools of the community schools logic model.<sup>5</sup> *Community Schools: Promoting Student Success; A Rational and Results Framework* puts forth a set of “principles” reprised here:

- Foster strong partnerships: Partners share their resources and expertise and work together to design community schools and make them work.
- Share accountability for results: Clear, mutually agreed-upon results drive the work of community schools. Data helps partner’s measure progress toward results.
- Set high expectations for all: Community schools are organized to support learning. Children, youth, and adults are expected to learn at high standards and to be contributing members of their community.
- Build on the community’s strengths: Community schools marshal the assets of the entire community—including the people who live and work there, local organizations, and the school.
- Embrace diversity: Community schools know their communities. They work to develop respect and a strong, positive identity for people of diverse backgrounds and are committed to the welfare of the whole community.

(Coalition for Community Schools, 2003, p.6)

In a thought piece entitled *The Community Agenda for America’s Public Schools* produced by IEL a “double bottom line” is established recognizing the interdependence of schools and communities (Blank, 2008, p. 1). Rural schools, too, play a central role in

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<sup>5</sup>The Logic Model Development Guide: Using Logic Model to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation and Action defines the process “as a picture of how your organization does its work – the theory and assumptions underlying the program. A program logic model links outcomes (both short- and long-term) with program activities/processes [i.e. initiatives and outputs] and the theoretical assumptions/principles of the program (W. K. Kellogg, 2004/1998, p. III).”

their communities, perhaps even more so as economic dynamics have played out on rural communities in recent decades. Strategies of the school as community center, community as a primary source of curriculum and engagement, and schools taking on community development projects are productive examples of the community schools model (Miller, 1995).

### **Benefits of School-community Partnerships**

Diana Hiatt-Michael advances the School, Family, Community Partnership model in the collection of monographs entitled *Promising Practices to Connect Schools with the Community*. The series of monographs, published in 2003 under the sponsorship of the American Educational Research Association, cite efforts of school districts throughout the nation innovating towards the goals of NCLB. The collection highlights emerging practices that link communities and schools re-creating the school as “a hub for services to children, youth, and families (p. 2).”

Examples of successful community school models are cited including: the Van Horn High School, Kansas City, Mo. established a School/Neighborhood Advisory Committee under state support through the Caring Communities Initiative. In house social services to the community include a health clinic, family counseling, and work force development personnel. The impact of the community services model at Van Horn “reach far beyond the school to help create families and neighborhoods that are safe, supportive, and engaged... [as]... parents and community members play a major role in Caring Communities’ content and direction.” Blank reports that the community established a community development organization (CBO) “enabling the community to seek new revenue sources and expand its agenda (2003, p. 11).”

Dryfoos (2002) study tells of the Quitman Street Community School “able to transform itself from a troubled place to a well-functioning full-service community school.” His examination of the exemplary work of The Children’s Aid Society operating as a CBO which manages the “settlement house in a school” model funded by the Prudential Foundation as the Children’s Aid Society. The services offered include: extended day education; mentoring and various youth development activities in sports, the arts, and adult education; a primary health care clinic; parent engagement inclusive of ‘coffee klatch’, GED education, recreation, cultural activities, and technical support; community work inclusive of playground improvements, street and graffiti cleanup, housing and transportation initiatives; and a variety of trips and experiences out of the neighborhood. Positive outcomes of student achievement, social and emotional wellness, staff development and engagement, and improved governance through convening monthly meetings for core partners are exemplary benefits of this community school (2003, pp. 36 – 40).

In a number of research reports produced over the last few years by the CCS the benefits of the model appear to align and perhaps surpass the goals established for the SFCP model. The *Community Schools Research Brief* (2009) summarized the mutual benefits to schools and communities including: more effective and efficient use of school buildings; improvement in neighborhood safety; increased pride in community; and stronger relations between residents, the school and students; increased attendance and retention; economic and social stability to the benefit of families and communities alike; and improved relationships between community agencies, the business sector, and civic organizations (p. 3).

Research calculating the return on investment (ROI) and cost effectiveness of the community schools model, as produced from the Finance Project in partnership with the Children’s Aid Society (Martinez; Hayes, 2013), calculates the financial benefit to schools and communities. This finding is summarized in the most recent *Community Schools Results* analysis published by the Coalition for Community Schools and reprised in its entirety here:

- Community schools blend and leverage funding. A study of community school initiatives and individual schools found that district dollars leverage community resources at a minimum rate of 1:3. A bulk of their resources directly assists schools in meeting their core instructional mission, while also strengthening the health and well-being of students, families and neighborhoods.
- A social return on investment study of Children’s Aid Society Community Schools found that every dollar spent returns between \$10.30 and \$14.80 of social value.
- A cost-benefit analysis conducted by Communities in Schools found that every dollar spent returns \$11.60 of social value. (Coalition for Community Schools, 2013)

Calculating the benefits of the community schools model in financial terms and suggesting the return to exceed 1000% of value in individual and community well-being for every dollar spent on school and community programs and services would appear to be a ‘good sell’ for the expansion of the model as a framework for community practices.

### **Roles of Teams, Councils, and Leaders**

Epstein et al., (2002) reprise the model for Action Teams for Partnerships (ATP) making the case that all parties interested in student achievement and success have a role to play in building partnerships. The membership of an ATP begins with school

principals considered “essential [as] they support and guide the ATP’s connections to the School Council, or similar body.” Many responsibilities are cited internal to school personnel and the governing councils however, one external responsibility stands out. Principals “work with community groups and leaders to locate resources that will enrich the curriculum and help students, teachers and parents in important ways (p. 91).” Team coordination is understood to be a full time commitment as the literature supports assignment of a coordinator. With an ATP, teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and others can work together to connect family and community involvement with school improvement goals.

The ATP functions as the “action arm or committee of the School Improvement Team or School Council.” The framework of the SFCP model advocates the strategy of engaging parents in shared decision-making, and collaboration with the community as a type of involvement strategy. The model is less clear as to strategies of school governance or community governance. This may be a blind spot of the SFCP model and school based reform efforts generally. As Senge et al. (2000) exposes the influence of “artifacts... [of]...the industrial age heritage of schools...[which lead to assumptions that]...learning takes place in the classroom, not in the world...[and that]...schools are run by specialists who maintain control (pp. 27 – 52).” These underlying assumptions’ may undermine collaborative partnership, and shared governance between schools, families and community actors.

The Community Schools approach pushes the balance of decision making of the school agenda to be inclusive of the aspirations of communities stakeholders and agencies engaging with the school system. The Coalition for Community Schools (2011)

publication on ‘scaling up’ the model establishes that: “School site leaders ensure that implementation (of internal policy) satisfies local needs, aligns with the school’s academic mission, and generates practice knowledge and data to inform improvements in community-wide policy and site practice.” The strategic placement of a variety of youth development, health and welfare, work force and adult education activities within the infrastructure of the school engages community agencies in more fully realized partnerships in achieving community development outcomes. Informal collective action becomes formal in the shape of “intermediary” agencies. As program innovations of these partnerships evolve, and the need for a representative structure develops, decision-making relationships comprised of internal school actors, residents, and agency representatives external to the school can be secured and more fully represented. Leader/Coordinators convene school and community partners, facilitate strategic planning, assuring that engaging community partnerships positively affects students, families, and education practitioners at their school sites (2011, p.13).

Impetus for CS partnership can also come from agencies completely external to the school and district (public, private, nonprofit). An exemplary effort of the United Way of Central Indiana, in collaboration with the Indianapolis Public Schools, seeks to address a variety of challenges both community and educationally based in and around the city of Indianapolis, Indiana. “In 1991, a United Way executive and a school superintendent looked at the problems facing children, families and schools in their city, and they envisioned the Bridges to Success Initiative, a strategy for creating community schools.” An update publication *Doing What Matters* (2004) summarizes the “involvement of a strong intermediary...like United Way...for developing initiatives to



get started...help attract key stakeholders and the diversified funding necessary ...[and]...have much of the in-house expertise necessary to staff and lead beginning efforts (Melaville, 2004, pp. 11, 12).”

Principals are “essential” to the success of school based ‘teams in organizing, implementing and evaluating the work towards the goals of the school and community partnership (Epstein et al., 2002, p. 34; Epstein, 2011, p. 583). As school system leaders principals are challenged in building capacity internally through modeling, training, and accountability of teachers and staff in the sustained implementation of the values, mission, and practices of the community schools partnership processes. The NCLB Act challenges that school leadership and parents draft a compact ensuring “all students reach academic achievement standards, processes for staff-parent communication, ways parents can provide and support learning (Ferguson 2005, p. 1).”

The Coalition for Community Schools, in partnership with the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals, coalesce the following set of strategies.

1. Know Where You’re Going: visioning and planning inclusive of a diversity of stakeholders in partnership with the school staff, families and in the community; and that the vision, goals and objectives are broadly owned.
2. Share Leadership: with partners who share the vision and bring resources, expertise and accountability; and deliberately with staff, families and community in achieving goals.
3. Reach Out: listen, engage, and become visible throughout the community acting with integrity in support of their partnerships and the shared mission of the school and community.

4. Don't Ignore the Elephant in the Room: addresses issues of race and class as strengths and opportunities for honest conversation, planning, and partnering.
5. Tell Your School's Story: using data and narratives to engage and grow partnerships throughout the community; building political will and support for school efforts.
6. Stay on Course: engage those partnerships that are aligned with the vision, goals and objectives of the community school partnership; assess progress regularly and focus on long-term sustainability. (Berg et. al., 2006, p. ES4)

Chrispeels (2004) establishes that as principals share leadership their schools become open environments for engaging students and their parents. As challenging as it may seem for principals to adopt shared decision making and empowerment strategies, it appears possible and promising "...to engage in inclusive, transformative practice...promoting inclusive cultures and practices in schools, and building positive relationships outside of the school may indeed form a new form of practice (Riehl, 2000, p. 71)" As Jacobson (2011) states in *Principal Leadership*:

Without question, the support of the principal is key to the success of community schools. A principal must acknowledge that his or her school belongs to the greater community and welcome the resources that partners can offer when those resources are aligned with the school's mission and goals. And those goals should go beyond the academic development of students to incorporate other aspects of a young person's development: health, social and emotional growth, and civic responsibility. (Jacobson, et al., 2011)

District and State Administrators, too, are essential in their influence and implementation of school reform policy and accessing external resources, technical and financial, down through their respective state and local school agencies (Sanders, p. 36). Recent and current impact of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers policy is a significant example (Henderson, p 206-207). Put directly by Epstein: "State and district

leaders play important roles in determining whether and how well schools develop and maintain successful programs of family and community involvement (2002, p. 263).” The praxis of the model, of engaging parents as a strategy for improving education outcomes, has direct implications for education policy and implementation through the state and down into local districts and schools with significant impact (Epstein, 2011, pp. 299 - 351).

Blank et al. (2011) summarized the variety of agency leaders that are to embrace the community schools partnership model if it is to be sustainable: “Community-wide leadership (e.g., school districts, government, United Way chapters, businesses, community- and faith-based organizations) are responsible for the overall vision, policy, and resource alignment (p.13)” Epstein, Galindo & Sheldon (2011) find that “district leadership is a vital resource for schools to improve teaching and learning” and recommends establishing a “district leader for partnerships... (p. 26).”

To summarize about leadership it appears that as responsibility for the implementation and achievement of community schools partnerships is shared across all levels of school and community actors and agencies, so too are the “acts of leadership” from any one member of the team, organization, and engaged community agencies (Denhardt, 2004). Leadership is by necessity to come from “all levels”, “cross boundaries” within the school, district, and throughout the community; i.e. “community leaders; leaders on the ground; leaders in the middle (Blank et al., 2006, p.vi).” Trends in the literature on leadership regarding collaboration leadership (Chrislip & Larson, 1994) and networking strategies of governance (Goldsmith & Eggers, 2004; Henton et al., 2004) support this finding. Perhaps Auerbach (2012) puts it right in her observation

regarding partnerships within community school initiatives to be at their democratic and social zenith if “authentic”.

Authentic partnerships are defined as respectful alliance among educators, families, and community groups that value relationship building, dialogue across difference, and sharing power in pursuit of common purpose in socially just, democratic schools (Auerbach, 2010). Such collaborations go beyond the limited type of partnerships typically seen in North American schools and beyond managerial approaches to leadership for partnerships that control and contain outside stakeholders (Auerbach, 2012 p.5).

### **Summary: School-community Partnerships**

A great deal has been suggested at the internal, micro level of analysis regarding schools and their partnerships with communities that can be productive to both institutions. The review moved from the internal to the external lens of analysis engaging the community in the business of the schools, and schools participating in the processes of community building. Considerations at the macro level of analysis include the larger political economy issues of race, class, equity and access; which have been suggested in the criticisms concerning the schools, social justice and civil society. Underlying the entire discourse has been the societal challenges of the public realities of public schools and the social, economic and political milieu in which they serve, receive funding, and in more recent times are motivated by public policy.

Families’ partnership internal to schools and external to the larger community values is clearly a primary concept. Cultural values within the family structure and parents’ sense as to their own place in their children’s lives, the administration of schools, and the greater community is a primary determinate as to their level of partnership. Where school administrators “reject deficit-based views of diverse families” and encourage family members for their assets and abilities, and offer resources for their own

interests and developments community school partnerships have positive effects throughout the system of change; students, schools and communities (Ferguson et al., 2008; Cooper et al., 2010).

In this way a culture of engagement can be manifest throughout a school and community system that has at its foundation an ethos of relationship building. Ferguson et al. (2010) outlines the relationship strategy as a “...focus on building trusting and collaborative relationships...address families needs as well as class and cultural differences...embracing a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared (p. 13).”

### **The Centrality of Schools in Community Development**

School-community partnership strategies of shared decision-making and resource development are observed to be parallel with those outlined in the community practices literature. Similarly, capacity building and governance ideas have become more fully understood through research and discussed as best practices in the literature of SFC and CS. Many community development practices engaging inclusive strategies for governance and resource development have become strategies in the implementation of school community partnerships. Sanders (2006) finds that shared decision making anchors the processes of school reform, shift of culture, and engagement of community governance for the community school model to become institutionalized in the school community environment (pp. 25 – 27).

Keith (1996) recommends capacity building strategies supported by research and practice in community schools which suggests the framework that evolved during the Principal’s tenure (2003 – 2010) at Promesa Primary. Opening the school to the

community invites the community to open itself to the school through a variety of strategies. These strategies include: a) assets based assessment of community priorities and strengths, b) an internal strategy of engaging parents in a classroom or school wide project, c) bringing students out into the community for a variety of experiential learning opportunities, d) or community providers who can bring activities into the school, and e) engaging service providers into school facilities and opening the school as a center for community activities (p. 261).

Henderson (2011) extends the capacity building theme in a recent research finding for collaborative strategies to advance the community schools model. This work codifies three directions the SFCP model has evolved inclusive of school and community based efforts, parent and family engagement, and as referred to in his study “wrap-around social and community services programs.” The Executive Summary establishes that “more infrastructure and capacity-building are needed at the state and district levels to support, evaluate, replicate and report on this work.” This research is summarized in the suggested strategies for ‘scaling up’ the community and schools partnership model.

1. At the local level: Build capacity in schools.
  2. At the school district level: Work collaboratively on policies and practices.
  3. At the state level: Provide opportunities for dialogue and offer technical assistance.
  4. At the national level: Promote research-based strategies on SCF partnerships.
- (Melaville et al., 2011)

In the publication entitled *Scaling Up School and Community Partnerships* Melaville et al. (2011) advocate for a comprehensive “system building” approach.

Strategies that fully align themselves with community building practices; i.e. sustaining capacity building, shared purposes and partnerships appear to be more robust in their success in implementing the community school partnership model.

Chung (2002) extends the premise of orienting school community partnerships in community development practices reframing school assets as “unrealized community development capital (p. 37).” Chung appears to present the more robust assessment of the community schools partnerships frameworks from the vantage point of urban planning offering important contributions to the community and schools development discourse. Her conclusions are instructive and reprised as follows:

- Public schools and neighborhoods are inherently linked.
- There is an urgent national need to repair and build public schools.
- Public schools are points of entry for community-based developers to practice comprehensive community development.
- Placing public schools in a broader community development context has many implications, including the creation of a new community based developer.
- Focusing on a shared mission fosters a relationship between stakeholders and produces win-win outcomes.
- Reinforcing the link between public schools and communities is not only good education policy, but also good community-development policy and practice (Chung, 2002, p. 37)

Chung (2005) advocates establishing competitive grants to encourage the use of public schools in comprehensive community development as good policy. Land use, in fill development, reuse and joint use of facilities; and innovative financing policies require intergovernmental coordination inclusive of schools and stakeholders throughout the community. Federal government policy needs to go beyond school achievement

standards and reform initiatives to encourage funding which can "...link public schools to a broader community development context (Chung, 2005, p. 34)."

Houston (2010) drives this point finding that "...schools have long been at the physical center of communities, and they have also occupied the social and psychological center. Through our society has changed dramatically, the school still stands and it could be used as a magnet for creating a more vibrant "village" (p. 131)." Peter Senge (2001) challenges "...until we go back to thinking about school as the totality of the environment in which a child grows up, we can expect no deep changes. Change requires a community—people living and working together, assuming some common responsibility for something that's of deep concern and interest to all of them, their children (p.22)."



## METHODOLOGY

This study engaged principle actors in the Barrio Promesa community development and school-community partnerships story. A case study was applied as the method of inquiry. Forty actors were approached for consideration as interviewees. Thirty interviews took place over all. Follow up with actors occurred as needed for further explanation or additional information. The Actors and Data Collection documents the process, and is offered in the appendix. Additionally, a variety of reports, news articles, socio-economic and demographic data was collected. The whole of the data is applied in responding to the four interview questions as presented in Chapter Four, Findings. The analysis of initiatives unique to Barrio Promesa are compared to the literatures of community development and school-community partnerships providing a mix of considerations and strategies in the praxis of community development and school-community partnerships discussed in Chapter Five, Summary and Discussion.

The research questions are stated once again for immediate reference.

1. What were the main demographic, economic, social and educational realities of Barrio Promesa In the period 1998 to 2010?
2. What development initiatives were undertaken in the neighborhood during this time period and what were the roles played by the key actors?
3. What have been the most significant challenges and accomplishments regarding leadership, collaboration, resources, inclusiveness, and sustainability of those initiatives?
4. What lessons can be drawn from the Barrio Promesa story for further research, policy and practice in community development and school-community partnerships?

## **Features of This Case Study**

The structure and methodology of qualitative case study analysis proved to be a good fit for exploring the complex and overlapping realities of development initiatives and partnerships within Barrio Promesa. The literature on case study method offers a set of considerations applied in this study to ensure efficacy in the research process for valid and useful findings to be achieved. Stake (1995) outlines the method applied in this case study. On a macro level, he explains the process to include: a commitment to interpretation; organization of data around the issues that surface; use of stories in explicating these complexities; concerns for ethics such as violation of privacy; and addressing the idea of generalization he suggests the researcher “aim toward a naturalistic generalization (p. xiii).” As a framework for this study the following features for case study research as outlined by Stake (2008) are applied as presented below.

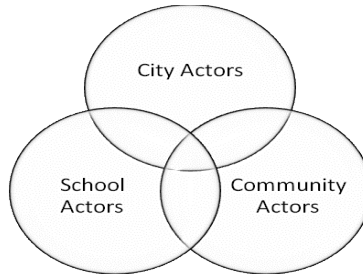
- a. Bounding the case, conceptualizing the object of study;
- b. Selecting phenomena, themes, or issues (i.e. the research questions to emphasize);
- c. Seeking patterns of data to develop the issues;
- d. Triangulating key observations and bases for interpretation;
- e. Selecting alternative interpretations to pursue; and
- f. Developing assertions or generalizations about the case

(Stake, 2008 p. 141)

### **Bounding the Case, and Conceptualizing the Object of Study**

There appear to be natural boundaries; geographic, temporal and intrinsic to this case. Barrio Promesa is bounded by major arteries, which served as well to sequester the area in a variety of ways including demographics, business, housing, transportation, education and city services. The period for this study addresses initiatives beginning with

the Rental Renaissance Program thru what appears to be a turning point with the onset of the recent Great Recession, significant political and policy events regarding immigration, and phenomena internal to actors and agencies. Actors' impacting the development initiatives of the neighborhood come from three primary sectors of influence: city, school and civil society.



*Figure 1. Sectors of Initiatives.*

Stake advances the following considerations in giving structure to the boundaries of the case (2005, p. 447) which are to be applied in this exploration:

***Nature and activities of the case.*** It appears that there are at least three threads of inquiry in understanding the development events in the Barrio Promesa Including the engagement of a variety of city agencies and council leadership in the development milieu; the evolution of the elementary school; the evolution of business and civil society agencies as to development initiatives.

***History of the case for background and context.*** Archival news coverage of events and concerns in the community as well as notes from the neighborhood alliance, school board meetings, and a variety of statistical data from the city and census data will provide background and context. This data in triangulation with the data compiled

through the interviews and should help to secure an understanding of the history and present context of development initiatives.

*Environment and physical setting.* Barrio Promesa is bordered by major streets that bound the neighborhood. The social, economic and political challenges of the community; inclusive of a variety of urban social and economic issues, had earned the neighborhood the unfavorable inference of an urban environment rife with a variety of crime, transient, and blight concerns, as “The Block.”

In this case study it is possible to observe the interplay of economic, legal, political, educational, social and cultural contexts. These and other challenges surface development and public policy questions regarding property rights, poverty and work force, health and welfare, youth programs and education, crime and juvenile crime, immigration politics and policy, adult and civics education.

*Actors of significance “through whom the case can be known.”* There are varieties of actors in either formal or informal positions initiating the interventions influencing Barrio Promesa that can offer significant stories of the development and partnership efforts in the neighborhood. These include the primary school principal, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant manager, the school district superintendent, a select group of business leaders, nonprofit social welfare and faith based agencies, and a select group of city agency personnel. Selecting the right actors has proven to be an imperative to the integrity of this study.

### **Selecting Phenomena, Themes or Issues**

My purpose in undertaking this study was to explore what, why and how development events have come about in the Barrio Promesa community, paying

particular attention to stories of successes and failures. In the process of understanding the uniqueness of these initiatives useful questions and generalizations are anticipated which can serve to enhance the praxis of community development and school-community partnerships. Questions, which pose useful criteria as “foreshadowed problems and issues (Stake, 2006, p. 10) are likely to positively impact the findings in this study include: leadership style and practices, efforts towards collaboration and shared decision making, access and allocation of resources, inclusivity of all stake holders, and the sustaining of initiatives. Secondary issues for consideration include community engagement and empowerment given the context of immigrant life and immigration policy impacts.

Applying the interpretive process of Eisenhardt (1989) and the iterative process as recommended by Stake (2008) uncovered additional phenomena that proved useful in achieving the primary goals for this inquiry. New lines of inquiry and issues did arise regarding immigration, juvenile/gang crime, and community governance requiring additional research and interviews.

### **Seeking Patterns of Data to Develop the Issues**

At the time of approval of this study the process for the acquisition and analysis of data was established. A consistent routine of archiving and triangulation of data was essential in the process of developing the validity of issues, assertions and in the final analysis generalizations useful to the field of community development and school community partnerships. An effort to establish a logic that brings rigor to the study evolves from Mason’s (1996, p. 24) rubric for qualitative analysis linking research questions to data resources with consideration of the processes of triangulation to assure

integrity and validity, interpretation and iteration to surface assertions and generalization, and the ethical issues concern protection of subjects.

*Table 1*  
Case Study Rubric

Research Questions: 1 - 4	data: interviews, reports, press	triangulation: integrity and validity	interpretation/ iteration: assertions, generalizations	ethical issues: protection of subjects
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### **Triangulating Key Observations and Bases for Interpretation**

This study applies the interpretive and iterative processes of case study analysis in triangulating these stories and other sources of data (i.e. socio-economic data and a variety of agency reports); and comparing the unique developmental events of Barrio Promesa with the best practices in the field. The methodology of triangulating data brings integrity to the process of exploration, reconstruction and possible findings for this study. Eisenhardt explains the process as an “iterative process” between the data/cases revealed and the question/theory being examined. She finds comparing the emergent concepts, theory, or hypothesis with the various literatures to be a vital feature of the case study process (1989, pp.548 – 549). Bassey (1999, pp. 62, 63) elevates case study as the exercise of “reconstruction” of experience and events and cites three primary purposes in the research method as: theory seeking and testing; story telling and picture drawing; and evaluation.

Stake advocates the embrace of the “tension that exists between the case itself and the academic discipline to which the research is to deliberate.” He suggests this tension as purposeful as it is structurally embedded in case study inquiry. He advises the researcher

to “place your best intellect into the thick of what is going on” as the “brain work” is observational and interpretive (2005, pp. 448 – 450).

According to Yin, specific processes of case study include the gathering of “multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion... [therefore]...benefiting from the prior theoretical propositions [as discussed in the reviews of the literature] to guide data collection and analysis.” He finds case study inquiry to cross many purposes of evaluation in research including explanation of causality in complex interventions; description, illustration and exploration of such interventions, or as a meta-evaluation process. Case study inquires into “phenomenon within its real-life context (2003, pp. 12 - 15).”

### **Selecting Alternative Interpretations to Pursue**

The interpretive nature of case study may uncover forces at play at the macro level of analysis that impact the neighborhood directly. These macro-forces become possible “working hypothesis” (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 38) which may affect the interpretation of the data and resulting findings. For example there are a variety of public policies at the city, state, and national level of analysis that have impacted the Barrio Promesa story. A few examples of underlying macro forces include the impact of the NCLB Act in establishing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program at the elementary school, and immigration policy at the state and federal level. Lastly, as the temporal boundary implies, the onset of the recent Great Recession may have had real impacts on development and partnership events within Barrio Promesa.

## **Developing Assertions or Generalizations**

It is the intent of this study that the insights gleaned from exploration into the Barrio Promesa case will lend useful generalizations and contributing to the theory and practice of community development and school-community partnerships. Stake (2008) argues for the validity of case study findings as the “epistemology of the particular” summarizing that the “...utility of case research to practitioners and policy makers is in its extension of experience (p.142).” Case study analysis is chosen precisely because of the circular/evolving give and take of experiences, relationships, and the “experiential knowing” that takes place in the mix. Eisenhardt (1989) supports the novelty embedded in case analysis stating that the “...theory developed from case study research is likely to have important strengths like novelty, testability, and empirical validity ... (pp. 547 - 549).”

Stake (1995) explains the process of coming to useful assertions; i.e. generalizations. “We study a case when it itself is of very special interest... [explaining further]...we look for the detail of interaction with its context (p. xi).” Gerring (2004) defines case study analysis as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units (p. 342).” Merriam (1998) describes the process as one of the “special features” of case study research. She comments “researchers are interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation” and quotes Cronbach (1975, p. 123) definition of case study as “interpretation in context” (pp. 28, 29).

Erickson (1986) finds for the centrality of interpretation in qualitative research “in which interpretive work is a creatively subversive activity (p. 158).” Simon (1996) embraces the interpretive practice of case inquiry with the contextual milieu from a



“holistic perspective” in stating: “What we have is a paradox, which if acknowledged and explored in depth, yields both unique and universal understanding (1996, p. 225).”

Adelman (et al. 1980, pp. 59, 60) understood these structural paradoxes and tensions of case study inquiry as a robust part of the process. Stake (2005) asserts the dynamic value in the process as “the more the object of study is a specific, unique, bounded system, the greater the usefulness of the epistemological rationales (p. 444).” He outlines the responsibility of investigators and the case analysis process in *The Art of Case Study Research*.

Contemporary views of research establish the responsibility of researchers to assist readers in arriving at high-quality understandings. The analysis and interpretations of researchers need to be paralleled by those of readers. For this, the researcher has an obligation to provide high-quality initiative for the readers’ study. If the importance of naturalistic generalization is accepted, the rules for analysis are preceded by rules for data gathering, which in turn are preceded by rules for preparing research questions, all taking the circumstances of the reader into consideration. (Stake, 1995, p. 88)

### **Protection of Social Actors**

Protection of social actors was clarified at the onset of the recruitment process with the guarantee of anonymity of subjects engaged in this study. Stake (2005) outlines the ethical obligations of the researcher in protecting the social actors interviewed. He elevates concern for the vulnerability of these voices willing to “risk exposure and embarrassment, as well as loss of standing, employment and self-esteem.” Stake implies a formality to the relationship of researcher and informant. “Something of a contract exists between researcher and the researched: a disclosing and protective covenant, usually informal but best not silent, a moral obligation (p. 459).”

Care was taken in this study so as not to reveal the location of the neighborhood or the identity of subjects interviewed for the study. The neighborhood of Barrio Promesa is fictional and the actors are noted only by their titles; i.e. Community Prosecutor Specialist, or (CPS) <sup>6</sup>. The process of triangulation to reports and press becomes problematic in citing and referencing these sources in honoring the covenant with subjects to protect their anonymity. For this reason, the name of Barrio Promesa is substituted in titles and only a generic citation is made in the process of validation; i.e. (Local Press, 2000). A more detailed list of references is available upon request and review of the purpose. The reader's participation and patience in the process of protecting the identity of confidants is appreciated.

### **Interview Process**

Eleven themes derived from the four research questions were applied as the basis for the question strategy. The strategy was vetted with the research committee and the International Review Board (IRB) assuring the protection of subjects engaged. Confidants consented to engage in the interview process as was secured verbally per the IRB requirements for social research designated as a low risk and therefore 'exempt' from more formal measures.

As confidants became comfortable with the ethics and appreciated the guarantee of anonymity the interview began with general contextual information as to actor's title, type of service, dates and general contextual information. This proved to be very useful contextual resource in understanding what confidants brought to the development and

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<sup>6</sup> For a detail of the acronyms of all participants see Appendix 1 (Actors and Data Collection).

partnership activities they engaged in. The original thirteen interviews proposed revealed the need to seek a wider mix of voices in order to understand the weaving of partnerships and development events revealed through the actors' testimonials. Thirty subjects were engaged in all in the case study process. The eleven themes derived from the research questions and the resulting prompts for the interview are presented here.

1. Barrio Promesa

What if any challenges did you perceive to be significant in Barrio Promesa during the years 1998 to 2010?

2. Activities

What community development initiatives would you consider significant to Barrio Promesa during the years 1998 through 2010?

3. Roles

What if any roles or responsibilities did you have in these initiatives? Did you feel that there were roles or responsibilities left unmet in development initiatives?

4. Challenges

What if any challenges were faced in the process of implementing development initiatives and what do you feel were the issues or possible causes?

5. Achievements

What if any achievements resulted for each development initiative and why do you feel these achievements to have been important? Were there any failures and if so why did you think so?

6. Leadership

Were there any leaders or acts of leadership that may have impacted these development initiatives for better or worse? What would you suggest were their strengths? Did you perceive any weaknesses regarding leadership?

7. Collaboration

What if any collaborations or partnerships took place in these initiatives? Were some of these partnerships positive or negative to the outcomes of development initiatives and if so why?

8. Inclusiveness/Exclusiveness

Were efforts made towards including all stakeholders within the neighborhood in the development dialog, decisions and implementation of initiatives? What kinds of inclusive activities took place? Were there voices in the community that did not participate in development initiatives, and if so why?

9. Resources

What kinds of resources were essential to each initiative and what were the sources for these resources? What are the challenges regarding resources?

10. Sustainability

Of the community development initiatives you consider significant which have been sustained over time? Are there particular achievements you note as indicators of this success? Are there development initiatives which have not been sustained, and what do you think are the reasons behind the demise of any particular efforts?

11. What lessons would you suggest are important as take-a-ways for development initiatives in the neighborhood going forwards, and what are the next steps you suggest to be taken?

**Summary: The Epistemology of Weaving Tapestry**

This study seeks to embrace the “challenges posed by qualitative research (Mason 1996)”, and in the particulars of this effort seek to understand “the art” of case study qualitative analysis (Stake 1995). Research as an ‘art’ intrigues as a good deal of my working life I have also engaged in the arts: the arts of teaching and learning; advocacy and administration for the arts; and a parallel career as a jazz musician. To study for the PhD in Philosophy of Public Administration has been an evolution of these two disciplines of teaching, and of making art through Jazz; for both engage the individual in balance with communities and as a result communitarian sensibilities.

As I search my own way of knowing the world, my personal epistemology, as an exercise in understanding my biases as a researcher it emerged that the underlying themes of my career are engaging people, evolving possibilities, and understanding the creativity within the limitations of context. Perhaps too, there is a drive for pushing beyond boundaries especially when the limits imposed seem arbitrary; i.e. to apply the Jazz philosophy of “the freedom within the structure.”<sup>7</sup> To embrace the tension of a disciplined yet creative endeavor that is particular to the context of the music, the classroom, the community and the persons engaged. Risking a generalization: I have embraced people, the processes, and the productive possibilities in each of the contexts above; not numerical generalizations, predictions and controls about real people, places and things. Being face to face in the moment of sense making in music, teaching, and now in community endeavors does not happen from an abstraction. Choosing to enter into the field through the lens of qualitative analysis is a natural evolution for this teacher and musician turned researcher.

In their overview of qualitative research Denzin & Lincoln (2005) surface “a series of tensions... between competing definitions and conceptions ...lodged within and outside the field.” Denzin and Lincoln argue in favor of qualitative research strategies that surface “multiple kinds of knowledge, produced by multiple epistemologies and methodologies, [that] are not only worth having but also demanded if policy, legislation, and practice are to be sensitive to social needs (p. xi).”

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<sup>7</sup> I first heard of this philosophy from a Jazz artist at a weekend festival in which I was fortunate to be performing at. The year was 1986. This seemingly paradoxical philosophy has informed my own way of being in the world of music; and life in general. Not to suggest myself to be a member of the avante garde.

Consideration of the tensions within and between the methodologies is echoed by Gabrielian (1999) in his review of the field. “Despite numerous attempts of classification of qualitative research methods there is no general consensus on the boundaries and contents of qualitative research methods, with some researchers even arguing against the fruitfulness of attempts to bring a taxonomy to such a diverse field.” The author sifts out of this eclecticism an orientation for the particular understanding the “primacy of concern being faithfulness to the situation (p. 178).” Usher (1997) adds that of “any one single theme that stands out above all others, it is that in the realm of social and economic research there is no single correct practice and no superordinate methodology... [and that]...far from being a sign of weakness, is rather a sign of difference at work...a matter of celebration and a mark of the sophistication and complexity of the process of social research (p. 1).”

In this way the interactive reconstructions of the uniqueness of events, the systemic nature of context, is embraced as a strength in seeking understanding, deriving knowledge from the details and subtleties in which researcher and reviewer engage. White (1999, pp. 3 - 5) moves beyond the retrenchment of quantitative method in his criticism of research specific to public administration commenting “the reconstructions [of qualitative methods] have the potential to significantly develop knowledge of public administration. As White reviews the current state of research in Public Administration he finds “many researchers in the field rely on qualitative research designs such as case studies, participant observation, field work, interviewing and action research. White comes to a conclusion that is highly supportive of qualitative praxis. “The effective solutions of ill-structured problems [i.e. real world problems with all their complexities]

involve a type of knowledge and action that is not captured in the positivist conception of science.” White generalizes across the qualitative methods of reconstructions as “fundamentally a matter of storytelling.” The author summarizes that “all research is fundamentally a matter of storytelling or narration” as he outlines his theory of knowledge as storytelling. The argument follows:

... language forms the bases for all of our knowledge of the world; recognizes the importance of three modes of research: explanatory, interpretive, and critical; each mode of research is fundamentally a different language game; that we engage in three forms of reasoning... instrumental, interpretive, and critical; validity of any type of research is fundamentally predicated on practical discourse; and pragmatic...that this knowledge may improve the way in which we practice [in public administration].  
(White, 1999, pp. 6 – 10)

Yin (2003) cites the existing uses of case study in exploratory inquiry and finds for the efficacy of the method in descriptive and explanatory purposes as well. Describing the past hierarchy of fields of inquiry as misconceptions he concludes “the more appropriate view of these different strategies is an inclusive and pluralistic one...there may be exploratory case studies, descriptive case studies, or explanatory case studies (2003, p. 2).” Solidifying this perspective Denzin & Lincoln (2008) comment regarding case study (as well other qualitative methods) in celebrating the eclecticism that the qualitative researcher may “deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand.”

Exploring the idea of ‘reconstructions’ in qualitative practice the authors evoke the imagery of the “quilt maker... the interpretive bricoleur [who] produces the bricolage—that is, a pieced together set of representations that is fitted to the specifics of a complex situation... (p. 5).” The authors evoke the metaphor of the montage as this

collective visual affect “uses brief images to create a clearly defined sense of urgency and complexity.” Denzin and Lincoln conclude:

In texts based on the metaphors of montage, quilt making, and jazz improvisation, many different things are going on at the same time—different voices, different perspectives, points of views, angles of vision...they move from the personal to the political, from the local to the historical and the cultural. These are dialogical texts. They presume an active audience. They create spaces for give-and-take between reader and writer.” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 7)

To these colorful metaphors I add the epistemology of weaving tapestry. The complexity of actions, agency initiatives, and events as told through the voices of the social actors are very much the woven threads of the whole image that forms the Barrio Promesa development and partnerships tapestry and in hearing these voices the wholeness of the tapestry can be better understood. I embrace this essential value of qualitative research evoking Stake’s finding for the method.

I claim that case studies will often be the preferred method of research because they may be epistemologically in harmony with the reader’s experience and thus to that person a natural basis for generalization...that it is reasonable to conclude that one of the more effective means of adding to understanding for all readers will be by approximating through the words and illustrations of our reports, the natural experience acquired in ordinary personal involvement (p. 5)...this method *has been* tried and found to be a direct and satisfying way of adding to experience and improving understanding. (Stake, 1978, p. 7)



## FINDINGS

This chapter reviews the findings as established in the sources of data gathered through the interviews, reports and local press. The themes and criteria culled from the research questions gave shape to the prompts used in the interview process.<sup>8</sup> The observations and statements from confidants are triangulated with the robust sources of data in seeking the highest level of accuracy and validity in the findings. In reporting the findings, I cite the primary sources of the information in text, and at the end of the paragraph I reference additional actors and data sources that confirm the particular information or perspective.<sup>9</sup>

The research questions are restated here as reference and organization for the four subsections of this chapter: 1) What were the main demographic, economic, social and educational realities of Barrio Promesa In the period 1998 to 2010?; 2) What development initiatives were undertaken in the neighborhood during this time period and what were the roles played by the key actors?; 3) What have been the most significant challenges and accomplishments regarding leadership, collaboration, resources, inclusiveness, and sustainability of those initiatives?; 4) What lessons can be drawn from the Barrio Promesa story for further research, policy and practice in community development and school-community partnerships?

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<sup>8</sup> Questions ranged across baseline observations of the neighborhood; development activities, challenges and achievements; the criteria of leadership, collaboration, inclusiveness, resources, and sustainability; and lessons and aspirations of confidants. The interview process was reviewed in Chapter 3 Methods.

<sup>9</sup> The schema applied in referencing actors formally by their title is applied though out the dissertation in keeping with my contract to protect the identity of subjects; i.e. the community prosecutor as cited becomes Community Prosecutor Specialist, or by abbreviation CPS. The appendix lists all actors by abbreviation and title.

## **Realities in Barrio Promesa, 1998 to 2010**

The summary of findings related to question one establishes a baseline understanding of the demographic, economic, social and educational realities in the neighborhood of Barrio Promesa, 1998 thru 2010. The dominant demographic trend is the Hispanic in-migration, particularly from Mexico, in the decade of the 1980s to the present. The effects of the Great Recession (December 2007 thru June 2008 <http://www.nber.org/cycles.html>) appeared to slow though not deter population influx as of the onset of the recession and is closely tied to the trend in major construction trades. The anti-immigration rhetoric and politics throughout the time line of this study, and the resulting immigration legislation in 2010, did not appear to deter the increase of in-migration from Mexico. The census data seems to support the transition of realities of the neighborhood as it became a barrio reflective of the dominant working class Hispanic culture.

### **Demographic Realities: Immigration Data**

According to the two census reports the neighborhood contracted a bit from 12,081 inhabitants to in 2000 to 11,385 in 2010. In 2000 6,250 Hispanic or Latino residents were accounted for in the census; 51.7% of the overall population of the neighborhood. In 2010 7,398 residents are counted in that census year as Hispanic or Latino, or 65% of the neighborhood population. By comparison 5,069/42% of the neighborhood population is counted as White in the 2000 census and 3,055/26.8 and of the population is counted as White Race in the 2010 census. Persons reported of other ethnic origins account for 782/6.3% in 2000 and 930/8.2% in 2010.

A long view of population dynamics as cited in the Weed and Seed Assessment (W&SA, 2007, p. 67) is telling regarding the trajectory of in-migration into the neighborhood as a rate of 40% is reported from 1990 to 2000 escalating to an increase of 281 % in the next ten years by 2010. By comparison the overall increase for the twenty years was reported as a 67% increase city wide, a rate of growth more in Barrio Promesa at more than four times the city rate in twenty years. The more recent American Community Survey, 2008 thru 2012, reveals further the trajectory of minority predominantly Hispanic population in reframing the overall population as 73.17% or 8330 residents out of a total population of 11,385 people.

There are valid reasons to suspect these official numbers to fall considerably short of the realities of in-migration of Mexican immigrants during the peak years of the housing boom prior to the onset of the Great Recession. This based on the understanding that those living as undocumented residents would make themselves invisible. As the Weed and Seed Assessment (W&SA, 2007) finds, "...immigrant populations are not fully counted in this neighborhood and are probably not always willing to be surveyed (p.4)." As one Community Action Officer commented: as the census agent knocks on the front door one person or couple comes to the front door and the remaining folks head out the back!

The average persons per household and per family reported in the 2000 census was figured to be 3.07 and 3.92 persons respectively. These figures are perhaps suspect for it is possible that among the working and impoverished Hispanic population multiple individuals and/or families shared domiciles. Per household data from GIS calculations reported 'severe overcrowding' as configured for the four tracts comprising the

neighborhood. Overall overcrowding was reported at 13.6% of the available housing in the neighborhood, and as high as 16.6% of the housing stock. This compares with an average rate of overcrowding citywide of 6.5%. (W&SA, 2007, p. 67)

Further reference to the migratory characteristics of the neighborhood can be discerned as 43.8% of those documented in the 2000 census reported that they were not in the U.S. in 1995, and the transient nature of the neighborhood revealed further as only 24.3% of the residents report being in the same house in 1995. In the 2000 census 37.4% of those queried self- reported as ‘not a citizen’. The statistics for ‘persons moved in’ as cited by the American Community Survey reveal an upward trajectory every decade since 1980 doubling each decade and nearly fivefold since 2005.

*Table 2*  
Persons Moved In

Persons Moved In	
Moved In (MI)	
MI - 2005 or Later	2733
MI - 2000 to 2004	599
MI - 1990 to 1999	273
MI - 1980 to 1989	101
MI - 1970 to 1979	48
MI - 1969 or Earlier	42

American Community Survey, 2007 – 2011

The data suggests that nearly half of the neighborhood counted in the 2000 census were quite possibly undocumented and 75% of the population transient in nature. Given the above criticism of the census process it is difficult to discern the realities of mobility and immigration on the neighborhood.

“Most demographic studies of the neighborhood fail to show the extremely transient nature of a large portion of its residents, many being migrants from Mexico...this segment of the community experiences recurring, sometimes

seasonal relocations. Such population movements contribute to the lower than average “length of stay” of the neighborhood residents when compared to both the surrounding area ...” (2007 Fight Back Proposal)

The trend towards a transient population in the neighborhood is supported by school mobility data. It is reported by several school agents that within the neighborhood primary school complex the turnover of the student population annually, i.e. the mobility rate within the school approached 90% churn of the student population in the early years of the decade and seems to have settled somewhat at 57% in the current school year of 2013/14.

As reported in the 2007 W&SA the trajectory of the shift in ethnicity from White (Non-Hispanic) to Hispanic is remarkable across the 1980, 1990 and 2000 census. Percentage of Whites in the neighborhood moved from 91% to 55%, and the percentage of minority population was negligible in 1980 and shifts to 44% by 2000. The minority population in that year was 34% Hispanic, and 5% Black and 5% Other. Estimates in the three years of the Assessment across 2004 thru 2006 suggest the “trend of Hispanics moving to the area probably increased to more than 56% by 2006. The trajectory continued as of the 2010 census where it was reported that 65% of the neighborhood population was Hispanic or Latino, and an increase of the White population to 26.8%.

### **Economic Realities: Income, Poverty, and Employment Data**

Income data as of the 2000 census reports that out of 3901 total households 1117 or 38.9% were at or below an income of \$25,000 annually. Average family income as reported for the 2000 census for the neighborhood is approximately \$29,000 less in the neighborhood at \$32,631 compared with \$61,483 city wide, and per capita income is similarly depressed reported at \$11,418 compared with \$19,833. The W&SA document

of 2007 summarizes family income status in this way and suggests a larger overall family structure in the neighborhood:

“...average family income was actually lower than their average household income, at \$32,631. This relationship is different citywide where the average family income was actually higher than the average household income. This finding shows that there are potentially less income wage earners per “family” than citywide. This is reinforced by the average per capita income levels shown where average per capita was \$11,418 versus the citywide average per capita of \$19,833. Therefore, there are probably many more children not earning a wage per “family” than the citywide rate. The citywide average per capita income is almost 74% higher...” (W&SA, 2007, p. 63)

In comparison the 2010 census reports that out of 3812 total households 1524/39.98% earned up to \$25,000 annually. Household income between the two census reports appears to be relatively flat and is found to be similar in the \$25,000-\$50,000 income bracket where 1636 households or 41.9% of households in 2000 and 1619 or 42.47% of households were reported in the 2010 census. What is telling in this data is the downward trajectory of the number of families reported to be moving below the poverty line in the ten years between the two censuses.

Summarizing data regarding poverty status as of the 2000 census of 2,500 families reported, 546 families or 21.8% were living in poverty. Of these families 519 had children under 18 years old and of school age. Assessing poverty at the individual level persons below the poverty level in 2000 census were 30% or 3595 persons in the barrio<sup>10</sup>. Comparatively in the 2010 census of 2410 total families accounted for 827 or 34.32% were reported to be living in poverty.

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<sup>10</sup> As defined by the U.S. Census, the poverty threshold for a family of four persons was \$17,029 in 1999. At that time, approximately 30% of the neighborhood’s population was living below the poverty threshold. This percentage was almost double the 1999 city average of 15.8%. (W&SA, 2007)

There would appear to be an increase of 279 families or 13.24% of all families living below the poverty line. Updating this statistic based on the 2008 through 2012 American Community Survey of 2365 families in total 1020 are reported to be living in poverty or 43.13% of the total family number. Given these statistics the trajectory of number of families and the percentages of families in poverty appear to have been increasing and more recently accelerating.

Occupation data in the census of 2000 reports 31.5% service, 24.9% sales and office, 15.7% construction extraction and maintenance, and 13.9% production, transportation and material moving. The 2007 W&SA summarize:

“...the most prevalent occupations are in the Service related category, nearly twice the rate in Services than the citywide percentage. Less than half the rate of Management, Professional and Related occupations are held by the Barrio Promesa residents compared to the citywide numbers [12/8 % /30.9%]. In fact, under the Industry’s category breakdown ... the primary industry for residents is in the “Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services” category with 16.3% ...” (W&SA, 2007, p. 64)

Employment/occupation data from the 2010 census echoes the preponderance of low wage, low skill jobs and income in the neighborhood. The presence of day workers (jornaleros) crowding neighborhood streets and businesses on the arterial streets was reported to be problematic for reasons of the safety and security. There were reports of men lined up three or four blocks deep into the neighborhood. Business owners complained that the workers presence deterred profits. The workers presence was reported as scary. Social habits of coin toss gambling, general loitering, and public urination exacerbated the problem. Business owners and some residents had been raising these concerns beginning late in the decade of the 1990’s. (Local Press, June 2003)

*Table 3*  
Employment and Occupation Data (2010 census)

INDUSTRY CLUSTER	NUMBER EMPLOYEES	NUMBER BUSINESSES
Retail Trade	649	39
Accommodation and Food Services	556	19
Construction	325	18
Educational Services	218	5
Health Care and Social Assistance	206	17
Other Services (except Public Administration)	201	20
Admin & Support & Waste Mgmt & Remed. Svcs	136	8
Transportation and Warehousing	119	4
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	80	6
Wholesale Trade	80	10
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	60	8
Finance and Insurance	48	3
Manufacturing	37	6
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	26	2
Information	7	1
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,753</b>	<b>167</b>

City Planning Department, Research Division

### **Economic Realities: Housing Data**

Housing tenure, considered a significant indicator of neighborhood stability, as assessed in 2000 reveals 1,175 or 30.1% of housing units were owner occupied and 2,731 or 69.9% of housing units were renter occupied. This ratio derived from a total housing stock of 3,906 units. There is little change in this ratio of owner occupied to renter occupied status over the decade of this study though increasing home ownership had been a high priority amongst development initiatives. In the 2010 census of a total of 3,639 housing units 1,044 or 28.69% were reported as owner occupied and 2,595 or 71.31% were designated as renter occupied.

There does however appear to be an alarming nearly fourfold increase in the number of vacancies. In the 2000 census 297 housing units were designated as vacant. In the following census 979 units were designated as vacant or 21.2% of the housing stock. ‘Alarming’ for as one city agent explained “open vacants” are an invitation for a variety



of blight and crime issues to take root in a neighborhood, and trend downward from there (NSD 3).

The housing stock of the barrio is dominated by mobile home parks and apartment complexes. Annexed by the city sometime in the mid-60s the neighborhood has its roots as a segment of the county that had been a working-class retiree community. The location was favored for its proximity to the regional recreation area just out of the metro area and urban congestion, yet close to the amenities of the city. The enclave had also been home to an annual in-migration of labor from Mexico as the surrounding cotton and citrus industries provided seasonal employment. From the late 1970's the trend of interior migration from the Mid-west and Northeast to the south-west given the climate, low cost of living and improving economic trajectory combined to fuel a building boom. This boom in construction provided a high level of demand for semi-skilled and skilled labor. Affordable rental housing was and is in plentiful supply in the neighborhood. Much of this rental stock available on a no documents/no contract/cash basis as reported by a variety of city, school district and community agents.

The Weed and Seed Assessment reports a significant shift in housing type and number across the decades of 1980 thru 2000. According to the report 90.6% of the structures in the neighborhood were built during the building boom of the 1970's and 1980's with residual construction in the 1990's: 1970's, 1,275 structures; 1980's, 2,038 structures; , and 1990's, 478 structures respectively of a total of 4,203 structures reported in the year 2000. In sum nearly 90% of the structures of the neighborhood were built before 2000 and 78% before the year 1990; i.e. most of the housing stock is 24 years or older. As summarized in the W&SA report:

“The neighborhood experienced a 212% increase in the number of housing units during the 20-year period between 1980 and 2000. Over that span, the number of single-family units increased by 162, multi-family units increased by 2,576, and mobile homes and other dwelling units (such as trailers) increased by 120. (p. 74).” Densities of units ranged from 14.5 dwellings to 29 dwellings per acre. (W&SA, 2007, p. 77)

*Table 4*  
Number and Type of Housing Units

Table D1.23: Number and Type of Housing Units						
	1980		1990		2000	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Single-family Homes	200	14.8%	322	7.8%	362	8.6%
Multiple-family Units	268	20%	2,820	67.7%	2,844	67.7%
Mobile Homes and Other	877	65.2%	1,020	24.5%	997	23.7%
Total Units	1,345	100.0%	4,162	100.0%	4,203	100.0%
Source: 1980 US Census, 1990 US Census, 2000 US Census						

City Planning Department, Research Division

As is evidenced by the American Community Survey (W&SA, 2007) data in the table above multiplex units dominate construction in the 1990’s and 2000’s. Of the 4773 total housing units recorded in the neighborhood, 717 are considered single family units (attached or detached), and 772 mobile homes were also counted as detached single family units. This totals 1489 units that could be considered as single-family housing. The remaining 3284 units are in multi unit dwellings. The density of housing stock favors a variety of multiplex apartments ranging from 3 to 20 or more units. This represents nearly 70% of the housing stock of the neighborhood with 2153 complexes above five or more units.

*Table 5*  
Housing Stock by Type and Number of Units

Total Housing Units	4773
Total Occupied Housing Units	3796
Total Vacant Housing Units	977
UIS - 1 Unit Attached	317
UIS - 2 Units	131
UIS - 3 or 4 Units	1000
UIS - 5 to 9 Units	791
UIS - 10 to 19 Units	812
UIS - 20 or More Units	550
Mobile Home	772

American Community Survey 2007 – 2011/W&SA

It is reported that the neighborhood was treated as a “county island” for quite some time resulting in the effect of a “blind eye” turned toward the infrastructure and zoning requirements there. This effect is considered to have led to a mix of infrastructure issues that plagued the area. Lenient zoning practices allowed for intensified multiplex development and substandard planning as to a maze of streets many of which end in cul-de-sacs’ and dead ends left over from the foot print of the trailer parks. (CCR, CPS, NSDPI, CAO, BPNAAP)

Where sidewalks or street lighting would be considered standard in newly developed neighborhoods the county island affect resulted in limited provision of either amenity. A block large piece of land owned by the city and managed by the Parks Department was left underdeveloped until the recent decade of initiatives. No other recreational amenities had existed. No faith based or social institutions had been developed. The neighborhood, bordered by the four major arterials, is bounded by a variety of business services including automotive, restaurant, and business services. As

the transition of the neighborhood took shape a number of bars, parlors, and cash checking businesses also established themselves.

Another indication of instability of the neighborhood can be construed through the valuation of the housing stock. In the 2000 census the housing valuations within the neighborhood were averaged at \$71,622, roughly half that of the metro area of \$146,525. Ninety-one percent of the housing stock was valued at less than \$100,000 compared to 42% of the housing stock city wide. Rents too were suppressed according to the same census reporting an average of “\$584.00 vs. \$642.00 city wide... (W&SA, 2007, p. 65)” Apparently lax oversight complicated by the preponderance of ‘absentee land lord’s and their managers’ more interested in taking money out of the neighborhood than reinvesting in upkeep helped to bring about this depreciation. Housing economics in the neighborhood do not appear to have improved greatly over the decade despite the housing boom and bust for in the 2010 census median housing unit value of \$113,186, and median rent of \$736 is reported, once again suppressed in comparison with the metro area.

There are few locations anywhere in the metropolitan area with as ‘upside down’ a ratio of 30% homeowner occupied to 70% renters as indicated in both the 2000 and 2010 census. In 2000 city wide data reported the norm percentage of home ownership of 60.7%, and 39.3% rental. The ratio was reported as ‘upside down’ by several city agents for it appears that their preference would be to turn this statistic around as “home owners are considered to be stake holders and an indicator for creating stable neighborhoods.” This 30/70 ratio is considered a very low level of home ownership and therefore a weak indicator of community given the probability of a high level of transience. When

compared with home ownership data of the 1980 census the churn in the neighborhood over the past decades becomes more clear as the ratio at that time was within the preferred urban planning norms of 71% owner occupied to 29% rental (W&SA, p. 3)

The reversal of home ownership ratio, density of rental units, decreases in rental rates and increases in occupancy/overcrowding add up to considerable demographic upheaval in the neighborhood in twenty years. This data is further indication of the dominant demographic trend of migration of Hispanic families responding to the economic and social opportunities present in the metropolitan area.

The neighborhood appears to have functioned as an ‘urban gateway island’ for labor and immigration flows from Mexico. As cited in the census data above the immigration of Hispanic population escalated as the out-migration of the Caucasian population increased. The W&SA states “an overall increase of 281% during the 20-year period between 1980 and 2000....the city’s overall population grew 67% during the same time period (p. 67).” The size and complexion of households changed as well.

“The number of households increased from 1,423 in 1980 to 3,901 in 2000 for a gain of 174% during the 20-year period. The average household size (persons per household) increased 40% during the same 20-year period from 2.2 persons to 3.07 persons. The neighborhood’s average household size was greater than the 2000 city average of 2.84 persons.” (p. 67) ...percent of those households that have one female parent only with children [is as high as] 12.4% of households...the average...[of] 7.64% citywide.” (W&SA, 2007, p. 64)

### **Social Realities: Cultural and Micro-economic**

The established disenfranchised gateway island that had become the neighborhood, and the realities of the dominant demographic of undocumented residents, encouraged a number of unique cultural and business practices of the “informal economy” (Portes, 1995, p. 29). Many of these practices help to provide a refuge from

the realities of immigrant life. Indeed a significant tension is uncovered through the interview process that primary ties for many immigrant residents are with their families and lives in Mexico (PL1, PL2, GM2). Lazear (2007) explains the national and familial allegiance to a life left in Mexico, social and economic realities, and effects of Federal immigration policy as resulting in a preference for living in “concentrated ethnic enclaves”; which also explains the slow rate of assimilation into the larger civil society (pp. 121, 122). Criminalization of immigrant status (Chomsky, 2014), and the fear of deportation that manifests, drives this population further underground hoping to stay undetected. Many confidants’ observe the immigrant population to be living as if “invisible.”

School, city and community agents confirm that for many residents their hearts, and a portion of their income, are established back in their home states of Sonora and Chihuahua in the north of Mexico, and Jalisco and Michoacán further to the south. Accordingly, many residents are reported to have left family and property in Mexico. There is both economic and historic precedent for this migratory life style. Economic migration based on better jobs, education and social services here in the U.S. has been well documented for many decades (Borjas & Katz, 2007, pp. 13 – 17, Chomsky, 2014). Many agricultural industries, especially in the southern states, have relied on this migratory labor pool for decades.

There are persons in the Hispanic community who are oriented to a much longer view of their history of migration throughout the south west region or what might be referred to as ‘old Mexico’. This historic lens articulates the philosophy regarding ‘undocumented immigrants’ that they are an originating people, “an indigenous people”

following a migratory tradition to Aztlan and other cultural centers throughout the south west that date back thousands of years. It is from this sense of history that the socio-political offense is felt as the present day immigration policies, and references to “aliens” and “illegal’s,” are perceived as dehumanizing and coded efforts of suppression and occupation of an indigenous people, resulting in “unsettling” affects.<sup>11</sup>

An additional norm within Hispanic migrant communities is the evolution of a cash based informal economy. Given the complications of immigration status as ‘undocumented’ there are significant reasons in keeping all business transactions in cash. The most obvious is that it becomes impossible to document in real terms the economic realities of the neighborhood, or any one individual. Keeping ‘under the radar’ has its complications though for the culture of the undocumented a cash based economy supports and protects against the fears of the realities of being discovered and deported. Attaining a bank account or establishing credit without a social security card or INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) documentation reinforces the underground realities of the political economy.

The rental economy of the neighborhood serves as an example. The well-established patterns of migration, the preponderance of cheaper rental units available, and the limited oversight by the city encouraged and supported this cash based, no document, and no questions asked rental market. It appears as reported by resident and city

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<sup>11</sup> The Neighborhood Activist (NA/DWCD) and a metro based artist/activist (MBHAA) , both of Mexican heritage, shared the history of the Nawa Diaspora affiliated with the Aztek people and their migrations to the trade and agricultural centers of the south west for “news, business, arts and culture”. Warnicke (2014) addresses the effects of these “plots [on] citizens, immigrants, and public administrators.”

confidants that a benefit to both landlord and renter was the simplicity of breaking contract, and for the undocumented renter moving within the neighborhood undetected.

There are disadvantages too, as the underground market milieu encouraged lax accountability and predatory renting practices by apartment managers and/or landlords. A downward spiral of transience undermanaged and blighted properties became the byproduct of this undetected market. The emphasis for managers and property owners was to occupancy and profit over any concerns for the qualities of renters or upkeep of properties. City agents report the disadvantages to residents as to any recourse with managers and owners in seeking repair and quality of life in the complexes. A survey in 2006 conducted by the cities Neighborhood Preservation unit reported that 35% of the properties had one or more maintenance violations (W&SA, p. 6). Reinforcement of existing codes by city agents was exacerbated by the realities of undocumented economic life in the neighborhood.

### **Social Realities: Civil and Criminal**

The linkage of demographic and economic characteristics to criminal behavior is explored within a police document presented at gang suppression workshops offered by the neighborhood Community Action Officer. The thought piece summarizes:

With a transient population base, little disposable income and a lack of both employment and recreational opportunities the neighborhood is suffering from an environment which is conducive to socially disruptive behavior to include nuisance and criminal activity. This is reflected in the fact the one square mile which defines the neighborhood experiences a far greater number of calls for service than the rest of the 144 square mile precinct...[taking the]... comparison further the neighborhood has historically exceeded the citywide rate (2007, Fight Back Proposal, p. 3).



Illicit business practices followed these trends as well as members representative of southern California and Mexico based gangs who found in the gateway an invisible community to prey upon. Bars and a massage business fronting for prostitution were available on the streets bordering the neighborhood. Loitering, public drunkenness, domestic violence and a variety of violent crime escalated in the neighborhood inclusive of drugs, prostitution and gang turf wars sometimes ending in homicides. Crime in the neighborhood was reported by police to have escalated by 41% in the years 2000 – 2002 for example.

An under-developed block of city parkland adjacent to the primary school became a center of criminal activity and battleground for gang fights where a fight club broke out at night. Blighted properties, trash, abandoned autos, and the prolific graffiti of gang turf wars plagued the neighborhood. “Open vacant” properties were particularly challenging as they become magnets for transients and criminal activity as explained by a number of city neighborhood agents as. (CPS, NSDC1, NSDC3, NSDPI, CAO)

The following summary regarding crime statistics for the three years 2004, 2005, and 2006 (with emphasis on 2006) serve as an example of these realities and challenges in the barrio:

- exhibits unusually high crime rates in drug-related crimes
- high crime rates in weapons-related offenses
- gang-related crime statistics were higher than citywide
- homicides have also proven to be problematic in the neighborhood, [11 in all]
- gang-related crimes by juveniles remain the highest overall
- violent crimes were 49% higher overall
- property crimes show an increase [2006] with burglaries and auto theft by juveniles

- domestic violence related incidents were at their highest rate for the three years, with a spike up to 88% higher than citywide rates in 2006 (W&SA, 2007, pp. 40 – 57)

‘Calls-for-service’ in the neighborhood have consistently exceeded the citywide rate when compared on a per-capita basis. Additionally, precinct data records the neighborhood as responsible for “at least 5%” of all calls which “results in a disproportionate concentration of enforcement resources... (Fight Back Proposal, 2007)” The Community Action Office (CAO) for the neighborhood suggested the percentage to be quite a bit greater at 15%. In late 2006 as part of a field project for a justice studies course offered at the Community College asked nearly 400 households “what were their biggest problems in the neighborhood”. Eleven problems were ranked as follows:

*Table 6*  
Survey of Resident Identified Issues

1. Burglary & other property crime such as personal theft, auto theft & bicycle theft etc...	57.6%
2. Drug dealers on the streets, comers, parks or in other public places	50.6%
3. Speeding, cut through traffic	50.4%
4. Youth disruption – young people hanging out, vandalizing, making noise, and underage drinking	48.6%
5. Robbery and violent crime such as shootings or assaults	47.1%
6. Gang activity	45.4%
7. Public drinking	44.7%
8. Litter and trash on streets and sidewalks; conditions of streets and sidewalks such as potholes; and lack of sidewalks	44.2%
9. Graffiti	41.9%
10. Domestic violence	26.6%
11. Child abuse and neglect	26.1%

W&SA, 2007, p. 57

Additional findings from the justice studies survey include:

- 45.2% said they felt “somewhat safe” out alone during the day
- 31.8% said they felt “somewhat unsafe” out alone after dark
- That in the time you have lived there, has anyone broken in to your home?  
10.5% said frequently, and 30.0% said occasionally
- only 39% of respondents were satisfied with available youth programs,  
34% were somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
- 63.5% spoke Spanish during the survey, 34% spoke English  
(W&SA, 2007, pp. 59, 60)

### **Social Realities: Criminal Street Gangs**

Gang activity and related crimes are a significant and recurring concern in the neighborhood as measured by the above survey and documented in various reports. According to the Local Press (2000) the neighborhood had been “reclaimed” in October of that year as “parts of the neighborhood were a haven for open drug dealing, prostitution and gang activity in the previous two years. A survey conducted through the office of the city council representative documents the recurring cycle as findings in that year (2003) cited crime related issues including “aggravated assault, drug crimes and gang activity.” In 2006 72% of residents cite gangs and their activity as an issue (Police Fight Back Application, 2006).” Gang membership and activity was cited as a concern and linked with juvenile crime activity in the W&SA (2007, p.27)

Gang suppression efforts became problematic as the Community Prosecution Specialist reported the unintended consequences of arresting leadership of one gang creating opportunity for the insurgence of rival gangs. These crime issues and insecurities felt within the neighborhood remain consistent. A more recent survey of 204 residents

conducted in the Fall of 2012 notes night time security, gang activity, and drugs as the top three concerns (BPMK, 2012).

Research and reports from the local Community Action Officer (CAO) conclude many gang related crimes are committed by juveniles. Accordingly crime activity is part of the process of advancing status in the hierarchy of gang membership. Recruitment begins early. “Wannabes” hang out with gang members and hope to be initiated or “jumped in”. “Peewees”, primary and middle school age, are new prospects. “Chicos”, generally of high school age engage in escalated levels of crime and violence in their efforts to advance in the gang hierarchy to leadership as an “O.G.”, original gangster.

Ironically the park, next to the school complex, is known by school, police and city officials as a recruitment location, and a primary area of gang criminal activity as articulated through GIS analysis. Recruitment of local children is a “major concern” in the neighborhood.

The neighborhood is experiencing a myriad of conditions, many of those discussed above, which have promoted the proliferation of street gangs. Besides poverty social disorganization, particularly in the case of mobile changing populations, provides an ideal breeding ground for the development of a gang subculture ...The neighborhood suffers both direct and indirect costs ...Direct costs are primarily financial and counted in the form of lost or damaged property and decreasing commercial and private property values. Yet even more injurious are the indirect costs borne by the residents in terms of fear, violence, lost lives and unmet potential among its youth. (Fight Back Proposal, 2007)

There are three gangs based in the neighborhood: Mexican Brown Pride (MBP), Wet Back Power (WPB) and Sur Trece Califas (Sur 13) with estimated membership of 100, 50 and 50 respectively. MBP is historically a Hispanic street gang which became active in the early 1990s and claimed the neighborhood as its turf perhaps giving the neighborhood its nickname as “the Block”. WBP began activity in the late 1990s and

moved into the neighborhood causing a gang war that culminated in the local city park and has rivaled MBP for turf and membership since. Sur 13 activity began in the early 2000's and is the result of a gathering of gang members from Southern California who have banded together to challenge the other neighborhood gangs. County information designates 96 juveniles living in the neighborhood to be on probation from gang related criminal activity.

The reentry and placement of nine sex offenders within the neighborhood is reported. There have been 8 convicted persons, released from custody, and live in the neighborhood (W&SA, p. 19); 202 adults living in the neighborhood are on various levels of probation (W&SA, p. 30).

Removal of graffiti, which is generally affiliated with gang turf activities, totaled 781 signs in the years 2004 - 2006 (W&SA, 2007, p. 28). Fight Back funds were granted in 1991, 1994, 1997, and again in 2003 for neighborhood driven crime mitigation in collaboration with local police. A Weed and Seed program grant would have provided substantial funding for crime abatement and community development was applied for in 2007; however it was not funded. Further Fight Back monies have not been available. The type, number and comparisons of criminal activity in the neighborhood clarify the sense of insecurity of social life in the neighborhood and the concerns of a variety of stakeholders; school, city and the civil society.

### **Educational Realities**

In the 2010 census of the 5,691 persons in the neighborhood population 25 years and older the following was reported: 1,295 or 22.76% achieved less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education; 1,382 or 24.28% attended high school; 1,525 or 26.80% were high school

graduates; 305 or 5.36% achieved a bachelor degree; and 75 or 1.32% held graduate degrees. An additional indication of a downward trajectory in the neighborhood was the rate for high school achievement in 1990 reported at 73.4% of adult residents compared to the 2000 census reported 57.2% of the population having completed high school. In the 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey a slight increase in high school graduation was reported at 28.38%, or about 1.4% over the 2010 data. The significant take away here is the drop in high school graduation rates of nearly 30% since 2000.

The deficit of 30% compared to the 2000 census data is significant. This said the reasons for this gap are complex and add further weight to the challenges in the neighborhood given the number of working class immigrants from Mexico. The transient nature of life for many Mexican immigrant families presented a significant challenge for the elementary school complex and school district. Mobility rates as high as 90% were reported by school leadership in 2003 and have apparently leveled off at about 57% of enrollments in the current school year (2013/2014). Another challenge was the overcrowding at the school. The 2000 census data cites 1472 children grades one through eight, 644 high school students, and 309 nursery and kindergarten children are enrolled.

Parental complaints and tensions regarding the challenges at the elementary school escalated at the district level. The evidence of overcrowding at the school (K-6<sup>th</sup> grade) includes an enrollment reported topping 1,300 students nearly two and a half times the original building capacity. Development actors report that a number of temporary portables were in place to accommodate the overcrowding. Expansion plans included debate regarding the busing of children to under capacity school sites outside of the

neighborhood, a point of contention for many stakeholders and families.<sup>12</sup> There was concern at the time as reported by confidants that the local community was given little voice in the decision making process, and that little effort was made to reach out to the Spanish speaking school community that was clearly in the majority.

District leadership decided to expand the existing school building to a capacity of roughly 800 for the kindergarten thru third grade students. A new intermediate school building was constructed at the school site to serve the remaining 400 or so fourth thru sixth graders. The two schools combined provided a capacity of 1,225 students. The expansion of the elementary complex was completed as of the school year of 2003. The school complex was reported to be over capacity by the 2005 – 2006 academic year, just two years after the expansion was completed.

The dominance of the Hispanic population is reflected in the composition of the school population where 92% of 770 students at the primary, and 83.97% of 474 students at the intermediate school were reported for the 2006/2007 school year. Black/African American student enrollment was reported at 6% and 4.01% respectively between the two schools. As these students matriculate to the middle school and two high schools outside the neighborhood the ethnic composition of those schools more nearly reflects the balance with white/Caucasian demographic of the school district. Hispanic population percentages at the middle school are reported at 48.75%, and at 24% and 25% for the two high schools. Overall of the total population of 6,228 students enrolled in the five schools

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<sup>12</sup> Contentious, though from two different perspectives. On the one hand opposition is reported to have surfaced from parents inside the neighborhood that did not wish their children to be bussed. A different perspective had to do with containing the “brown problem” within the neighborhood school from “leaking” into other schools in the district as reported by several confidants

servicing the neighborhood 54.74% reported to be Hispanic, 4.49% Black/African American, 37.68% White-Non Hispanic, and 2.26% Asian, 1.36% Native American. (W&SA, 2007, p. 71)

Given the majority population of schoolchildren enrolled in the primary and intermediate schools are Hispanic, and that the majority of the neighborhood is Hispanic, it would be reasonable to anticipate that the primary language is Spanish. By the 2000 census Spanish was already the dominant language with 5160 persons reporting it to be their primary language or 48.2% of the neighborhood. To compare, 4838 residents or 45.2% reported English as their only language. The 2000 census data further corroborates this as 60.1% of the population reported the language spoken at home to be Spanish and speak English less than well.

Comparing this data to the city wide percentage of 36.2% speak Spanish at home and English less than well gives further evidence to the uniqueness of the barrio and the challenges faced by the public school system there. In a discussion of findings provided in the 2007 Assessment the Hispanic population of the neighborhood is projected to have “increased closer to 90% Hispanic in 2006 based on recent school data concerning the racial and ethnic makeup of the local elementary school students (p. 82).” This estimate would be in line with the reported enrollment percentages in the two elementary schools, Promesa Primary and Intermediate school.

Both the primary and intermediate schools struggle to keep pace with the bilingual demands placed upon their teaching staff and have been challenged with state school board reviews of under-performing. English as a Second Language (ESL)



programs, whether full English immersion or dual language based, were in demand by the neighborhood families and became a point of contention with the school district.

The politics of ESL was reported to have landed heavily on the primary school in 2002 as the newly scaled up dual language program was pulled by upper administration of the district under pressure of a school board member with political aspirations.<sup>13</sup> The result left that school staff unprepared to address the language challenges put before them just two weeks before the start of the school year (GM1, CCR, CPS, SS). The linkages between English language proficiency, academic achievement and employment potential present a significant hurdle for Spanish speaking families and their children living in enclaves like the barrio (Beckhusen et al., 2012).

The 2007 Assessment surfaces this linkage further in summarizing achievement test scores which are given in English and calculated for a primarily White and middle class demographic. All three schools: Primary, Intermediate and Middle have suffered recurring issues with the state performance ranking system as being “underperforming”.

The W&SA summarizes,

Test scores for reading, language and mathematics were lower than state averages at both the Primary and Intermediate Schools in 2003-2004 and 2004 -2005 school years. Test scores from the Middle School were lower than state averages in all three areas for both school years.”

“...the need for improved ESL and job training programs is extremely important to the young and old residents alike, and is a primary concern of the responsible agencies and school district. These statistics definitely need some improvement in terms of bolstering the existing adult classes in the local community centers,

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<sup>13</sup> Referenced earlier in the overview of this study it appears the board member was engaged in a campaign for State Superintendent of Schools and was challenged by his opponent as to the number of language waivers being provided in his school district. Such waivers were a necessity given the dominance of Spanish at the Promesa schools.

additional ESL programs and improving the English language learning techniques at the basic elementary and middle school levels. (W&SA, 2007, p. 82)

The school district too was challenged by a succession of civil rights suits filed by the Office of Civil Rights for the Department of Education. The legal action was advocated by the League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) on behalf of the neighborhood's Spanish speaking families regarding a variety of issues regarding insensitivity to the culture, bilingual educational services, and inclusion in major district decisions impacting the neighborhood elementary school complex.<sup>14</sup>

Additional factors considered as risk indicators for school achievement included: "...absentee rates ranged from 2% to 5%; limited English proficiency rates ranged from 8% to 90%; students on free or reduced lunch program ranged from 24% to 100% (p.5)." Comparatively State Board of Education data for the 2004 – 2005 school year reported that limited English proficiency of 90% and students on free/reduced-cost lunch at 92% of the school population of the primary school. Data for the intermediate school was not reported regarding limited English proficiency and free or reduced cost lunch at the intermediate school. This may be a result of the probationary period given a new school for the first five years of becoming established.

## **Summary**

Historically established as a working class and retirement enclave little in the way of city services were brought to the neighborhood perceived as a 'county island' within

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<sup>14</sup> A variety of infringements of civil rights and bilingual services were brought to the attention of the Office of Civil Rights. Several suits were filed against the school district in the years 2002 – 20004. A settlement was achieved establishing a neighborhood council in partnership with the school district. (Local Press, 2003/2004) LULAC has a long history of social and political agency on behalf of the Hispanic and Latino community national, originating between the two world wars in efforts of social, civil and economic justice. (<http://lulac.org/>)

the cities borders after being annexed. The shifting demographics, economics, social and educational realities of immigration to what could be conceived as a ‘gateway island’ neighborhood combined to negative effect. The ‘blind eye’ practices of the city, school and civil society manifest as unresponsiveness to the significant transformations taking place within the neighborhood which had become a working class and underclass barrio. As a city council representative and a school district principal summarized the predominantly Hispanic neighborhood had become a “disenfranchised” community.

### **Development Initiatives and Actors**

Section two of this chapter reviews findings from the case study data focusing attention on the two-part question: What development initiatives were undertaken in the neighborhood during this time and what were the roles played by the key actors? This discussion based on the data gathered through the case study focuses on development initiatives and the roles played by key actors in those initiatives.

The case study metaphor of the tapestry is useful for we weave initiatives from the primary sources of city agencies, the school district (especially the local primary school), and the civil society (which includes business, nonprofit and interfaith contributions). The time span chosen for this case study is intentional as the chronology of initiatives build upon each other initiated from the city beginning in 1997/1998. As mentioned earlier we close the window of the case study somewhat arbitrarily as of 2010 based on events internal to the neighborhood and external underlying events of impact; economic, legal and social. Where useful events before or after this time span are offered as context and comparison to deepen our understanding of the significant events occurring in the barrio.

Three definitive periods of development initiatives surface in the findings over the years of the case study from 1998 through 2010. In the years 1998 through approximately 2002, a series of development events occur that are *transitional* and perhaps foundational. The second period of development initiatives, 2003 thru 2008, it appears that a *virtuous trajectory* of development initiatives coalesce at the Promesa Primary school. The third segment of time, 2009 through 2010, surfaces the presence of underlying forces much greater than the development initiatives, actors and agencies leading to a fragmentation, or a “*dismantling*” as some confidants suggest, of initiatives putting at risk the partnerships that had developed during the transitional stage and blossomed during the virtuous cycle.

Reviewing development initiatives across these three primary sources of the city, school, and the civil society of the neighborhood, and across these phases of development; transitional, virtuous, and dismantling; surfaces a robust story of community development initiative and partnership that is instructive for the purposes of this case study. Instructive from the successes and sustained developments as well as possibly missed opportunities of collaboration, and the understanding of how these community development relationships and initiatives can unravel in the context of much greater social, economic and political pressures.

### **Transitional Stage, 1998 through 2002**

**City Initiatives 1998 – 2002.** City initiatives in the neighborhood appear to have come from four institutions: the City Prosecutors office, the Neighborhood Services Department, the Police Department and City Council representation. Within the City Prosecutor’s office is the Community Prosecution Division with a specialist (CPS)

assigned to the neighborhood. Neighborhood Services Department (NSD) had recently been reorganized to include both coordination and preservation functions, i.e. developmental services as well as zoning and enforcement. The Police Department had recently initiated a Community Action Officer (CAO) program with an officer whose assignment was wholly dedicated to the barrio. One of the more promising initiatives was the establishment of the Community Service Center on the edge of the neighborhood in the shopping plaza anchored by a major Hispanic grocery chain. As of 2002, a newly elected City Council Representative (CCR) instilled a level of responsiveness to the benefit of the neighborhood.

*Neighborhood Services Department: Rental Renaissance Program.* The Rental Renaissance Program (RRP) was initiated in 1998 as a pilot in this neighborhood, and one other neighborhood in the city. The RRP established collaboration between city services operating as a team with the mission to address code violations, blight, graffiti and the generally described “slum” conditions endemic to the barrio. The mission of the program was to address absentee landlord issues and enforce the restoration of properties within code, establish an alliance of managers and owners of the rental properties in the neighborhood to be more responsive to the renting community, and to develop a rapport between the various city agencies addressing the degraded conditions of the neighborhood. The vision was to reverse the degraded slum like conditions in the neighborhood improving infrastructure, safety and security; though empowerment of renters rights and accountability of property owners and their managers.

Community development block grant funding helped to establish the Community Service Center presence of the Rental Renaissance Program Team in the neighborhood.

The Team's abatement process included the NSD Preservation Inspector who would cite properties that were out of code informing NSD Coordinators, the CAO and CPS who would pursue the mitigation of landlord-tenant issues. An alliance of managers and owners was facilitated through the work of the CPS. The Barrio Promesa Apartment Managers and Owners Alliance met on a monthly basis to address abatement issues and receive training in the crime free program sponsored by the NSD.

The NSD leadership gave the Preservation Inspector (NSDPI) and Neighborhood Services Department Coordinators (NSDC) considerable discretion in responding to tenants, and contacting managers and property owners directly in the first five years of the RRP. The CAO would report violations and enforce service and abatement actions. CPS would address managers and owners in earnest and bring about restitution through negotiated settlement or litigation. Properties were cleaned up, razed and in some instances, the city took ownership. A few homes and two apartment complexes were refitted. Follow-up through NSDC included enforcement of property managers in maintain the crime free certification in the hopes of maintaining better living conditions for the tenants.

***Police Initiatives: CAO, Block Watch, Gang Suppression, Fight Back Grant.***

Through the coordinated effort of the Community Action Officer (CAO) and Community Prosecution Specialist (CPS) Neighborhood Block Watch programs were organized. Block Watch Presidents became a vital resource for communication direct to police in responding to crime, and significant in building a rapport for police and prosecution services with the residents. Block watch partnerships with police, fire and parks agencies along with small grants from the city supported training of residents and surveillance

efforts at the local park. The block watch initiative was particularly significant in addressing the criminal activities of gangs. The networking and empowering of residents established a level of trust with the undocumented community members that the police would respond to restore their safety and security, without putting residents at risk of deportation. (CAO, CPS, BPBAP, CCR)

The first established Block Watch President (BWP) was a retired and longtime resident reported to be “fed up with the speeders” in the neighborhood. Speeding was a particularly dangerous issue for the safety of the schoolchildren and parents who would have to walk on these same streets for few sidewalks and little street lighting existed. Inspired to do more, the BWP approached the CPS who in collaboration with the CCR applied for Fight Back funding.

The Neighborhood Fight Back initiative provided a year's funding of locally driven crime prevention efforts. Four Fight Back grants in total were achieved by the neighborhood, each one generating approximately \$70,000. Monies were used to coordinate Rental Renaissance team initiatives into the neighborhood in collaboration with the business community. These funds were used to improve lighting at the park, establish police bicycle patrols in the evenings at the park, and improve education and communication about the community service center in the variety of agency resources available. The outreach effort coalesced in what became known as a Knock and Walk. The effort helped to establish a level of trust and empowerment with residents that they could count on the local authorities to respond to the needs. (CAO, CPS, BPBAP, CCR, NSDC1)

The gang enforcement unit of the city police department initiated a crime suppression effort in 1998. The resulting arrests of several gang leaders of the MBP limited the influence of this gang. There was some restoration of safety and security in the neighborhood for a time as the Local Press reported a “rebirth” to be emerging (CAO, CPS, Local Press 2000). However the overall arc of violence and property crimes continued to escalate as a rival gang saw the opportunity to claim turf in the barrio. Several of the MBP leaders arrested would be released on parole in 2004 initiating another escalation of gang activity and violence. (W&SA, CAO, CPS)

In those early years, police increased its patrols, and in 1998, law enforcement held a gang sweep, arresting many of the main leaders. The city instituted strategies to improve the neighborhood, including a pilot Rental Renaissance Program that targeted rental properties that needed to be cleaned up, and put in such infrastructure as sidewalks and lighting in a park's soccer-field area (Local Press, 2012).

In 2001, an electrical storeowner concerned for repeated breaking and entering of the businesses along the north arterial of the neighborhood began to engage the police and the Community Service Center team. The tenacity of this business owner would elevate him into collaborations with the CCR and the CPS helping to set in motion several significant initiatives that anchored the transition stage giving foundation for the virtuous trajectory of events beginning in 2003. The electrical storeowner will be recruited to establish and become president of the Barrio Promesa Business Alliance in 2002 (BPBAP). The BPBAP will join in crime prevention efforts helping to access Fight Back support in 2003, and participate in the Knock and Walk March of 2003.

The Knock and Walk initiative was a door-to-door canvassing of the neighborhood residents by representatives of the City Services and RRP teams and



included the BPBAP and the BWP. Door hanger brochures were distributed to inform residents of the services available to them and how to contact police, fire, preservation and a variety of neighborhood services. Results of the effort were mixed as undocumented residents' fears of discovery and deportation as well as their concern for the retribution of gangs against family members was exacerbated (CPS, CAO, BPBAP).

*Community Prosecution Specialist: CPS.* The mission of the Community Prosecution Division of the City Prosecutor's Office (CPO) appears to have been the most articulated framework for community development. The development of community prosecution as a comprehensive proactive approach to crime prevention parallels leading ideas of community development empowerment taking shape in urban planning and city management in the mid-1980s initially in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington (Green & Burke 2012). The facilitative role of the Community Prosecution Specialist (CPS), assigned to the barrio in 2001, provided energy for collaboration which gave shape to significant development initiatives in the barrio. The transformative leadership vision of the CPS appeared to be a catalyst for building partnership that have provided the most sustainable community development initiatives. The CPS provided accountability and enforced zoning codes and revitalization efforts through mitigation and litigation as a member of the RRP team. (CPS, CPO, CCR, BPBAP)

The CPS's effort to build coalition is lauded by many confidants interviewed for this case study. Four significant collaborative bodies took shape through his guidance during the transitional phase of development initiatives in the barrio. The Barrio Promesa Apartment Managers and Landlords Alliance was established as a self-governed collaboration in partnership with the RRP. The Barrio Promesa Business Alliance was

formed with membership of the business owners along the perimeter of the neighborhood in collaboration with the electric storeowner who was recruited as president. The Barrio Promesa Inter-faith Coalition established an element of coordination and effectiveness of the initiatives from the faith based agencies bringing program services to the primary school and neighborhood. Collaboration with a regionally based homebuilder with investment in the neighborhood established the Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition impacted policy and partnership across all three sectors of development initiatives. This alliance would become intentional and productive in accomplishing development and partnership initiatives on behalf of the neighborhood.

The telling of the collaborative efforts of the CPS to organize the faith-based institutions serving the neighborhood provides the defining metaphor for understanding the transformative vision of this community agent. It appears that there was some ‘redundancy of resources and services’ being provided by churches eager to assist through their outreach efforts. As reported by the Primary School Principal (PPP) and the Regional Lutheran Parish Pastor (RLPP) the duplication of efforts was also being “gamed by some residents” who understood how to “play these resources” to the disadvantage of others (GM1, GM2). The lay leadership of the various churches were approached by the CPS to become more effective as he suggested they each had a piece of a Lego set however they were not going to be able to build something meaningful [for the families] until they joined together in a collaborative vision and bring those Lego pieces together. (CPS, RLPP, PPP, GM1)

***City Council Representative (CCR).*** The City Council Representative (CCR) proved to be a transformational figure in leveraging her authority as elective

representative and facilitating access to resources of the city on behalf of the Barrio Promesa residents. The councilperson's previous experiences in the neighborhood were through leadership of the school district parent teacher council which proved essential in building relationship with the Primary School Principal and accountability with the school district.

Two initiatives sponsored through the CCR's office are instructional as transitional development events and the trajectory of the neighborhood began to change constructively. The effort to create a liquor task force in seeking to limit further liquor licenses being granted. One success story of this liquor task force created through the collaborative efforts of the CCR and CPS with emerging neighborhood alliances was their ability to keep at bay a Hells Angels affiliated club from gaining access to a bar and its liquor license along the periphery of the neighborhood.

The vision and courage of the city councilperson were exemplary as these qualities of her leadership emerged around the events that occurred in establishing the Day Worker Center. There had been as many as five years of growing concern for the day laborers gathering at businesses on the periphery of the neighborhood on a daily basis. The presence of day laborers crowding out access to parking lots at fast food locations and home improvement stores was creating very real tension, suspicions, and as loss of revenue. Concern was also voiced for the safety of the jornaleros that they not be taken advantage of by unscrupulous employers or harassed by anti-immigration activists. The laborers were known to line up two to three blocks deep into the neighborhood which was intimidating to children, their mothers and pedestrians generally.

As reported by the CAO the environment was tense and unsafe for children and their parents, the jornaleros, and the businesses. The CAO, himself of Hispanic heritage and bilingual, attempted to address the laborers regarding trespass issues, loitering and public urination. Though there were ordinances established to enforce and arrest the day workers it was clear to the CAO that he could “not arrest the day worker problem away, and that something needed to be done.” As the CAO explained he would make a first pass in the morning and explain circumstances to those day laborers who needed to conform in their behavior and upon a second pass late in the morning he would make arrests if necessary. It appears that most jornaleros waiting for work would comply without issue, respectful of the law once explained, and appreciative of the CAO's efforts to educate them. In this way the CAO, and the police in general, benefited in the mutual respect shared between men who had work to do; the CAO on the one hand and the jornaleros on the other.

Business owners, leveraging the newly established business alliance, ‘lobbied’ the CCR's office for what became a significant and defining development initiative the barrio. Through the collaboration of the BPBA, the City Council, police and prosecution agents, and a Hispanic Activist (HA/DWCD) was enlisted as a plan evolved to establish a Day Worker Center at the periphery of the neighborhood. It is interesting to note that the idea for a center was suggested in counsel with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Given the anti-immigration politics an ‘arm’s length relationship’ was considered strategic to the success of establishing a center.

The Day Worker Center was established with a grant of \$120,000 unanimously approved by the City Council for construction of the site. The Hispanic Activist became

the Day Worker Center Director (HA/DWCD) and it was his vision that the center could evolve as a full-service community outreach initiative. He reports to the local press that a win-win scenario had been created for the neighborhood, the affected businesses, and the Jornaleros themselves. Business and city agents attest to the success of the labor center as a meaningful resolution.

The pushback from the anti-immigration activists materialized swiftly and loudly. A recall of the city councilperson was established. Anti-immigration activists aligned themselves across the street from the Day Worker Center bringing a new level of insecurity to the neighborhood. The vehement response of the anti-immigration movement revealed the underlying tension of race and politics as it manifest locally, influencing the state and national immigration debate. The CCR shared that it was necessary to call upon one of the States' Senators who had established a national platform against any form of "amnesty" or leniency towards easing the plight of the undocumented in this country. As shared by the CCR in interview, that Senator had some influence in tying up the monies approved by City Council that had been frozen by the City Manager. Evidently the CCR called and made the case with the Senator that the monies for the Day Worker Center was good policy in resolving a local business community issue, and not a national immigration issue.

Interviews with the HA/DWCD, the CCR, the CAO and the CPS attest to the success of the day labor center as a meaningful and civil resolution for all parties. The day labor center served approximately 100 men per day placing sixty or more in meaningful work. At the same time, the Centers' Director documented employers' information protecting the Jornaleros from not getting paid or reporting unsafe working

conditions. Sales and profits returned to norms as reported by a Restaurant Entrepreneur who would become the second of Business Alliance President (BPBAP2). The congestion and loitering crowding out businesses and neighborhood streets was relieved, however the level of anti-immigration presence would take a turn for the worse over the next couple of years.(HA/DWCD, CCR, CAO, CPS, BPBAP2, Local Press 2002)

The CCR was also instrumental in bringing to fruition the Fight Back monies. Her office assisted with printing costs for the door hangers used for the Knock and Walk initiative. Secretarial services and printing of minutes was provided through her office for the BPBA meetings enabling the Restaurant Entrepreneurs leadership.

**School Initiatives: 1998 – 2002.** The primary school (kindergarten thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade) was centrally located in the neighborhood. It was established in 1975 and replaced in 1987 with an increased capacity for approximately 500 students. In the year 2000 the school is reported to consist of the existing small structure with additional classroom trailers servicing approximately 1000 students in total. The building principal at the turn of the century is reported to have practiced an open door in engaging the families of the schools' children though no formal outreach program was in place. Apparently there was a neighborhood United Parents Counsel operating for a short time though the agenda was apparently co-opted by district leadership leaving residents disenchanted as to their interests being addressed (PIP2, PPP).<sup>15</sup> The school complex will be expanded once again

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<sup>15</sup> This case study draws a line in discussing the internal educational affairs of curriculum and other programs given the focus on community development and school community partnerships. Exceptions are made where such programming may have its affects (intended or unintended) in the relationship of the school with the neighborhood being served.

with the opening of the intermediate school (4<sup>th</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> grades) in the year of 2003/2004 as enrollments were projected to increase upwards of 1,400 students

It does not appear that a formal English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum existed within the school before the efforts of the new Promesa Primary Principal hired to lead the Kindergarten through Third grade school beginning the with the 2003/2004 academic year. Various confidants of the primary school and district shared that in 2002 the English Immersion program was pulled two weeks before the school year began. One confidant, a student at the school at the time, shared that in her first year 2002 she felt embarrassed that she was not fluent in English and therefore not performing very well academically and chose to keep to herself. This confidant verified that once transferred to a bilingual teacher's classroom she began to progress academically, her confidence emboldened, she would grow to become a person of leadership amongst her peers. (SDS, PPP, GM1, CCR, CPS, BPRS)

In the school year of 2001/2002 and again in 2002/2003 the primary school was evaluated by the state Department of Education as an “underperforming school”. Additionally, there was a perceived lack of responsiveness on the part of the school board and administration to respond to Hispanic parents concerns regarding English as a second language. Their concerns also included the overcrowding that was occurring topping 1300 students in enrollments. Reports from confidants suggest that very little outreach on the part of the district administration towards the Hispanic residents or to provide interpreters for parent teacher conferencing, general school information, and school board meetings. Actors report parents concern for being shut out of the educational process when it was determined by the district administration to build out the intermediate school

in the neighborhood. As discussed earlier a number of civil rights disputes were filed regarding issues of insensitivity towards the Hispanic population. (PPP, SDS, GM1, CPS, CAO, BPRP)

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) became active in the neighborhood representing Hispanic residents' complaints to the office for civil rights of the US Department of Education. A settlement was reached in 2004 regarding these civil rights infringements holding the school board accountable for its insensitivity to the Spanish speaking community of the neighborhood school. Additional requirements of the school district were implemented regarding bilingual strategies including interpreters at school board meetings, publication of school information in Spanish and English, and telephone hotlines that provided information in both languages. (SDS, GM2, Local Press 2007)

Promesa Primary administration, teachers and staff were faced with a number of challenges not uncommon to urban neighborhoods where the dominant school population is Spanish speakers. High levels of mobility based on the transient nature of the population made advances in the classroom challenging. The high level of poverty qualified the school for Title I support providing nearly 100% of the student population a free lunch. An additional layer of concern for the school leadership evolved around the issues of safety and security of the children given the gang activity in the barrio. The social realities impacting the school placed challenges on academic progress, retention of teachers, and morale.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> I note that the social realities impacting school achievement present a mix of variables that challenge any direct causality to school programs, leadership, or administration. There may be implication of these



Much of the gang activity apparently took place in the city park adjacent to the school. Frustration is noted on behalf of some confidants that the district administration was cool in response to the need to inform staff through workshops regarding the encroaching gang presence. A resource officer dedicated to the neighborhood school had been difficult to achieve. These external forces and internal organizational stresses led to a high rate of turnover of teachers and staff. Apparently in the years 2001 and 2002 there was a new principle in each of those years. (PPP, SDS, CPS, CAO, Local Press 2001)

The school community partnerships appeared to have been limited to a few churches outside the neighborhood operating within their perceived mission to address the issues of poverty through their outreach to children and their families. Valentine's Day and Christmas celebrations appeared to be the primary form of initiative from these well-meaning parishioners. Additional partnership included a nonprofit hospital network which had placed a health clinic at the primary school as early as 1998. Outside the neighborhood at the middle school was a youth program developed in partnership with the Metropolitan Boys and Girls Club. (RPP, BGCDO, PPP)

The Community College (CC) two miles north of the neighborhood offered students valuable classroom experience for their education majors in partnership with the school. An America Corps program existed as part of the social justice and leadership program of the College. Adult education courses were offered in ESL; i.e. English as a

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variables to academic achievement and school performance (as documented in the literature on school community partnerships or suggested by confidants); however direct linkage would not be appropriate.

Second Language in partnership with the Community Education Department of the School district. (CCP)

Kids Camp, a non-profit providing after school enrichment activities and youth mentoring at the primary school established the incentive of a week of summer camp for children who were on task at the afterschool program. Title I designation was also useful in providing funding for the after school programming. An effort to find significant funding to benefit youth and family programming coalesced between Community Education Leadership, the CPS, and a State Department of Education grants coordinator in 2002. The first of two 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grants, part of the federal government's program of the omnibus No Child Left Behind Act will be foundational in the virtuous cycle of initiatives that follow. (CCP, CPS, CCR, PPP, SDS, KCD, GM1)

**Civil Society Initiatives: 1998 – 2002.** It is apparent that there were civil society initiatives of some degree occurring in the neighborhood. As has been cited previously one or two business owners began to show interest as to what was occurring inside the neighborhood, as did a few residents who wished to bring some positive changes to the neighborhood. Three or four churches outside the neighborhood had established outreach predominantly through their work at the neighborhood school. There was the nonprofit hospital, and the community college that had established partnership and program at the school. Any real activism internal to the neighborhood was a few “rabble rousers” and the representation by LULAC. Overall, it can be said that very little coordination was occurring outside the resources of the City's RRP. (CPS, CCR, SDS, CAO, HA/DWCD)

There was a regional business association that accepted participation of the businesses surrounding the neighborhood on the arterial streets. A handful of business leaders began to get involved initially out of concern for their business and their customers. A few residents engaged with the CAO to establish the Block Watch Program given their concerns for crime and blight. The church groups bringing mission and resources to the schoolchildren and their families did so without any coordination and were reported to be “stepping over each other” in their mission based zeal. The Hispanic Activist concerned for the plight of the jornaleros was operating under the auspices of a Hispanic nonprofit not directly affiliated with the neighborhood. None of these interested parties actually lived in the neighborhood (except for the presidents of the block watches), most were white men and none were reported to be bilingual (except of course the Hispanic activist).

Interestingly in these transitional years, a few confidants tell of a change of focus on their own self-interest to a heartfelt concern for the quality of life of the children and families of the barrio. One business leader, the regional church pastor and a lay parishioner of Hispanic heritage, and two residents who had enough with the crime and blight, reported that they started to pay attention to the fate of those less fortunate driven by a sense of compassion. A number of confidants tell of this change of heart. The RLPP reports of a shift of focus from a community on the southern border of town to the ‘felt needs’ of the neighborhood discovered there within his own parish boundaries. The retired homeowner who in reaction to the speeders" addresses the local police precinct for assistance and as a result establishes the first block watch of the neighborhood. The electrical storeowner who becomes the first president of the neighborhood based business

alliance because as he put it “they should just start talking to each other.” These stories are instructive to this case study.

*Barrio Promesa Business Alliance.* The electrical storeowner shared in interview that he approached those businesses on the periphery suggesting “hey let's start getting together and start sharing some information.” Attending the regional business community meeting he met the CPS who had just been assigned to the barrio in 2001. The storeowner was impressed by the “proactive nature of the CPS” as different from his experience with city agencies. He declared, “when you're dealing with people in the city you're going to deal with everybody that is reactionary.”

With the help of the CPS who enlisted a local apartment complex manager and a police officer this group addressed the businesses along the periphery. Frustrated with the lack of response by these businesses owners the self-recruited community organizer wrote a letter “shaming those owners for not getting involved.” The same letter found its way to the newly elected CCR who engaged. The neighborhood business alliance will be formed and the application for the Fight Back grant will be filed and funded from these efforts.

As this businessperson turned community organizer suggests he had “three goals; to reduce crime in the near term, keep things going in the right direction, (and in the long-term) totally turning the whole area around.” The electric storeowner, recruited to become the founding president of the Barrio Promesa Business Alliance, backed up his own vision becoming a leading voice in establishing the effort to build the Boys and Girls Club in the neighborhood.

The Barrio Promesa Business Alliance (BPBA) was essential in establishing the transitional period of development initiatives that became foundational to the virtuous cycle of events that followed. Through the creation of BPBA, a neighborhood-based entity was created giving city agents entry and an opportunity to engage the neighborhood. The BPBA will become an important partner in development planning, grant acquisition, and implementation. Initiatives including Fight Back funding, the Knock and Walk effort, and the evolution of the Day Worker Center were possible. There was a change of leadership in 2004 and a subsuming of the Revitalization Coalition when it dissipated in 2008. This brings about a broader focus and new name for the alliance as the Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Action Alliance that continues to meet monthly at Promesa Primary.

***Barrio Promesa Interfaith Coalition.*** The Interfaith Coalition (IC) will be founded as well during these transitional years. The work of this coalition of faith-based organizations has provided a vital resource in meeting the needs of schoolchildren and their families, and the general population of the barrio. Through the IC coordinated efforts in addressing challenges of food insecurity, school supplies, and celebration of school holidays become a staple of outreach for several churches. A variety of adult services will become staples of this coalition including taking over the ESL courses, assistance with immigration and naturalization documentation, health and housing efforts. The regional parish will take a position in establishing a neighborhood family based church during this period of transition and search to find a Hispanic pastor to develop the effort. The work of the IC continues to be a vital source of initiatives for Barrio Promesa.

*Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Revitalization Coalition.* One other initiative that begins during these years of transition is the establishment of the Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition. The BPRC President along with the assistance of the CPS, engaged members of the local Business Alliance, Interfaith Coalition and the school district. Two initiatives of significance would come about from the efforts of this Home Builder turned Neighborhood Activist. The first was to achieve a change in policy to designate the barrio as an 'In Fill' location as part of the Cities efforts to create fast track permits and infrastructure support as incentives to builders of single family homes and town homes. This was achieved through the collaborative efforts of the Home Builders Alliance, the newly formed Revitalization Coalition, the CPS and the CCR office in keeping with the philosophy of the Rental Renaissance programs efforts to establish home ownership and therefore stakeholders in the neighborhood. This HBAP being of Hispanic heritage and having benefited from the Boys club of her youth (as a basketball athlete) established the vision to bring a metropolitan boys and girls club to the neighborhood. (CPS, CCR, HBAP, BGCDO)

### **Virtuous Cycle, 2003 through 2008**

The tapestry metaphor is realized in the weaving together of a robust variety of initiatives which established a virtuous cycle. The synergy of initiatives and people engaged established a positive trajectory of development events. Many of these initiatives came about as a result of the partnerships established through the neighborhood school Initiatives were originated through reactive as well as proactive responses to the challenges perceived. Impacts from these efforts, some short term and others that continue, came about through resilient effort, transformative vision and facilitative

action. There are actors who tell of a more personal transformation in the process of engaging in the development initiatives. What becomes clear through documentation of events on the ground, and the testimonies of the many stakeholders involved, are the transformative forces that coalesced at “El Centro Comunidad”, the neighborhood primary school, Promesa Primary.

**City Initiatives: 2003 – 2008.**

*Neighborhood Services Department: Rental Renaissance Program.* The Rental Renaissance Team (RRT) of the RRP appears to have had significant success in its first years of operation. The first of two apartment complexes were purchased and revitalized by the city. The team took office space there centrally locating itself in the heart of the neighborhood. A second apartment complex was transformed into stable affordable housing with a designation as being crime free. The crime free program was a part of the RRP outreach in collaboration with the Managers and Landlords Coalition to establish a set of standards of management, due diligence in contracting of tenants, and response to infractions related to blight and crime. Blight, graffiti, and ‘open vacants’ were aggressively addressed by the RRT. Graffiti cameras were posted in some high tagging locations for remote observation by city operatives. A Good Neighbor Program was established supporting a group of residents in collaboration with NSDC in addressing these issues. The park nearby the school was enhanced with playground equipment, ramadas and barbecue area, and lighting. (RRT Reports, NSDC, CPS, CAO, Local Press 1999)

The Safe Path to School initiative is an enduring contribution proactively envisioned through a collaboration of city service agencies, school leadership, and the BP

business alliance. The NRT was able to purchase and refurbished two houses that served to anchor a lighted and secure sidewalk for the schoolchildren, many escorted by their mothers, to make their way to and from school weekdays. Some interviewees reported that the prior conditions were dangerous. Children would trespass across a new condominium development, climb under an alley fence and over a retaining wall, and travel down an unpaved alley through gang turf past known drug houses, to avoid a much longer walk and even more dangerous route to school. Two new owners who qualified for homeowner assistance were able to benefit as well as the NRT succeeded in their placement and underwriting their down payment. (NSD reports, CPS, CAO, CCR, PPP)

*Police Initiatives.* The CAO and the gang suppression unit for the City were able to make some progress on the ground and through educational outreach at the primary school complex. With funds generated from the Fight Back grant the CAO, as a member of the Knock and Walk team, was able to grow a measure of trust with the residents. This resulted in a more open communication between residents and neighborhood police. This level of communication became vital in gaining intelligence on gang activity. (CAO, CPS, CCR)

The relationship between police and gang unit agents was improved at the neighborhood school as well. Programs informing classroom teachers as to gang activity and recruitment efforts raised awareness and enhanced prevention. Programs were designed with families and schoolchildren in mind. Through this partnership process the trust between police, school staff, neighborhood families and the schoolchildren was enhanced. This was particularly important given the location of the school next to the park where recruitment and other gang activity took place after school and in the



evenings. This level of partnership, outreach and education helped to build a level of confidence that encouraged neighborhood families to reclaim the park pushing back the influence of gangs there.

The efforts of the area police precinct, and the CAO in particular, were essential in building a more proactive posture in addressing crime and gang activity. This is particularly remarkable given the fear that residents lived with. Fear from gang retribution, and fear of deportation by the INS, Immigration and Naturalization Service. To achieve an understanding with residents in the neighborhood that the police were there to be of service to their safety and security was a substantial achievement. The background of the CAO served him well for his job in Barrio Promesa.<sup>17</sup> This community outreach effort will prove significant in confronting an escalation of gang crime activities 2004 – 2006 considered to be linked to the release of several gang leaders on probation in 2004. The CAO will directly benefit as well from the good will of the barrio residents previously established as he gets erroneously caught up with an INS action in 2004. He was exonerated from any foul play. (CAO, CPS, Local Press 2004)

*Community Prosecution Specialist.* The CPS work on the litigation and abatement negotiation side of the Rental Renaissance revitalization team was ongoing. Efforts to reinforce the building of single-family units and establish more stakeholders in the neighborhood were improved through lobbying the advocacy of the Village Planning Commission in establishing updated zoning and support for infill designation. The CPS skill in building capacity by facilitating bringing actors and agency resources together in

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<sup>17</sup> CAO attributes include Hispanic, Bilingual, was confronted with gang recruitment and crime as a preteen, and a brother who engaged in a gang life.

partnerships will prove most significant. The transformative vision of the CPS in working the mission of the community prosecution unit helped to create the “dialogic space” that will coalesce around several vital and lasting initiatives in Barrio Promesa (Drysyk, 1990).

The CPS effort in establishment of collaborative alliances and coalitions was significant to the virtuous trajectory of development initiatives. For example, the Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition President (BPRCP) established proactive partnerships with a variety of development actors from the city and school, business alliance and church coalition. The vision to establish the Boys & Girls Club in the neighborhood will be realized through the work of this coalition. Perhaps the best example of the BPRCP transformative leadership can be found in the *Barrio Promesa Community Action Plan* (2003). This document coalesced many of the ideas and hopes of the various development actors coming together on behalf of the barrio as is captured in the byline *proactively building our community*. The *Plan* cites the achievements during the transitional stage of development as a change in trajectory for the neighborhood. The projected \$27 million to be invested by the Home Builders Alliance, the evolution of the Day Labor Center, and the vision of the PPP to transform the school as a center of the community are highlighted. (BPRCP, CPS, PPP, SDS, CAO, NSDC, NSDPI, BGCDO)

Although the ABCD language of ‘assets’ is not used in the agenda of the *Action Plan* it does list many successes. Neighborhood champions from the City Council are celebrated for their vision of a safe and enjoyable place to live. Reduction in violent crime and property crime is cited with the total decrease of 17.5% in the previous two years (2001/2002). Homebuilders are said to envision developing “229 new single-family

homes” which did not materialize. The Promesa school principals (both the primary and the intermediate) are celebrated for establishing that the school complex will become the center of the neighborhood. The receipt of Department of Education grant to establish a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center at the school complex is cited. Infrastructure improvements at the park, the plan for 6900 linear feet of sidewalks, and improved management of traffic flow especially in the proximity of the elementary school complex are celebrated. And as noted earlier the use of fight back grant monies to us help to establish several block watch efforts and the soon to be realized Knock and Walk in building relationship for crime prevention and neighborhood revitalization (BPCAP, 2003, pp. 4 - 6).

This action plan puts forth the transformative vision statement that ‘through small changes in the environment signaling criminal behavior is no longer appropriate there can be a profound cultural shift changing the trajectory of the neighborhood.’ The vision of the mayor elect is invoked for subscribing to the “broken window” theory community revitalization citing Gladwell (2000). The community prosecution mission is highlighted for “marshaling the neighborhood resources” as the primary proactive approach in helping residents “deal with unique neighborhood issues in the best possible manner (p. 10). From this visioning, document objectives were put forth as “positive investments” for city leadership to engage as an action agenda.

The Action Plan calls for city leaders to establish the best practices of “seamless city services” in coordinating communication and resources from the variety of city agencies. The action agenda goes on to recommend a “rallying point for communication” and outreach be established in the neighborhood schools “as a means of neighborhood

identity.” A public relations campaign is called for in changing the image of the area as “The Block” through a renaming as Barrio Promesa. Significant in this list of “investments” is the recommendation for “civic education of our Hispanic immigrants.” In addition, the objective of bringing the Boys & Girls Club into the neighborhood is mentioned.

*City Council Representative.* Responsiveness on the part of the CCR had already been established in the transitional years in bringing the resources to build the Day Labor Center, Fight Back grant monies, building collaboration with the school complex, and working with business and city resources on the liquor task force and the RRP program. The efforts from the CCR parallel those of the CPS in their vision of “striving to create community.” The Councilperson was directly engaged in the ongoing events of the neighborhood advocating for city resources and collaborative relationships between actors and its associations. Exemplary in her efforts of facilitating a transformative vision for community leadership and development is her stewardship of the Action Plan, direct collaboration with the PPP in helping to secure the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grant, and the evolution of the school as a center of the community advocating for the RRT to be relocated there. She went on to facilitate infrastructure and institutional changes in the neighborhood though confronted with an effort to recall her seat on the Council as a reaction to her advocacy of the Day Worker Center. The CCR suggested the recall was driven by “racist politics”. Noted successes of this Council leader in the neighborhood included the Safe Walk to school and the evolution of the Boys and Girls Club. Both are enduring development assets in Barrio Promesa. (CCR, CPS, BPNAAP, PPP, Local Press 2003, 2006)

**School Initiatives: 2003 – 2008.** A number of development events occurred in the barrio that brought the elementary school complex (particularly Promesa Primary) into focus as the center of development activity. The expanded primary school building (kindergarten thru 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and the new intermediate school (grades 4, 5 and 6) opened as of the 2003/2004 school year. New leadership was established at both schools, and a new superintendent for the school district assumed leadership. The procurement of funding from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant helped to establish the elementary complex, notably the primary school as the base for development partnerships. New space at the primary building provided office space for a variety of development efforts. The intermediate school shared the school grounds and provided the larger of the two cafeterias/multipurpose spaces for all school and community events.

Leadership for these two new schools will come from inside and outside the district. The Promesa Intermediate Principal (PIP1) stepped up from an assistant's position the previous year at the primary. The new Promesa Primary Principal (PPP) was hired from outside the district leaving her post as acting superintendent at a nearby urban school system. Unique to the elementary school complex was that both these new school leaders were bilingual, the PIP1 being of Hispanic heritage and the PPP of Puerto Rican heritage. The presence of two new principals who spoke Spanish was taken as a promising sign on the part of neighborhood parents and development agents that the school district would be more responsive to the community. The new superintendent hired both principals.

The new School District Superintendent (SDS) had spent the previous year as an assistant superintendent. He commented in interview that a portion of his time had been

spent as “an observer of the challenges facing the district, and the neighborhood school.” Having seen the antipathy voiced at school board meetings first hand one of his first priorities was to address these issues. With the encouragement of the CPS a meeting with the LULAC representative was set with the intention of “listening to their concerns” hoping to resolve the pending civil rights actions. The SDS reports that taking a new approach in “bridging the gap, and establishing new leadership at the school complex [that] the rancor went away.” These steps which were responsive to the bilingual and cultural realities of the school population, and the formal acknowledgement of the Hispanic community on the part of the district, helped lead to settlement of any further litigation against the school district. (SDS, CPS, PPP)

Challenges for the neighborhood school with the State Department of Education regarding its “underperforming” status were a first order of business for the new principal. The PPP, whose resume included a doctorate in language acquisition, instilled curriculum and scheduling changes putting all enrichment and “specials” in the afternoon. Morning curriculum was unified to include a “sacred reading block for 90 minutes without interruption” engaging the children in learning English and “taking ownership of measuring their own progress.” The “buy-in” on the part of the children helped to bring their parents into supporting the new policy of reading 20 min. every night at home with their children “even if English was not the primary language at home!” (SDS, PPP, CPS, CAO, CCR, GM1, GM2, BPBAP, Local Press 2004, SDEWS)

Three tiers of ability groups were structured in each classroom. Teachers were asked to evaluate the progress of their students on a weekly basis so that resources of time and personnel could be brought to the assistance of those children with greatest

need. The philosophy of the PPP, based on Maslow's needs hierarchy (Maslow, 1943), established that there would be “no excuses” for students not to be able to learn. The idea as explained was to provide a “threshold of food security and health, safety and basic well-being...that the students needs would be met so that there would be ‘no excuses’ they could not succeed at school.” This philosophy, and the message of individual responsibility for academic and personal success, became the foundation of the initiatives motivating students, their parents; and those teachers who joined in the vision. Results were promising for in that first academic year the primary school regained performing status and maintained it, or performing plus throughout the PPP’s tenure. (SDS, PPP, CPS, CAO, GM1, GM2, BPBAP, BPRCP, BPFC, SBE/AYP)

Promesa Intermediate was given a five-year grace in order to establish the academic program before State reporting requirements would need to be met. Where the goal at the primary was to have all students become proficient in English in their first year the intermediate school had not taken on such an aggressive program preferring to keep the dominant model of the district in place. Confidants confirm that the intermediate school staff and leadership struggled to achieve until 2010. It is interesting to note that where the outreach at the primary school was intentional along the lines of building school community partnerships the buy in from the intermediate school leadership and staff was not as enthusiastic.<sup>18</sup> (SDS, PPP, GM1, CPS, CCR, SBE/AYP)

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<sup>18</sup> As noted before academic performance is the result of many internal and external variables. Substantiating causality would demand a different focus of study and research methodology.

The Intermediate School Principal will be replaced at the beginning of 2006 apparently exacerbating the difference in philosophy, educational approach, and school culture between the two schools. Hosting of major neighborhood outreach continued at the intermediate school given the larger of the two cafeterias facilities; however much of the social outreach programming became centered solely at the primary school. The new Promesa Intermediate Principal (PIP2) confirmed the more traditional educational model and mission of “the business of learning” at the intermediate school with less of an emphasis on school community partnerships and social outreach. Promesa Intermediate did regain state designation as a performing and performing plus program in the ensuing years. Confidants for this study perceived a rift between the two schools after the change in leadership at the intermediate which was perceived by some as a retrenchment by the school district. Clearly the shift from a bilingual Hispanic principal and school program engaging in community activities and education, to an Anglo woman educator who refocuses the intermediate school within curricular goals could exacerbate such perceptions. These perceptions were reinforced as the outreach programs shared between the two schools became centered at the primary school. (SDS, GM1, PIP2, PPP, BPRP, BPRS, CPS, SBE/AYP)

At no time in interviews with the Principal of Promesa Primary did it surface that either a school-family-community partnership framework or a community school model was being followed. There is scant evidence of discourse amongst the previous building leadership though in June of 2002 the CPS notes in his field log that some sense of evolving Promesa Primary into a ‘community school’ had been discussed (CPS docs). However, the PPP’s philosophy was driven by the “no excuses” mission as she



reorganized her school program and outreach around this social work based framework. Driven by this philosophy and supported through the activities of the 21<sup>st</sup>CCLC grant the mission of the school was recast to embrace students' lives in school, at home, and in the neighborhood. A synergy of development actors and agencies evolved at the primary school as it became the center of neighborhood life.

The PPP attests to reaching beyond the traditional school boundaries and traditional educational model practiced in the district in her efforts to “address the needs of her students and their families.” The PPP shared in interview the story of her own experience of being of Puerto Rican heritage, coming from poverty and dealing with her own family struggles. She described a kinship and desire to help school families transcend these challenges in the barrio. In this way, the school was transformed to become the center of neighborhood life. Her vision fit well with that of the SDS as he explained his love of history gave him the appreciation that “in the absence of a true center to the neighborhood of a church or village square the school and its park would need to provide this focus.”

Parallel in time and mission was the vision work of both the CPS and the Community Education Department Coordinator (CEDC) for the elementary school. It appears that both were seeking to bring substantial funding to the elementary complex in support of school and youth activities. The CPS was collaborating to bring funds from a significant foundation while the CEDC was researching a grant application to the US Department of Education. As part of the No Child Left Behind Act the 21st Century

Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC)<sup>19</sup> policy provision includes a variety of enrichment and enhancement activities in order to build meaningful partnerships in support of children's academic achievements in particular in impoverished neighborhood schools.

The focus of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grant is in improving student academic achievement through after school programs. A fundamental philosophy of the 'ACT' is that families and the community be engaged in such effort as is a strategy of the SFCP and Community School models. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program requirements include adult education, interfaith collaboration and partnerships with business leadership. A district Grants Manager (GM1) was responsible for the day-to-day program implementation, budget and annual reporting requirement. The grant ran for five years beginning in fall of 2003 and an unprecedented second round of funding was procured beginning in 2008. The second grant ran its course ending with the 2012/2013 academic year as reported by the second of the managers for the grant (GM2). The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program appears to have been synchronous with the PPP and the SDS concept to enhance the centrality of the school providing a framework, financial assistance, and a manager to do the implementation work of bringing their vision into reality. (NCLB, 21stCCLC, PPP, CPS, GM1, GM2)

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<sup>19</sup> This program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The program helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offers literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.  
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>

The 2003/2004 academic year of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program included: a) an after school program entitled After the Bell; b) moving the RRT into the Promesa Primary office complex; c) the continuation and expansion of the health clinic contract; d) establishment of the process of bringing a dental clinic in house; e) the establishment in partnership with the Interfaith Coalition of the food pantry and a second hand clothing goods outlet. The Barrio Promesa Family Church (BPFC) was formed under the sponsorship of the Regional Lutheran Parrish. The BPFC began holding Sunday services in the cafeteria and office space for the new pastor was arranged in partnership with the primary school. Adult education courses were offered in the evening including ESL, sewing and nutrition as well as music and other crafts. A cafecitos (coffee and talk) program was established as a focused outreach to the mothers of the barrio. The three neighborhood associations, Interfaith Coalition, Business Alliance, and Revitalization Coalition held their meetings at the Promesa Primary cafeteria as well. Promesa Primary had evolved to become a primary partner in the development initiatives of Barrio Promesa as the PPP celebrated, “El Centro Comunidad!” (PPP, SDS, CPS, GM1, GM2, 21stCCLC docs, Local press)

**Civil Society Initiatives: 2003 -2008.** Development initiatives 2003 thru 2008 are also significant on the civil society side of initiatives into the neighborhood. The Day Labor Center severed from further municipal funding found nonprofit donors willing to assist in making the mortgage. Discussions begun in earnest regarding the build out of the Boys and Girls Club next to the school at the park, and a variety of nonprofits engaged in partnership with the school to the benefit of the neighborhood. Homebuilders, for-profit and nonprofit, will establish investment in the neighborhood.

***Day Worker Center.*** Given the fallout that surrounded public funding for the development of the Day Worker Center the CCR found it prudent to support the HA/DWCD in finding appropriate nonprofit support. The CCR shared in interview that she approached the Mayor who used his network connections to align appropriate Hispanic agency support. The political issues around the Center established unforeseen partnership given the public support expressed through the BP Business Alliance. The Alliance leadership had just changed as the past president sold his electric store and retired in 2004. A local restaurant entrepreneur was recruited by the CCR and the CPS to preside over the Alliance. The BPBAP2 found himself in the public fray holding a joint news conference at the park commenting that the “Day Worker Center was a local solution to a local problem and that immigration issues were for the national government to address (CCR, HA/DWCD, Local Press 2004, 2008).” The Center Director acknowledged that the Alliance President 2 was a good partner however; his criticism for the Council was blunt noting “the city was talking out both sides of their mouth!” In the early years of this partnership the HA/DWCD had attended the Alliance meetings. He shared his disillusionment in the interview that the people of the mostly Mexican neighborhood were not perceived as players and “that they were not at the table.”

***Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition: The Boys and Girls Club.*** The Revitalization Coalition took the lead of the three committees meeting monthly in developing the Action Plan; lobbying for homebuilder infill designation permitting the process of housing developments to be fast tracked through City Planning; and to coalesce the vision that would bring the School district, the City and the Business Alliance into collaboration with the Metropolitan Boys and Girls Club. This appears to

have been synchronous for in interview with the Director of Operations for the Club (BGCDO) it became apparent that expanding the clubs was part of the strategic plan, and that “Barrio Promesa was one of five leading candidates communities.” Evidently the relationship with Boys and Girls Club and the school district went back at least 10 years earlier where there was an after school program at the middle school however, this was not easily located for the children of the barrio had to cross the major southern thoroughfare to get to that program which was felt to be underutilized. (BPRCP, BGCDO, SDS, CPS)

An inside group consisting of the Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition President (BPRCP), BPBAP, SDS, PPP, and the CPS and CAO were engaged in the mission to bring a Club to the barrio. The original idea was to place the club on the Park property next to the school. There were several policy issues with the City Parks Department leadership adamant that city property not be put to private use. It was the insight of the school district Facilities Manager to create the three-way partnership between the District, the City Park Department, and the Boys and Girls Club. The resulting public and private/nonprofit agreement has become a model replicated in two other locations within the city and picked up as a model by the National Boys and Girls Club Association. (BGCDO, SDS, BPBAP, BPRCP, Local Press 2007)

The unique nature of this partnership was assured through the creative fund raising efforts of the Club’s Executive Leadership in finding private funding circumventing any complaints of the use of public funds for building of the Club in the barrio on public school property. The School district benefited as the capacity of the elementary school complex grew to include an indoor gymnasium, computer lab, art

room and a variety of multi-purpose spaces that would be available during school hours. The vision of the PPP, the CPS and other development actors focused on the B&G Club's leadership program component as a vital piece of the development initiatives taking shape. The thought was that with after school, and weekend programs located at the school complex; and that with the variety of enrichment, civics, leadership and teen programming available through the club the neighborhood youth would have a safe alternative to the pressure of gang life. (PPP, BGCDO, CAO, CPS, BGCBM)

*Interfaith Coalition: The Barrio Promesa Family Church.* By 2003 there were at least six different churches serving the neighborhood and in partnership with the primary school. Under the umbrella of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, a policy prerogative included partnership with the interfaith community that was already active since the transitional phase of development initiative and the establishment of the IC. These partnerships developed a food pantry, a used clothing goods store whose proceeds provided uniforms for the schoolchildren, and evening adult education. The IC leadership has encouraged their respective congregants to support the elementary school complex through designated tax credits through the State.

The leadership at the Lutheran congregation thought it important to develop a neighborhood Family Church that could provide services to the Hispanic community. A pastor of Mexican heritage from Chicago was recruited to establish this mission church and his own unique "holistic approach to family and faith in community" fit well with the evolution taking shape at Promesa Primary. The Barrio Promesa Family Church pastor (BPFCP) explained the many ministries of the church encouraged leadership internal to the church community however, as clarified by the pastor this would not translate into

civil or political leadership citing the challenges of being undocumented (BPFCEP). There is irony in this for it is reported that the pastor engaged a cell phone text network amongst parishioners as an early warning should there be an INS action in the barrio. Evidently, the pastor became a political activist for his congregation organizing a protest march in the barrio against the pending anti-immigration legislation at the State. Leadership changed hands at the Family Church early in 2008. The congregation continues to hold Sunday services at the primary school and assists 200 or more families, most of whom live in the barrio.

*Nonprofit Initiatives.* A nonprofit was established to build affordable housing in the neighborhood with assistance from the city. Barrio Promesa Home Builders, Inc. (BPHB) and a nonprofit contractor, as well as volunteers and the “sweat equity of prospective residents” developed six lots. The BPHB Director, a regional parish activist in the barrio, sought out the City Housing Authority and with the help of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding succeeded in placing six new homeowners in these houses. The Housing Authority helped to bring the necessary resources, provide due diligence of prospective buyers, secure the initial down payment for those who qualified. The Authority would become a second partner guaranteeing the mortgage. The six new homeowners were supported in establishing their own Home Owners Association as a measure of self-governance in managing their properties within city zoning standards. This is an exemplary initiative of development partnership initiatives empowering home ownership and fostering neighborhood stakeholders to have been realized to date. (CPS, CCR, NSDC, BPHBD, Local Press 2003)

A variety of nonprofits also serve the neighborhood in bringing resources, programs and expertise to Promesa Primary and its residents. The issue of food insecurity in the neighborhood has been a constant given the high percentage of families living in poverty. A farmer's market styled provision of fresh produce donated by a metropolitan based food bank in partnership with the local NP and the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC team meets in the parking lot of Promesa Primary to distribute food first weekend each month originating in 2009. The GM2 has shared how organized and deliberate many residents are in "taking the lead in the set up and distribution of the food" in cooperation with their neighbors. The sponsoring NP has made a point of providing food 'Bags of Hope' to schoolchildren that they do not go home without food for the weekend. Another NP active in the barrio mentors young people and has also established a local garden teaching young people responsible habits of good nutrition and agriculture techniques.

Two initiatives exemplary of the proactive school community partnerships being driven through the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC outreach were the Dia De las Mujares; i.e. Women's Health Fair, and the Barrio Promesa Reading Festival. The women's health fair ran for four years and engaged initiatives from all sectors of resources in bringing educational, health, legal and employment agencies together in celebration and support of the women of the neighborhood. A dimension of the reading fair continues at the elementary school complex though this program appears to be internalized within the schools into a month long reading competition. (CPS, GM2, PPP, NSDC3, Local Press 2007)

### **Fragmentation, "Dismantling" of Initiatives: 2009, 2010**

The metaphor of the tapestry carries forward here though the weaving of development initiatives begins to be frayed. For approximately six years there appeared



to be a virtuous cycle of collaborative development initiatives across the three sectors of influence. Some of these initiatives have had sustained effects. Some continue to influence the neighborhood favorably. However, internal and external events both economic and political slow the trajectory overall with fragmenting and perhaps dismantling effects on initiatives. For sure the impacts of the ‘Great Recession’ as early as 2007/8 will be felt internally within the various agencies of government, the school district, and the business and nonprofit entities of the civil society engaged in the neighborhood. In those same years, anti-immigration sentiments, and government agency actions and policies will affect the barrio systemically. Though these themes will be discussed in the closing chapter of this dissertation with some detail it is appropriate to surface the impacts on the development initiatives, and perhaps counter initiatives, in documenting the chronology of phases of community development that occurred in Barrio Promesa.

**City Initiatives and Events: 2009 – 2010.**

*Neighborhood Services Department.* There were indications that the intention and availability of resources that the RRP Team could bring to the neighborhood might be diminishing as early as 2006. Significant funding was available through a grant program entitled Weed and Seed. Monies from the grant could be used by the neighborhood in developing a comprehensive plan regarding crime prevention, community identity and self-governance. The application process was comprehensive and demanded a thorough assessment of the neighborhood across social, economic and demographic characteristics, as well as a thorough evaluation of crime statistics, and a set

of proposals as to how the neighborhood would move forward. The W&SD was structured to include statistical data for a three-year period of time 2004, 2005, and 2006.

Revealed in the Assessment is that the cycle of crime and violence was returning to the neighborhood after a period of reduction from crime suppression efforts of 2000. The release of gang leaders and members on probation who had been previously incarcerated back into the neighborhood in 2004 fueled an escalating cycle of criminal activity and turf warfare.

What also surfaces is that there was a real passion and growing capacity for change in the neighborhood. Clearly there were grounds for the neighborhood to receive the financial and technical support of the Weed and Seed initiative. It was revealed in interview that the funding went to a “more vocal”; i.e. politically connected community. City agents suggested that agency leadership perceived that Barrio Promesa was “not going to be as vocal” alluding to the undocumented nature of the Hispanic community and the resulting lack of political access. (CPS, NSDC 1 – 3, NSDPI, CAO, CCR, Local Press 2007)

The assessment process in itself was perceived to be purposeful though the grant was not awarded to the neighborhood. The process left a lasting impression on the NSD leadership. The Rental Renaissance Team Action Plan for 2009 – 2010, an annual objectives exercise for NSD, cites the action plan as being “in coordination with the strategy used for the Weed and Seed application.” The RRT Action Plan establishes three “Broad Action Programs”:

1. “Community Building ...focuses on the capacity building of leaders, residents and organizations. This section includes educational opportunities, trainings and organizational support.
2. Revitalization...focuses on...the enforcement of zoning code, and revitalization projects.
3. Prevention ...is designed to identify partners that can assist the team in addressing neighborhood issues.” (NSDC1 Document)

Efforts regarding blight and neighborhood clean ups continued in these later years of the study though there had been fewer demolitions. Few new home building permits are recorded in the two final years of the study 2009, 2010. Barrio Promesa Community Builders, Inc. was granted an extension period of their contract in the effort to sell the properties in the down real estate market. A citywide effort to secure homeownership through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program does not record any initiatives into the barrio though median values dropped more than 50%.<sup>20</sup>

Contracting for additional sidewalk and curb infrastructure was secured with the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and matching funding from the state. The larger of the two city-owned apartment complexes received refitting with solar panels dedicated to relieving the cost of utilities for the tenants in the complex. There were efforts to establish a new initiative that failed. An effort to rebrand the business district along the north boundary street was not funded. Apparently, not enough of those business owners collaborated to bring about a unified vision. There is irony in this missed opportunity for the streetscape was in the same location as the electrical

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<sup>20</sup> Local Press published in 2010 cites median home values of \$260,000 in 2006 depreciating to \$126,000 in 2010. No explanation was given as to the failure of the Stabilization Program to assist homeowners in BP.

storeowner that took on the barrio initiating development efforts and forming the Business Alliance back in 2001. (BPNAAP, NSDC1, NSD documents, CCR, CPS, Local Press 2010)

Representation from NSD at the Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Action Alliance (BPNAA) monthly meetings appears to have been a constant though it is not clear as to how much of the RR Action Plan had been asserted. Community building opportunities appear to have been offered at these monthly meetings however, there are no records of an intentional effort in building leadership capacity or technical training in community development processes. The Interfaith Coalition and the Revitalization Coalition are cited in the action plan as “two examples of prevention initiatives” though it is not clear city agents engaged either of these bodies on a regular or intentional basis. Support for Neighborhood Night Out Events in collaboration with the local police precinct as part of the City wide National Crime Prevention activities each October have continued. Clean ups are organized and NSD Coordinators bring resources. (NSAC1, NSD documents, CCR, CPS, GM2, Local Press)

One thing is clear that as the Great Recession manifested in limiting city revenues agency budgets and program services were curtailed. Neighborhood agents report having to adjust to the new constraints on their time and the resources they could bring to the neighborhood. The pressure for budgetary efficiencies across all city agencies was both local and national news in 2009 and 2010. Interviews with city agents attest to the challenges in Barrio Promesa given their reassignment to much wider coverage of multiple neighborhoods. Agents for various city services commented regarding the internal affects as program accountability increased reporting and face time at the office

burdening their time in the field. This directly affected the work of the RRP Team as agents energies were spread thin in their ability to respond and follow through on anyone neighborhood initiative, complaint and enforcement. (NSDC 1 - 3, NSDPI, CCR, CPS)

***Police Initiatives.*** Political and budgetary restraints were felt within the ranks of the City Police force, the nearby precinct, and the amount of time that Community Action Officer was available to be present in the barrio. The CAO reports that his beat expanded to the entire precinct not just the neighborhood. The assessment of escalating crime found in the W&SA process did not deter precinct initiative and outreach. A renewed crime prevention and gang education campaign was established in advance of a planned crime suppression effort in 2006 and 2007. Another cycle of violent crime followed by suppression efforts was reported in 2009. (CAO, CPS, Fight Back Proposal, Local Press 2009)

Gang suppression efforts and the virtuous trajectory of development impacts appear to have reversed the trend of cyclical violence. The CAO reflects in interview, and is echoed by other stakeholders in local press coverage, that the improved sense of safety and quality of life in the neighborhood has been a collaborative effort. Program initiatives from the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC and the B&GC are mentioned as giving the “young people in the neighborhood another option.” Crime statistics would support the impression for an overall reduction in violent and property crimes, and gang activities were reported. Violent and property crimes have diminished since 2002 overall according to FBI data. (CAO, CAO docs, CPS, CCR, BPNAAP, GM2, Local Press 2011, 2012)

“Trust” of local policing and the CAO's taking “ownership of the neighborhood” also appears to have become a resource in the quality of relationship established with the

residents of the barrio. A rift between the County Sheriff's Office and City Police Department is an indication of the integrity of the mission intentionality of local police steward the trust developed in the barrio. Agents from all three sectors of stakeholders in the barrio reported the intense fear evoked on the neighborhood as the County Sheriff's Posse conducted a crime sweep of the barrio in 2008. The 'sweeps' had become code for immigration enforcement activities and point of contention between various policing agencies. The city police chief presented at the BPNAA meeting; attended the BPFC to speak to the local congregation; and went on record with the local press in his criticism of the 'over reach of the Sheriff's Office.' The Chief re-established that the neighborhood police were focused on calls for service and criminal activities. (HA/DWCD, BPFPC, BPNAAP, CPS, CCR, PPP, GM2, NSD1, RLPP)

Successful crime suppression continued with collaborative efforts in shutting down a "fight club" that had returned to the neighborhood park. The respect in the barrio developed by the CAO was cited in a feature article in the local paper. The CAO confided in interview that his commitment to "his neighborhood" was tantamount and that you "learn to do more with less." The CAO suggested "listening is a key to his success in establishing trust" with the local families, and to treat people as equals as "they are the back bone of the neighborhood." (CAO, BPNAAP, CPS, HA/DWCD, NSDC1, PPP, NSDPI, Local Press 2010)

***Community Prosecution Specialist.*** City initiatives from the prosecutor's office continue in these later years. The CPS continued work as a member of the RRP Team on abatement and litigation, and in collaboration with community policing and block watch committees. The facilitative consultant role continued as well though as the CPS

celebrated during interview, ‘the major work had been accomplished’. As he noted the infrastructure was now in place citing the Business Alliance and Interfaith Coalition having achieved self-governance and directive as to their mission and program initiatives. The success of the 21st CCLC before and after school programs, and cafecito women’s group had also become established. With the opening of the Boys and Girls Club in December of 2008 the Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition appeared to have achieved its final goal for the barrio. In this way the CPS continued his role to step back and support, and when called upon “lead from behind (CPS).” (Local Press 2009)

The commitment of this individual was exemplary for his attendance at meetings, his availability to the partnerships he helped to create, and his continued presence as an agent for the neighborhood residents. CPS continued though officially his territory and obligations expanded given the budgetary constraints on all city agencies. When asked about the impact of budget constraints the community prosecutor pointed out that his role was in “developing relationships and partnerships more than money.” (CPS, CPS docs, NSDC1-3, PPP, CAO, CCR, GM1, GM2)

***City Council Representative.*** The City Council Representative continued to assist in the stewardship of resources from the engaged city agencies and attempted to bring new initiative to benefit the barrio. The CCR role as facilitator and problem solver continued though it was hopeful that leadership in the neighborhood would take that next step in self-governance. Clear that “government is not the answer” she fills in her vision for self-governance as coming from the BPBA in establishing a nonprofit entity that would develop the leadership and find the money to continue the trajectory of community development (CCR).

Council's office continues to collaborate with neighborhood services, community policing, and the school district in these years 2009, 2010. These collaborations included funding of infrastructure improvements, neighborhood policing, support for the new Boys and Girls Club, and collaboration with the BPBA and the IC. The CCR's office was a primary stakeholder of the unrealized proposal for rebranding of the business district along the northern border street of the neighborhood.

Running for a third term in office to begin in 2010, she commented in the press: “We have made great strides in the Barrio Promesa neighborhood. It is a safer, more livable community. This effort has been in partnership with the businesses, school system, police and the city's Neighborhood Services Department (Local Press 2009).” Being a strong advocate for continued services from the city throughout her district the CCR fought many skirmishes on behalf of continued funding for youth services, parks and NSD. The CCR reflects that substantial political capital was spent in advocating for city resources for Barrio Promesa, and immigration reform.

Press in May 2010 references the formation of an exploratory group in consideration of a run for the Mayor's office (Local Press). December of that year the CCR announces her bid for the upcoming mayoral elections and therefore must resign her council seat as there is more than the one year maximum term allowed remaining as Council Representative. She continued to attend the monthly alliance meetings regularly as a citizen honoring her commitment to the neighborhood.

#### **School Initiatives and Events: 2009 – 2010.**

The Primary and Intermediate schools of the neighborhood continued to address internal educational challenges though from different philosophies of curriculum,



discipline, and the role of each school regarding partnership in the neighborhood. The 21st CCLC program continued to be of service to the neighborhood through Promesa Primary. A variety of collaborative relationships across the sectors of initiatives appeared to have real benefits both in regards to the “performing plus” status with the State and in the trust the PPP and Promesa Primary continued to enjoy as ‘El Centro Comunidad.’ (PPP, GM2, SDS, NP, NS, CPS, CCR, Local Press 2009, SDEWS)

In contrast, the intermediate school continued to struggle in maintaining its achievement performance rating with the State Department of Education. Promesa Intermediate was reported to have “failed adequate yearly progress (AYP) two years in a row (Local Press, 2009).” There are neighborhood actors who commented as to the different educational approaches and community philosophy the two schools appeared to present. Some confidants made note of the professional and perhaps personal tension between the two building principals. (PPP, GM2, SDS, NP, NS, CPS, CCR, CAO, SDEWS)

Push back from the district added another layer of stress as reported by the PPP. Evidently, there had been the possibility of the Promesa Primary Principal becoming educational leader for both Promesa Primary and Intermediate with assistant principals assigned to each school, and the “no excuses” framework unified between them. The internal culture and politics of the school district did not allow this proposal to see the light of day. The antipathy was so strong as to have digressed to the possibility of a wall being built separating the two buildings though they share the same playground. This may have been rumor for it could not be corroborated. (PPP, SDS, CPS, CCR, CAO)

There is evidence that these stressors were palpable as acknowledged in interview with the PPP who would seek to leave her position due to challenges to her health at the conclusion of the 2010/2011 school year. She reports that the departure of the SDS who had, “watched her back” and supported her philosophy and leadership was a turning point.

Promesa Primary continued to have a significant presence in both educational and social outreach in the neighborhood as funding, programming and management from the 21st CCLC and Title I programs continued. Collaboration with the Interfaith Coalition and the Business Alliance was sustained, and partnership with city agencies continued. Educational and youth enrichment outreach was enhanced with the opening of the Boys and Girls Club in December of 2008 anchoring the elementary school complex as a place of “refuge” in the Barrio (BPNS, BPNP). The PPP celebrated the arrival of the Boys and Girls Club, an initiative she had been a lead voice in supporting. She envisioned that the “neighborhood's next generation of leaders” would come because of the club. (PPP)

The idea of refuge is supported by several confidants for Promesa Primary offered resilience against the double threats of immigration action and the impact of the recession on the neighborhood. Economic emigration out of the metro area negatively impacted small business citywide however, Barrio Promesa stayed relatively stable. Enrollments for the elementary school complex were reported to have diminished only slightly in the first or second year of the recession returning back to normal capacity by 2010. Participation at the Boys and Girls Club and for the 21st CCLC stayed strong. During 2010, perhaps the worst year of the combined effects of the recession and immigration politics, the numbers of students and adults served grew substantially for both programs.

This may be construed to be further evidence of the sense of safety and security neighborhood families valued. (PPP, SDS, NP, NS, CPS, CCR, GM1, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC docs)

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center.* The GM2 for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC champions the human initiative and compassion of the volunteers who gave their time to a variety of initiatives inside the school, with the before and after school enrichment programs, and the family and neighborhood outreach. These collaborative partnerships were intentional, proactive, and in some cases transformative for those served and those serving including volunteers and staff. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC mission statement outlines that these “collaborations would continue to enhance and sustain programs... [and] ...will create leaders that will give back to their community.” This may be more rhetoric than reality without a leadership component. An innovation derived through the earlier round of the grant and continued through the enrichment, mentoring and community projects of the after school program. Projected number of participants anticipated as the second round of the grant was funded in 2008 suggests serving 250 students/children and 60 adults. The actual numbers are much greater at 600 children and 200 adults served. It is worth noting that in 2010 the number of students served was reported at just over 1000 though the number of adults served remained consistent. (PPP, CPS, CCR, GM2, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC 2013)

#### **Civil society Initiatives and Impacts: 2009 –2010.**

As suggested above in the discussion of city and school initiatives the initiatives from civil society partners continued to provide significant resources to the neighborhood predominately through collaborative partnership with the school. The BPNA and the IC continued to meet at the school and network their initiatives both into the school and thru

the school to the barrio. The Neighborhood Night Out partnership with the Police Department, cleanups facilitated by NSD, the monthly farmers market food bank, and the community garden were supported and reported monthly to both collaborative bodies. The neighborhood church continued to flourish holding its Sunday services at the primary school reporting participation of some 300 families. The GM2 and the PL2 nurtured the outreach partners through a regular presence with both neighborhood groups.

*Boys and Girls Club.* Fundraising as well as outreach efforts of the Boys and Girls Club began as early as 2005, well before ground was broken for the building. The public relations effort included outreach to school families supported by the school leadership. There were reports of a rumor or suspicion amongst residential families that the new structure was to be used as a detention center for deporting immigrant children to Mexico. The trust developed through these outreach efforts proved significant to the early success of the club. The Branch Manager (BGCBM) for the club commented that “building trust with the children, their families, and school and business leadership” is vital in establishing the Club’s mission, programs and staff in the barrio. He states we are “genuine about building partnership” and then these collaborations are based on a shared perspective of “caring for and serving the community youth.” The BGCBM explains, “trust building is essential and from this good faith grows the capacity for program sustainability.”

In 2010, the club was serving 150 youth in after school and summer programming. That number is understood to have nearly doubled currently. The intentionality of partnership and a deep understanding to the challenges of poverty impacting the neighborhood can be seen in the Clubs outreach to youth in meeting their

most basic needs serving 120 dinners nightly. The infrastructure, academic and recreational activities typical of Boys and Girls Club brought additional initiatives shared with the elementary school complex during the school day and in the evening with programming to the adult community. The unique intergovernmental relationship between the Club, the School district and the City made it possible for these initiatives to be folded into the neighborhood outreach at Promesa Primary and 21st CCLC adding additional adult education and community meeting space.

The character and leadership building program component of the club was rightly perceived to be an essential initiative for the future of the neighborhood. The club's leadership program is broken down by age groups where the primary school kids are engaged in citizenship by helping others generally within their school community, and the high school age Teen Club members are involved in self-governed civic engagement projects within the barrio. Instilling a sense of ownership and empowerment of personal and community life is the vision of the program. Teen club members have taken it upon themselves in collaboration with the Kids Camp after school program at Promesa Primary to develop a counselor in training apprenticeship. One young adult member has gone on to become a recipient of the State Boys and Girls Club leadership award. (BGCD, BGCBM, PPP, BPRCP, GM2, CCR, CPS, CAO, KCD)

*Barrio Promesa Day Worker Center.* The HA/DWCD states that it became impossible to sustain the mortgage on the land and cover the expenses for the upkeep of the property by the onset of the recession in 2008. The last of the nonprofits that had been supporting the center budget found it necessary to withdraw for economic circumstances. Two other nonprofits appear to have withdrawn their support, as suggested by the Center

Director given the intensity of anti-immigration politics. The Director reports that he was going to have to foreclose on the property and shut down. He suggested an impact in losing the center could be that the day laborers might return to crowding out the neighborhood streets and businesses however, this was not manifest given the effects of the recession and anti-immigration legislation. The activist's commitment to the families in the neighborhood led him to assist in establishing and teaching at a charter school to serve some neighborhood youth with a strong focus on Hispanic culture, English and academics (Local Press 2007). Though the original vision of a community center as part of the Day Worker Center outreach was not realized he continues to manifest this vision through the charter school. (HA/DWCD, Local Press 2009, CCR, CAO, CPS)

### **Roles Played by Key Actors**

Key actors are those persons who in their position of authority and/or passion for community were intentional in their actions for community development initiative at the neighborhood level of analysis. These actions are considered in the context of community development frameworks. It is important to suggest the key actors could also be institutions providing development initiative and/or partnerships through agential policy implementation. And then there are those agents working on the streets of the neighborhood courageously implementing agency policy productively as intended by agency management, not necessarily as interpreted by management. The context of the actors professional, and perhaps personal lives, also lend to an understanding of their roles as agents of social justice. It is interesting to note that community development initiatives at times transformational for the neighborhood were often parallel with internal transformation on the part of many of these actors. As one NSDC commented, “the

neighborhood changes people!” Many other participants in this study shared this sentiment.

### **City Actors.**

*Neighborhood Services Department Agents.* The role of city agents acting on the behalf of barrio residents seems best served when acting as street level administrators of city agency programs. Where city agency policies of engagement in community efforts is clearly centered in the social planning model of development frameworks the individualized strategies for implementation taken on by street level actors may be better framed as social action. There are exceptions where it appears social action is intentionally woven into policy, where leadership and field agent are consistent from mission to implementation.

The mission statement credited to the initiating leadership of the Rental Renaissance Program Team is cited for establishing the “work to be a gift in doing wonderful things to save neighborhoods.” As a pilot project initiated in 1997 this operational objective produced considerable results in cleaning up the neighborhood and revitalizing living standards by holding landlords accountable. The message delivered on the street by these neighborhood agents was “you fix it, or we fix it!” Authoritative as that communication might appear most properties were brought up to code through such negotiation strategy and costly litigation for violations avoided. The sense of providing good service to both owners and residents was actively fulfilled through the teams notice and enforcement actions, and consistent presence in the barrio. (NSDC3, NSDPI, CPS, CPS docs, NSDC1 docs)

With the change of leadership of the RRP after the first five years in 2002 came adjustments to the interpretation of the mission impacting the effectiveness of implementation of the RRP Team. Internal and external political interests, and budgetary constraints, are reported to have negatively influenced the enforcement process. Team members report feeling the tension between the trust and reliability established on the ground in the neighborhood and changes in implementation processes from agency leadership. (NSDC3, CPS, CCR, BPNAAP)

Agency actors commented as to the tension experienced in bridging the gap between leadership's interpretation of policy and their own discretion in implementation on the ground. In this way, each actor practiced a street level form of decision making facilitating public value (Moore, 1995). Where adjustments to policy procedures might slow the process of filing and enforcement on a blighted property these "street-level bureaucrats" (Lipsky, 2010/1980) acted intentionally on behalf of residents and property owners in seeking to negotiate settlement of these problems more quickly. Centrally locating the City Services satellite office in the barrio was essential in establishing the rapport of the City actors with residents. Team members understood their being present and proactive in mitigating enforcement challenges was vital to establishing trust with residents. (NSDC 1-3, NSDPI, CAO, CPS, CCR)

Newly required quotas and reporting procedures instituted by NSD leadership negatively impacted this 'face time' though all agents continued within the intent of policy and availability of resources in providing city services to the barrio. NSDC have offered a variety of leadership programs. The Good Neighbor Program, Neighborhood



College and Neighborhoodology programs have offered grassroots leadership training and evolution of 'sense of place' processes. (NSDC1, NSDC3)

The NSD Preservation Inspector and Police Department Community Action Officer continue to be a presence in the barrio though both report their responsibilities have expanded to cover much larger territories. The commitment by these two neighborhood actors in particular has been given accommodations for their commitment and longevity in working to improve quality of life in the neighborhood. Both men shared the same sense of commitment to the families of the barrio as the CAO commented, "you have to take ownership of the neighborhood!" (NSDPI, CAO)

*Community Prosecution Specialist.* The role of the Community Prosecution Specialist might best be described as a community development change agent. The CPS summarizes community prosecution as "community problem solving in furtherance of public safety." The intention to engender change is clear from the mission statement of the Community Prosecutors Unit is to provide vision, strategy and technical knowledge. This strategy is based in the social planning model of the Community Practices framework.

Community Prosecution involves a long term proactive partnership among the prosecutor's office, law enforcement, the community and public and private organizations, whereby the authority of the prosecutor's office is used to solve problems, improve public safety and enhance the quality of life of community members. (CPS Reports)

Individual interpretation of mission and implementation can be a variable between actors. The CPS personal mission statement for Barrio Promesa is instructive in this regard. His track record with community partners is testimony to the intentionality he brought to the work perhaps transcending any particular framework of community

development including both locality and social action efforts in applying “best use of self” as would a social worker in the role of neighborhood organizer, community developer and social activist.

I seek to build community and improve the quality of life in Barrio Promesa and the City. I am directed to solve community problems for the long-term by developing and executing strategies with members of the community along with government and private entities. I seek restoration from those who have detracted from the community. I am to be an agent of change, and not merely a reactive element processing cases. (CPS Reports)

And if that isn't clear, his goal for the neighborhood is simply put, “get it done!” Through interview the CPS describes his role as facilitating the “conspiracy of excellence” based on empathy and a “shift of focus to the well-being of the children of the neighborhood” and their families. In his seeking to build this conspiracy of values driven partnerships he commented “you find those people of heart”; i.e. “find the people who can do good and then help them to become great!” He summed up this transformational philosophy as “leading thru” differentiating the process from the idea of “managing problems!” (CPS, SDS, PPP, BPNAAP, GM1, GM2, CAO, NSDPI, CCR, BPRCP, BPFCP1, RLPP)

The driver for the CPS’s resilient strategy for transformational community development through collaborative partnership was the “sense of purpose and meaning achieved in valuing and improving the quality of life of the children and families in the barrio (CPS).” Not all partners started with this high-value mission in mind. Many brought their own agendas, their own instrumental rationality or a what's in it for me (WIFM) transactional sense of purpose. Others operated within the minimum of the mission, policy or job description of their agencies and title. For many whose path the

CPS crossed in the process of community development and partnership they report their focus was transformed to a higher perception of the value of their work and their own empowerment in the process. The CPS was intentional about this and often cited the work of Victor Frankel, in *Man's Search for Meaning* (2006/1959), advancing a video clip of one of Frankel's presentations.<sup>21</sup>

What becomes known as the 'Lego's strategy for collaboration' amongst many actors is based on the CPS telling each that they hold one Lego and if they would get together they could build something wonderful." As discussed earlier the CPS shared this analogy in discussing the formation of the IC. He proactively facilitated the formation of collaborations that brought about development initiatives and helped to build capacity and new institutions in Barrio Promesa.

***City Council Representative.*** The role of the City Council Representative was that of a problem solver, coalition builder and transformative leader. From the beginning of her tenure as CCR, the challenges in Barrio Promesa and the demands placed on her office from the business owners there engaged her in years of responsiveness to problems and the networking of resources to address them. She is clear in interview in suggesting that her role was to listen to the complaints and needs of the residents and from the authority of her office "do what needed to be done (CCR)." The CCR does not claim a formal knowledge of community development practice though her prescriptive response to meeting needs in the neighborhood are solidly based in the Macro-Intervention model

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<sup>21</sup> The consistency with which this community prosecutor specialist discussed the value of meaning and purpose in community action is parallel with transformative leadership (Gardner) in bringing transactional actors to a higher sense of purpose on behalf of the barrio.

of social planning. However her longer-range vision and resilient passion for “doing the right thing” could be said to apply a mixing and phasing of locality development and social action.

Having previous experience as a leader of the Parents Association at the school district and also the Village Planning Association provided insight for creating collaborative partnerships and access to personnel from all three sectors of community development initiatives. Leadership from the BPBA, the BPRC, the IC, the school district and Promesa Primary could call direct to her office. A variety of city agencies including Police and NSD, engaged her office as a collaborative partner and facilitator of resources. The CCR and CSP operated like transformative co-conspirators. (CCR, CSP, BPBAP, BPRCP, PPP, CAO, NSDC1, NSDPI)

Combined experiences in leadership engendered the vision that leadership and institution building at the neighborhood level would be vital to sustaining any gains from the community development initiatives. She shared the philosophy that home ownership would help to establish stakeholders in the neighborhood as a matter of mission and policy. Reducing crime and gang activity as a baseline for the safety and security of children and family life was not negotiable. The PPP confided, “I could pick up the phone and question as to when am I getting my safe path!” The CCR worked in collaboration with city services, at times leveraging the authority of her elected office, to support these priorities. Her concern for the transient nature of residential life in the barrio, and the “racist” politics from outside the neighborhood, undermined empowering neighborhood-based leadership and institutions; i.e. “putting a face on the leadership from within the neighborhood.” (CCR, CSP, PPP, CAO)

The CCR shared the strategy that it was important to partner with “persons of compassion and heart”, to develop leadership and “build trust” in order to sustain development initiatives. It is the CCR's observation that the keys for development success were gelling during the virtuous cycle of initiatives. The next stage in these efforts needed to come together through the BPBA and NSD in collaborating to establish a nonprofit to move forward in development of neighborhood governance and leadership. The CCR acknowledges with some measure of consternation that these strategy conversations took place emphatic that “government alone could not be the answer long-term” in resolving the challenges of Barrio Promesa. (CCR, CSP)

#### **School Actors.**

*Superintendent and Principal.* The role of the SDS and the PPP provided vision and authority in transforming the elementary complex and Promesa Primary in particular as a center of social and educational life for the barrio. The SDS facilitated problem solving of district and neighborhood school issues in hiring and supporting the program of the PPP. The philosophy and resilient determination of the PPP recast Promesa Primary as El Centro Comunidad by engaging community partnerships in order to support the children and meet the educational goals of the school district. The PPP confides that a “political solution was not enough to meet the needs of her kids”, that if she ran into a “no, you can’t do that” she simply would not take no for an answer commenting with some measure of zeal “we were making it up as we went along!” She celebrated the “champions” she could turn to from the community partnerships that would “provide resources with one phone call.” (PPP, GM1, GM2, CPS, CCR, BPFCP1)

The PPP's expertise in language acquisition<sup>22</sup> also proved essential for her students, teachers and the School district to regain “performing and performing plus” status with the State Department of Education throughout her tenure. The PPP also showed collaborative leadership finding the resources and establishing the partnerships that would support her constituent families all the while pushing back against the negativity inside and outside the school system.

The SDS prescriptive actions would fit formally is the social planning model of the Community Practices framework as his vision that the school complex provides a cohesive social function invokes both locality development and social action as strategies. The PPP professionally and personally engaged elements of all three models of community development and in her passionate belief in the children as the future leaders of community is embedded an aspect of the ABCD development framework. Both administrators showed themselves to be transformative leaders as well as facilitative partners in the successful innovations at Promesa Primary.

*21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Actors.* The role of Grant Manager is one of facilitating funding, partnerships and programming in fulfilling federal policy in service to the school and community. Grant Managers 1 and 2 facilitated the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC of 2003 and 2008 respectively. Both practiced vision and innovation in establishing, scaling up and sustaining their program. Their formal approach to the community bounded as they were to the criteria of the grant aligns the program within the social planning model of the

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<sup>22</sup> The principal of Promesa Primary has PhD in education with an emphasis in language acquisition, administration and leadership. Her M.A. was in English language learning, and also holds a minor in adult psychology.

Community Practices framework. Additionally, the degree to which both brought personal energy, time and resources to transforming the school thru innovative outreach and partnerships to become the center of community life engages aspects of social planning and locality development. (GM1, GM2, PPP, CPS, BPNAAP, CAO, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC docs)

The heart and commitment both GMs practiced in fulfilling the mission of the grant has been considered exemplary and they are lauded by many confidants as champions for the neighborhood. Acting as facilitators both were strategic partners in fulfilling the vision of the PPP. Before the Bell, and After the Bell academic programs were vital in partnership with the classroom teachers and essential in motivating students' academic and personal achievements. Outreach to parents through adult education and enrichment helped to build a level of trust between school and family that enhanced community life. (GM1, GM2, PPP, CPS, BPNAAP, CAO, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC docs, Local Press 2011)

GM 2, challenged with the cessation of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant funding as of the spring of 2013, established new funding support for a number of the outreach programs and partnerships to continue. Program initiatives and meeting spaces were moved into a refitted elementary building outside the barrio. In this past year (2013), the GM 2 showed resilience in the fight to keep the food pantry open at the new location pushing back a challenge from inside the district. (GM2, CPS, BPNAAP, NSDC3)

The work of the Parent Liaisons (PL1 and PL2) provided an essential aspect in developing relationships with adult members of the community most notably the women of the barrio. The coffee talk program, Cafecitos, developed a core group of 40 moms

who have been strengthened through their partnership to engage the program and school in exemplary actions of self-governance. Each PL's back round provided them with an intimate understanding of family and gender cultural constraints as Hispanic women in empowering the "forty moms" who had become regular participants with the Cafecitos social and adult education programming. (PL1, PL2, GM1, GM2, PPP, CPS, BPNAAP, CAO, NSDC3, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC docs)

Many neighborhood actors lauded the mission and partnership from Kids Camp in extending academic enrichment and youth activities. The Director's life experience and compassion for the children help to establish the longevity of the youth outreach program and the trust of children. The Kids Camp Director (KCD) imbues a street level passion to the work having been raised in a middle and working class southern border community, herself an Anglo of Jewish heritage and bilingual. Her own volunteerism as a teenager and early work experience as a youth counselor inform her sense of "being able to see both sides" of Mexican and Anglo society in a way that gives her credibility with the After the Bell and Summer Camp participants. (KCD, GM1, GM2, PPP, CPS, BPNAAP, CAO, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC docs, Kids Camp Web Page)

### **Civil Society Actors.**

*Business Alliance President.* It appears a journey from business owner to community organizer flows through the compassion and heart for some who become transformative community development actors. The story of the electrical supplies business owner initially motivated by a spike in robberies degrading the value of his business turned community organizer sets the precedent for transformative leadership in community initiatives. This business owner hopeful to retire and sell his business tells of



his early attempts to organize neighboring businesses to approach the city regarding concerns for crime and destabilizing effect on property values. He confides that in his first journey into the neighborhood that lay behind his store he was moved to see what it was could be done to “change the slum like conditions and direction of the neighborhood and do the right thing for the families and the children (BPBAP)!” (BPBAP, CPS, CCR, CAO)

It appears that the combined motivations of the heart and the pocketbook set this man apart as he was recruited by the CCR and the CPS to organize and lead the Barrio Promesa Business Alliance in 2001. A clear vision for what needs to be done and his skepticism that the city was able to respond motivated his rationality and engaged his compassion into purposeful action changing the trajectory of the neighborhood. Through his leadership of the new Business Alliance and collaborations across the sectors of development initiatives the Day Worker Center, the Fight Back grant, advocacy for after-school, youth programs and the effort to build the Boys and Girls Club were realized. The models of locality development and social action were engaged as well social planning interventions through the partnerships shared with city and school district agents. (BPBAP, CPS, CCR, CAO, PPP, BPNAAP, PBRCP, BGCOD, GM1, RLPP)

*Neighborhood Action Alliance President.* The journey of the restaurant owner turned Neighborhood Action Alliance President is no less a transformative journey. Initially the loss of profits and the crowding out of his customers by journaleros moved this business owner to address problems in the neighborhood. Finding common ground and concern with other business owners led to his collaborative relationships with the city, school and the newly established Business Alliance. This man would become the

next leader of the Business Alliance and oversee the transformation of the institution as the Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Action Alliance. (BPNAAP, CPS, CCR, NSDC1)

Seeing past personal concerns and embracing the purpose of “improving the quality of life for the children and the families” became his internal motivation. It was his voice that spoke out in the neighborhood park for the journaleros at the Day Worker Center when the backlash of politics and reactionary protests came to the neighborhood. When asked to explain this transition from concerned business owner to community leader he answered that it was a “mystery ...that appeared to be divine; [that it was] something that he was meant to do (BPNAAP).”

Community development frameworks may not be appropriate in attempting to define and categorize the entrepreneur’s willingness to go well past his own business concerns and continue as a binding force in keeping the collaborative space of the action alliance functional. The later years of 2008 present many challenges to the BPNAA existence if not for his conscious effort to “stay firm and be a cohesive force, concentrating on the positives”. His own journey probably most closely aligns with social action and, through collaborative partnerships, social planning. There is a latent potential of the neighborhood action alliance to become a sustaining force for locality development in the neighborhood. This entrepreneur turned activist acknowledges that ‘a buzz’ about the establishment of a nonprofit has been revisited recently. (BPNAAP, CPS, CCR, GM2, NSDC1)

***Revitalization Coalition President.*** The homebuilder turned president of the Revitalization Coalition understood through her managing of sub-contractors in the building trades what it took to establish a cohesive structure. As president of her construction

company and a chief contractor for a condo complex in the neighborhood, she had observed the crime and gang related challenges. The BPRCP shared that her own upbringing was humble, of Columbian heritage, and that she was the only girl attending the boys club in her childhood neighborhood to play basketball. (BPRCP, CPS, CAO)

The BPRCP shared that in earlier community foundation work she had experience with the mission and vision process of community initiatives and the significance of youth programming for the vitality of neighborhoods. It was in this way this president brought the technical knowledge, leadership abilities, and vision to establish the Revitalization Coalition in partnership with the actors and agencies from all three sectors of development initiatives. Seeking to build the coalition with as many “voices in the neighborhood as stakeholders” the BPRC produced the Barrio Promesa Action Plan (2003), engaging the necessary partners to establish the Boys and Girls Club at the elementary school complex. She also established a coalition of builders who were successful in their effort to achieve “in fill” status for the neighborhood which lowered fees and shortened the building permit process. (CPS, PPP, GM1, BPBAP, IC, BPFC, NSDC, CCR)

Application of the community foundation model, transformative leadership abilities in achieving coalition and mission, and her business experience blended all three models: locality development, social planning and social action in achieving the initiatives of the BPRC. Attributes of leveraging assets (stakeholder inclusion) and capacity building (coalition and partnership) of the ABCD model are also invoked in the development initiatives driven through the Revitalization Coalition. Under her transformative leadership style all stakeholders were asked what their needs were, and

“what gifts are you bringing” in building the coalition. (CPS, PPP, BPNAAP, CCR, CAO)

*Interfaith Community.* Of five or six faith-based entities bringing initiatives to the neighborhood one stands out for both longevity and levels of initiative. The Regional Lutheran Parrish recognized the “felt needs of the people” in the barrio refocusing their social outreach ministries in discovering the poverty and challenges of the immigrant community well within their territory. Lay leadership established their social justice ministry with the intention of affecting the quality of life of the schoolchildren in partnership with the Primary school beginning in the late 1990s. (RLPP, BPHLA, CPS, CCR, GM1, GM2)

Seeing the opportunity to be impactful longer term led to the establishment of the Barrio Promesa Family Church in 2003, also in partnership with Promesa Primary as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. The pastor established a holistic sense of community stewardship as put forth in the Church mission statement: “in service for both the people who pass through the community as well as those who put down roots and remain. The family church can add a sense of purpose and permanence to the community.” (RLPP, BPFCP1, BPFCP2, BPHLA, CPS, CCR)

A parishioner and community activist of the Regional Lutheran Parish expanded the social justice outreach mission through the development of Barrio Promesa Homebuilders. The BPH lay activist (BPHLA) explained the mission of the nonprofit was to build affordable homes and assist qualified families in achieving home ownership. Six single-family homes were built in collaboration with NSDC and City Planning. (RLPP, BPHLA, CPS, CCR, CAO)

The Regional Lutheran Parrish pastor (RLPP) highlighted perhaps the most significant contribution of the congregation is the energy and vision of institutional leaders who influenced the neighborhood. Leaders who were also parishioners included three superintendents of the school district, and the neighborhood precinct captain who rose through the ranks to become chief of police. Each of these leaders incorporated the ministry of the church in stewardship of their agency resources on behalf of the efforts in the adopted barrio. This is most clearly revealed in the vision and transformative leadership of the SDS who made possible the virtuous phase of development initiatives during his tenure at the school district. Other lay leaders, perhaps less visible have been sturdy in their commitment to the barrio through their volunteer service, assisting in coordination of program, and donation of resources. In this way the dominant development role of the church and its parishioners has been of social action in meeting needs however, the ABCD criticism of a client based relationship may be an unintended consequence. (RLPP, BPHLA, CPS, CAO, SDS)

*Hispanic Activist and Day Worker Center Director.* The development initiative vision, leadership and advocacy of the HA/DWCD closely aligns with the framework of social activism. Dedicated since young adulthood to advancing the understanding of Hispanic culture and history, political empowerment (inspired by the organizing mission of Caesar Chavez) the activist's passion became his life work. Through his employer, his activism was given an institutional basis from which to engage in the social, economic and political milieu. (HA/DWCD, CPS, CAO, NSDPI, BPNAAP, BPHLA, CCR)

Informed by hundreds of years of Hispanic migrations through the southwest, i.e. "Greater Mexico," his activism was both militant and pragmatic in seeking to resolve the

jornaleros challenges as well as the Hispanic residents. His vision for the Day Worker Center was to develop a Hispanic community center based in the vision of imbuing residents, especially the youth, with an appreciation of Mexican history and culture. His resilience in finding the resources and blunting the political vehemence of the anti-immigration movement are exemplary. Politics and economics undermined his efforts though not his voice. (HA/DWCD, CPS, CAO, NSDPI, BPNAAP, BPHLA, CCR)

### **Challenges and Accomplishments**

The ‘weaving of a tapestry’ metaphor proves to be useful in responding to the question of significant challenges and accomplishments of community development initiative and school-community partnerships. Primary threads selected for analysis in this case include the criteria of leadership, collaboration, resources, inclusiveness and sustainability. I considered these criteria as the weaver would carefully select what threads to apply in making the whole piece of cloth to more fully understand the story of Barrio Promesa. To appreciate each of these criteria we must understand that they are individual threads that achieve their meaning in the context of the community development initiatives, and school community partnerships within the neighborhood. So too the underlying forces from outside the neighborhood challenging the development initiatives within must also be accounted for if we are to fully value the resulting tapestry and the resilience of the wick. This part of the Findings chapter addresses the challenges first, then secondly considers each of the criteria, and finishes with the accomplishments hoping to realize the robust story of Barrio Promesa and the weaving that compels this case study.

## **The Politics of Immigration**

The realities of Hispanic migration to the ‘urban gateway island’ that became Barrio Promesa engendered internal and external challenges resulting in various impacts including: a) culture, b) poverty, c) low educational achievement, d) an informal economy, and e) the race infused politics of anti-immigration.<sup>23</sup> The backlash against the Hispanic immigrant community was an underlying challenge to the quality of life within the barrio. The underground nature of living life as if invisible (given the challenges of being undocumented residents) evoked a “shadow society” which complicated initiatives.<sup>24</sup> All three sectors of agency and development initiative were impacted by these factors. Every city, school and civil society actor interviewed noted the intended and unintended effects on development initiatives. A NSD agent articulated the underlying tension in this way:

The barrio was a microcosm of the political wrangling in the state and country at the time. The economics and family structures were directly impacted as the new laws were implemented. [Attempting to] build community among a community that felt marginalized was difficult, and at times next to impossible. So, yes the passage of the stricter immigration laws complicated our agency's efforts and the efforts of others working to strengthen the community which was already facing difficulty. (NSDC2)

The Hispanic Activist suggested the barrio was a “war zone!” He criticized the city, school and business actors as “disconnected [that they] did not see the people.” His

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<sup>23</sup> Several confidants were of the same opinion regarding the race bias of the anti-immigration rhetoric, politics and legislation that burdened the residents of the barrio and impacted the initiatives of these development agents. The CPS reference to the “southern strategy” of political brinkmanship infused into the debate seems plausible. The strategy plays to racism as a means of getting out the vote (Clifton, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> Interview and discourse with the Pastor of the Barrio Promesa Family Church evolved this framing of life in the Barrio manifest as a “shadow society.” (BPF2)

reference to the neighborhood feeling “militarized” was not unfounded as he inventoried the protests and politics that developed around the Day Worker Center, the ‘crime sweep’ of the Sherriff’s Department, enforcement actions in rounding up suspected gang members “that are our sons and daughters”, and INS (Immigration and Naturalization) actions in deportations that tore open families. (HA/DWCD)

The HA was adamant in recalling a series of events that took shape regarding mobile food vendors he entitled as the “Taco Wars.” He noted that a city statute was narrowly redefined for targeting these vendors restricting their mobility, location, music, and licensing. He reported that “200 taco entrepreneurs” were forced out of business negatively affecting life in the Hispanic community throughout the metro area. In this way the HA explained the distrust felt within the Hispanic community. (DWCM/HA, CPS, COA, Local Press 1999)

The ‘crime sweep’ in 2008 presented a more virulent example of the anti-immigration agenda perceived by many residents as an example of the “occupation” they feared. During the weekend of the ‘sweep’ a tank was parked at the primary northern entry point to the neighborhood and bright orange fencing cordoned off a major entry near the day worker center. The action shot through the barrio as 500 children were afraid to go to school for an entire week. Confidant’s report that the Sherriff’s actions were predicated on the petitioning of ten business owner’s peripheral to the neighborhood, approached by outside anti-immigration activists. The action galvanized the neighborhood resulting in a consort of voices who spoke out against the action based on concerns for social justice. (HA/DWCD, BPBAP, Padre II, PPP, CAO, CCR, BPNP, BPNS, Local Press 2008)



The BPF2 commented as to his parishioners “fear of deportation” and the possibilities of being separated from family that the residents live with every day. He referenced first hand that his parishioners were “scared” by the protestors on the street against the Day Labor Center and the actions of the Sheriff’s Department. The pastor shared that he had to look deeply into his faith to find a message of “peace and justice” that would strengthen his congregation. In his efforts he preached, “we are not criminal people... no need to live in fear...instead live life... [and practice]...compassion.” He summarized his homily to “engage in faith, forgiveness, and courage.” (BPF2)

Legislative Proposition 20004 is an early example of several anti-immigration laws<sup>25</sup> that directly impacted ongoing development initiative. The law restricted state and local governments from the provision of public benefits and required that public employees report immigration law violations of undocumented persons who apply for public benefits. It was clear to many actors that the new law was a reaction against public funding of the Day Worker Center. (Proposition 20004, CCR, HA/DWCD, BPNAAP, CPS, PPP, Local Press 2004)

Agential and resident response to such narrowly targeted legislation is instructive from a community development and humanitarian perspective. Neighborhood actors consistently showed an ethical and creative approach in managing these challenges. As one city agent commented, “front line agents implement [policy and program] with all the heart we can.” The tenacious compassion shown by development actors in providing

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<sup>25</sup> Proposition 20004, 30006, two House Bills and a Senate Bill all address in-migration as illegal immigration. These policies are perceived as a punitive attack by the Hispanic community. They bring negative impacts socially and economically. Perhaps a more proactive public policy (in the context of compassion and social justice) would be more constructive. The reader may wish to consider the following authors’ discourse on this subject (Portes, 1995; Borjas, 2007; Chomsky, 2014)

needed services was inspiring to others. The local community college could not continue to provide ESL adult education. A partner church offered to volunteer in providing the service as part of the ongoing social justice ministry of their congregation through collaboration with the IC. (NSDC1, CPS, CCR, GM1, CCP, BPNAAP)

The compassion shown on behalf of development actors in response to attempts to limit needed services in the neighborhood are truly acts of “significance” (Denhardt, 1993).<sup>26</sup> The city mayor is reported to have accessed his network to secure nonprofit agency support for the Day Worker Center. The same strategy was echoed in developing completely private funding for the establishment of the Boys and Girls Club in the neighborhood, without the use of city funds or benefits, avoiding any political backlash. Reference to development agents as “neighborhood champions” revealed a form of social action, and perhaps resistance given the political context. (CCR, CAO, NSDC1, DWCD/HA, BGCDO, CPS, PPP)

The undocumented resident living in the shadows “invisible and off the radar” of civil life was perhaps an act of “resilience” (Hall & Zautra, 2009) and perhaps civil disobedience. Family, school and work lives were established in Barrio Promesa. Migrating back into Mexico was not an option for established families. Living in the shadow society of the barrio was by default the better option for many. Achieving legal status from either the Mexican or U.S. government were considered limited options at best. (RLPCA, BPF1 and 2, CCP, GM1, CCR, HA/DWCD, BGCDO, BPR, BPS)

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<sup>26</sup> Denhardt (1993) in his discourse regarding public administrators and managers and finds for an orientation that embraces service delivery and policy implementation that impact individual and community life for the better as “acts of significance” (vs. an orientation based strictly on efficiency).

## **Leadership Challenges**

### **City.**

Many interviewees suggested that the primary challenge in the barrio was the absence of residents in leadership as they were not directly engaged in the process of governance or community development strategy. The CCR voiced her frustration that the representative voices of the community were not present and that the opportunity to develop those persons of leadership did not materialize. (HA/DWCD, CCR, CPS, NSDC1)

The sense that leadership within the majority Hispanic community did not surface was shared amongst development agents of the NSD. As one NSD Coordinator mused it would have been better to have developed a community basis for leadership suggesting “perhaps now there is a better opportunity.” Another agent suggested that the neighborhood leadership did not materialize that could have evolved “a sense of place” finding instead that the “professionals defined it.” (NSDC1, NSDC2) The essence of this criticism evokes the critique of the social planning model regarding professional prescription rather than locally driven development decisions

The NSDC1 questioned the lack of clarity in development policy as to “what is the line” of criteria regarding initiative goals. He shared a frustration as to “how far to push” for community based leadership citing the challenges of trust and rancorous politics as factors. The agent alluded to an informal limit on discussion within agency culture regarding the political impacts on development policy. This agent summarized the resulting process of initiatives as a recurring “ameliorative cycle.” He considered that

perhaps there was a sense of limitation to development efforts in order to “keep Barrio Promesa in Barrio Promesa as a “buffer” for the surrounding community. (NSDC1)

### **School.**

Frustration voiced by confidants regarding the school districts limitations of responsiveness to the neighborhood suggested administrators were “protective of the districts image.” Interviewees cited the political and economic milieu as a source of significant pressure on district leadership. Neighborhood actors commented regarding the apparent intent of district governance to “manage the issues” at the school complex “inside the barrio” in an effort of preventing those problems from “leaking into the school system.” There are city agents who deride the decision to close a nearby elementary school while building the intermediate school within the barrio as exemplary of the sense of containment. (CCR, CPS, PPP, CAO, BPNAAP, HA/DWCD)

No confidants cited an outright animosity or racial intolerance projected against the residents. There was however, a fundamental challenge to the school district system regarding “insensitivity to the unique needs of the Hispanic community.” The perceived lack of sensitivity was enough for LULAC to engage the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education to bring suit against the district. The PPP observed that district governance and leadership “held highly political views about the neighborhood that put academic support as a secondary focus. It was always about parents not complaining directly to the Board, not suing or not going to the press.” (CCR, CPS, PPP, HA/DWCD)

The CPS commented as to a fundamental difference in philosophy of “equity vs. equality” in meeting the unique challenges of the schoolchildren. District administrative leadership was reported to have practiced a philosophy of equality of resource

expenditure across the system. Administrative leadership in the district was criticized for practicing a policy of equal resources to teachers and schoolchildren. The logic was reported to be more than frustrating given the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program funded resources and salaries for the after school programs. This tension was apparently exacerbated as Promesa Primary's academic achievement and climate became exemplary. The PPP confirms what seemed as an "ongoing attack of her leadership and academic programs [as she felt] under constant pressure" given demands for accountability by district secondary leadership and other building principals. The tension between primary and intermediate school leadership and staff regarding resources and program apparently added to the pressure. (PPP, GM1, GM2, SDS, CPS, CCR, PIP, CAO, BPNAAP)

The CPS is adamant in countering the district policy of equality arguing for the necessity of "equitable distribution of resources in responding to the needs of the schoolchildren, that they are provided an equal opportunity for academic achievement." The observation regarding school district leadership as "closed and disconnected" belies the frustration of some development actors. The CCR and CPS question rhetorically "at what point, what number, would district or school leadership acknowledge their failures!" These actors were no longer willing to accept reports of 'almost success' if not for the challenges of transience and ESL cited by administrators as if shielding them from further accountability. The CPS levied harsher criticism as he surmised, "the administration has set the Barrio Promesa children up to fail!"<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Friedman (1997) comments as to the "private fief" like nature of "centralized" public school systems. He comments as to the inequity of resource distribution especially in marginalized urban schools. Ostrom & Ostrom (1999, p. 81) postulate "government institutions can become instruments of tyranny when some

The departure of the SDS in 2009 was prologue to the close of the virtuous phase of development initiatives centered at Promesa Primary. The PPP reported that the following academic year was difficult as she “felt more vulnerable” without the SDS there to “watch her back.” Her own health challenges were reported as the cause for her retirement at the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

New building leadership was put in place the following year, and the dismantling of El Centro Comunidad began. A possible indicator of the significance of the PPP’s impact is that after nine years of meeting State Department of Education standards for ‘performing’ and ‘performing plus’ the new leadership (and the changes made to internal programs and external outreach) was not able to sustain the achievement trajectory at the primary school. Perhaps this turn was foreshadowed recalling the intermediate school was challenged with achieving performing or better status until the 2010 academic year.<sup>28</sup>

### **Civil Society.**

Succession of leadership within the Barrio Promesa Business Alliance, the Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition, and the Barrio Promesa Family Church brought subtle though significant changes to these neighborhood institutions. The BPBAP put his electrical goods business up for sale in 2004 as it was his intention to retire. The CCR and

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dominate the allocation of goods in a society to the detriment of others.” For example the failure of school systems to respond to minority publics’ demand for their public resources.

<sup>28</sup> State Measurement transitioned from the Average Yearly Performance to a Letter Grade criteria. The Intermediate achieved grades of C/2011, C/2012, and B/2013 academic years. The Primary achieved grades of C, D, and D in the same years. (SDEWS) I note again the caviotte that there are many variables influencing student achievement of which building leadership, program and environment are but a few. Causality of achievement based on any one variable, or a few would be suspect; however there may be correlation in regards to the remarkable character of the PPP’s leadership and program to achievement.

CPS recruited the restaurant entrepreneur to lead the meetings. Significant support from the CCR's office for the taking of minutes and any printing needed was promised. A subtle shift in leadership style occurred as the new president accepted his position perceiving the role as that of a facilitator. As the new president for the Business Alliance explained his role he was to provide the “glue...to keep the business alliance together in meeting the needs of the neighborhood.” The Business Alliance influence transitions to a stewardship approach to initiatives. (BPBAP, BPNAAP, CCR, CPS, PPP)

Leadership and mission of the Revitalization Coalition appeared to move on having achieved the founding of the Boys and Girls Club. The leader for this coalition moved on to other home building ventures and out of active leadership of the coalition. The collaborative energies and partnerships unique to the BPRC were folded into the BPBA. The Business Alliance strategy to become more inclusive changed its name to the Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Action Alliance subsuming the mission though perhaps not the same inclusiveness and energies of its predecessor. (CCR, CPS, BGCD, PPP, NSDC1)

The IC continues to this day in organizing itself around the “felt needs” of the neighborhood families and the schoolchildren. A significant voice was lost as the founding pastor for the BPFC was released from his service. Several confidants surmised that as the pastor became intentional in protecting the neighborhood families from the rising fears of anti-immigration sentiment he may have become too visible in those social justice efforts. His efforts to protect his parishioners may have been too external in nature; i.e., establishing a texting response network and leading a ‘Unity March.’ It is

telling, and perhaps fitting, that the pastor now in service at the Church looked inward in his ministry. (RLPP, BPFCP1, BPFCP2, PPP, CCR, CPS, CAO)

**“Picking Off” Leadership.**

There is evidence, testimony, and observation of events that suggested leadership of development initiatives can be accompanied with moderate to high levels of professional and at times personal risk. Clearly, there were forces from outside the barrio that appeared to have had a vested interest in confrontation with development initiatives, and targeted those persons who were visible as leaders.

The CCR suffered an attempted recall during her first year in office due to her support for the Day Worker Center. The Hispanic Activist who became the Day Worker Center Director was threatened for his advocacy of the jornaleros. He exclaimed “they try to pick off the leaders!” The political action of the pastor in organizing the Unity March came with risk to his ministry. The CAO was relieved of his beat for six months while waiting out an investigation regarding allegations of overstepping his authority as part of an INS action. He was exonerated. So too, the second of the Business Alliance Presidents was derided by protestors alleging he hires “illegal’s” at his restaurants which brought internal pressures from the corporate partners of the franchise.

Less visible are the internal organizational risks to mid-level city service employees and school district personnel who placed themselves into agency on behalf of the barrio residents, families and children. There are those city agents who found their hands tied and their ability to be of service diminished. The PPP noted a “constant pushback” in regards to her leadership. The first of the intermediate school principal’s is



reported to have felt unsupported in his leadership as well. (NSDC1, NSDC2, NSDC3, NSDPI, PPP, CAO)

### **Accomplishments: Transformative and Facilitative Leaders**

Two threads of leadership accomplishment surfaced through the case study interviews are closely aligned with the frameworks of facilitative (Svara et al., 1994) and transformative (Burns, 1978; Gardner, 1990) leadership attributes.<sup>29</sup> These attributes may not appear in complete framework sets and may overlap in the actions of development actors. What is significant is that some measure of these attributes is present with consistency in the behaviors of those actors who are identified as having impact as leaders.

Accomplishments of facilitative leaders appear to have had the ability to react to challenges and organize people in development activities while enabling access to resources for development initiatives. Transformative leaders' accomplishments focus on the attributes of driving mission, purpose and process in their role as proactive community development visionaries. It is interesting to note that as many development actors share their own experience each reveals a sense of transformation in their motivation from an internal orientation towards an external commitment to the other; i.e. to positively impact the quality of life of the children and families of Barrio Promesa.

The line between these two sets of leader attributes is subtle, fuzzy perhaps, definitively academic, and perhaps they are complementary. Many confidants speak of a

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<sup>29</sup> The leadership framework of Svara et al., (1994) suggests the concept facilitating resources and technical knowledge in stewardship of other's agency. The transformative frame from Burns (1978) moves from transaction based endeavor to transformation of agency and agent. Gardner (1990) suggests a transformation of values amongst agency leaders as well agency personal, community leaders and participants, and civil society generally.

“synergy” of person’s working in partnership to bring about what has been defined here as the virtuous cycle of development initiatives. All informants mused about the injustice of poverty and humane desire to bring possibilities for the children and their families. The humble passion to improve the opportunities for the residents, no matter their immigration or economic status, in the context of the dominant political and perceived worldview of the district, city and state authorities appear driven by a moral courage on the part of development agents. Actions of civil resilience in pushing back against internal organizational hazards and/or external political and economic pressures in “putting people before policies” is driven by a deeply “public virtue” (Bellah et al., 2008/1985, Bozeman, 1997) that informs the actions of neighborhood “champions.”<sup>30</sup> (PPP, CAO, CPS, CCR, GM1, GM2, KCD, BPFCP1)

There are examples of formidable collaboration between a transformative leader working in concert with a facilitative partner. Transformative development initiatives were realized from these collaborations. The City Council Representative and the Hispanic Activist established the Day Worker Center together. Each of these leaders brought unique resources that facilitated the creation of the Center which was transformative for both in their professional lives, as well as the business and residential communities, and of course the jornaleros.

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<sup>30</sup> “Public virtue” is presented in *Habits of the Heart* (Bellah et. al., 2008/1985,) as a political science framework which speaks to a communitarian sense of the public In this values based discourse de Tocqueville’s reference to Americans penchant for civil mores as driven by their “habits of the heart” is cited. Bozeman (1997) extends the discourse balancing self-interest with public value in reframing the public interest. “Champions” is a referent used for several neighborhood actors in interview. A few actors received accommodations as Neighborhood Champions.

The relationship between district and primary school leaders provides a remarkable example of vision and resilience as the School District Superintendent facilitated the leadership of the Promesa Primary Principal who transformed her school into an academic success internally and a community social services center externally. Another example is the transformative partnership between the PPP and the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Grant Managers (1 and 2) who facilitated the resources that could fulfill this vision. In these examples, and other initiatives as well, the power of the right and left hand working together; i.e. the transformative visionary and the facilitative manager are two threads of leadership ability that provided an essential partnership in fulfilling development initiatives.

### **Growing Leadership in Barrio Promesa.**

**City Agencies.** The CCR and the CPS partnership in the creation of several neighborhood based coalitions recruiting and supporting new leadership transforming the lives of these individuals and creating the opportunity for collaborative acts of conscience to manifest as development initiatives. The electric storeowner and the restaurant entrepreneur each tell of their elevated sense of purpose from management of their business enterprises to community leadership of the Business Alliance, and the later Neighborhood Action Alliance. The homebuilder, in collaboration with the CPS, became the Revitalization Coalition leader who organized community actors significantly enriching youth opportunities through founding the Boys and Girls Club in the heart of the barrio.

Fight Back funding and strategy is embedded in the philosophies of locality development and social planning. The program is facilitated in collaboration with the

CCR's office and implemented with the vision of the CSP. The intervention process is to engage neighborhood residents in strategies as to how to apply funding in the effort to combat crime.

The Block Watch program engages local residents as neighborhood leaders in partnership with the CAO and the RRT. NSDC1 suggested that these programs are of limited impact and subject to diminished returns as funding streams change and neighborhood anchors feel unsupported or simply move on. He commented as to a certain "dividend in learning to organize" at the grass roots level. The CPS reflected on the "need to have established more Block Watches, and the challenge in establishing leadership within the Hispanic community. (NSDC1, CSP, CAO, CCR)

Leadership development programs offered by NSDC agents have included the Good Neighbor Program, Neighborhood College and Neighborhoodology. There does not however appear to have been a great deal of traction in the neighborhood for these programs, and for a variety of reasons. The Good Neighbor Program is an effort to organize a neighborhood group to partner with the City in addressing quality of life concerns, less so the crime prevention focus of the Fight Back and Block Watch programs.

The Barrio Promesa United Hispanic Neighbors, established in 2000, included in the statement of objectives "to be heard and included in neighborhood issues." There is no known record of actions or agency by this group though listed as a neighborhood organization thru 2011. Another effort to establish a Good Neighbor Program unknowingly recruited a parent of known gang members effectively engaging the volunteer leader as a mole as to City and Police activities. This NSD agency effort met

with strong criticism from Police and Gang Enforcement entities surfacing a riff between the two City agencies. (NSDC1, NSDC3, CPS, CAO)

The Neighborhood College program is intended to engage residents in leadership workshops and training as to how to access City services. The Neighborhoodology program presents the strategy of developing a sense of place by study of the unique features of the neighborhood by a select group of residents. Neither program is on record of implementation in the neighborhood. (NSDC1)

One city agent noted these programs “have good intent, but are not grounded in the realities of the neighborhood.” This agent commented that the Crime Free training of multi-family housing managers was “not very successful.” He noted that what looked like a “good [policy strategy] idea on paper...was [in reality] asking property managers to go out of business” considering the competitive realities of the informal economy of the rental market in the barrio. (NSDC1, CPS, NSDPI, CAO)

**School Outreach.** The requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grant are intentional as to engaging residents in partnership with the school and community. The approach of the “cafecitos”, the coffee talk outreach, is instructive. Led by the Parent Liaison (PL) who coordinates the group participation over the years grew from a few to upwards of forty women. What is interesting is the reported “empowerment of the Forty Moms” who found their collective voice given their shared concerns for their children in the school and family life in the barrio.

First established as an afternoon coffee for the neighborhood parents the GM1 and PL1 realized the cultural challenges for attendance in the afternoon given responsibilities of motherhood on the home front and that the fathers were working. Once established as

a morning coffee the gatherings flourished engaging neighborhood mothers, predominantly Hispanic, in conversation and a self-governed curriculum intentional in the purpose of assisting these women to “navigate” the school and government agencies. (GM1, GM2, PL1, PL2, CPS, PPP, CCR)

Presentations by a variety of development actors and adult education included domestic violence assistance, nutrition, parenting, technical assistance, immigration, English, and landlord tenant education, crime prevention and gang awareness. The shift from a social work philosophy to a strategy self-empowerment through facilitating an “authentic dialog” between the women in attendance proved to be transformative for all involved in the process. The GM2 commented as to this shift of focus from a services model to a community engagement strategy as the ‘Forty Moms’ became a “rich resource.” The PL2 noted that as the program turned to listening with intention these women became more self-directed “often staying well past the meeting time to discuss their plans for the group, their concerns and plans, and network.”

Engaging the ‘moms’ in visioning their children’s future through visits to the university and a consistent mantra of “you can do it” from program staff proved to be powerful. The trust established in meeting the needs of the women; i.e. “filling in the gaps” strengthened their will to be heard and proved a “win win” for neighborhood and the school district. The Dia de las Mujeres (Day of the Women) Festival was a direct result of this effort of intentional engagement. The ‘Women’s’ Festival’ presented a comprehensive collaboration of city, school and civil society services and information in a celebration of the women and culture of the barrio. (GM1, GM2, PL1, NSDC3, CPS, PPP, CCR, CAO, BPF2, BPNP, Local Press 2007)

The cafecitos program success in self-governance, voice and access is perhaps the unique story of locality and social action efforts coming together in the barrio. The capacity of the “Forty Moms”, as they are now affectionately embraced, transcends race, gender, and access issues in effectively empowering these women. They are involved in the education of their children and know how to address the school and District administrations in meeting their needs. The transformation of these women, homebound and invisible to each other, into a collective and active voice for their children and families is perhaps an exemplary story of asset and capacity development as well. Their transformation reportedly motivated the GM2 and PL2 as they have continued to find ways in attempting to sustain program aspects of the outreach and cafecitos though the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant officially ended.

**Civil Society Efforts, *the Barrio Promesa Family Church.*** The pastor who founded the Barrio Promesa Family Church engendered a transformative philosophy of the wholeness and dignity of human life. He is passionate regarding this holistic philosophy founded in faith and “in the heart of every person.” He commented with an awareness of how this fundamental philosophy was parallel with the philosophy and initiatives of the PPP, the CPS, the BPRC and the various entities bringing their gifts. The ministries established through the Family Church were of wholeness of the family, and the role of the church in their lives and community. As he explained, these ministries were to teach leadership within the church community. (PBFCP1, RLPP, RLPCA, BPFC)

Asked if this leadership took on a secular political role, the pastor was adamant that the focus was internal to the faith-based community given the fear of deportation and anti-immigration policy should parishioners make themselves too visible publicly and

politically. The internal focus on faith and the role of the Family Church was echoed in discussion with the second of the pastors. This said the social justice message of his leadership and example gave shape to an IAF form of social action leadership development, and the ministries of church community leadership are parallel with a locality and perhaps ABCD capacity development strategy. (BPFCP1, BPFCP2)

**Youth Leadership Education: 21st CCLC, S.A.L.S.A., Kids Camp.** The School district office of Community Education had been engaged in outreach efforts prior to the two 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grants. There are reports of an after school youth activity program at the middle school, where there was also an in-house Boys and Girls Club presence. Out of the neighborhood geographically, and across a major street, the program served some measure of support for those youth that had the resources to get over and back after school.

Evidently, the youth program director, hired as a Parent Advocate under Title I funding, became out spoken about civil rights issues of the neighborhood adopting an activist approach. Perceived to having become a “rabble rouser” instead of a more collaborative mentoring approach she was released in the spring of 2003 as Title I funding was redirected back into the neighborhood school programming. Her arrest in 2004 over an INS action resulting in the deportation of three neighborhood teens (which she smuggled back into the country in the trunk of her car) was considered to have been an act of compassion though lacking of good judgment, and illegal. (SDS, CAO, CPS, Local Press 2004)

With the establishment of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program came a requirement to engage school age children in a variety of academic enrichment and character development



programming. The After the Bell (ATB) program included math, science and reading support as well as art, athletics and the S.A.L.S.A. program. Participants conforming and achieving in the academic portion of the ATB program were rewarded with the opportunity to participate in S.A.L.S.A. This leadership component of ATB engaged youth in self-esteem, team building, communication and conflict resolution training; and community engagement and problem solving thru a neighborhood service project. The S.A.L.S.A. curriculum i.e. Student Academy for Leadership and Self-Awareness was a collaborative effort on behalf of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC staff, AmeriCorps volunteers from the nearby Community College, the Kids Camp Youth Foundation Director.

The S.A.L.S.A. leadership component fit well with the mentoring philosophy of the Kids Camp Youth Foundation, an early nonprofit partner with the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant. Kids Camp (KC) was woven into the ATB program pairing neighborhood children with high school and college age teens as mentors. The KC serves students after school, in the summer session day camp, and for three one-week overnight camp sessions at a donated facility in the mountains north of the City.

The Kids Camp Director (KCD) explains that the motivation to participate in the mentoring program activities after school and in summer is so powerful that children meet the additional academic demands of the AFB with the hope of participating and perhaps making it to overnight camp. The KCD was recognized as a Champion in partnership with the Mayor's office. A recently established component, "Club KC" engages Boys and Girls Club Teen Club members as counselors in training at the summer day school and overnight programs. In this way, an additional level of mentoring and youth development is layered into the youth outreach collaboration between Kids Camp,

the Boys and Girls Club, and the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. (GM1, GM2, KCD, BGCBM, PPP, CPS, CCR, BPNAAP, NP, NS, Local Press 2005)

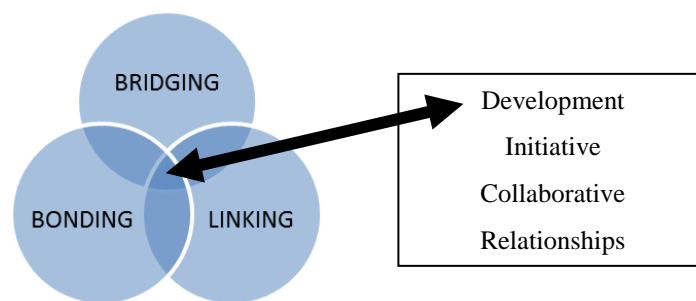
**The Boys and Girls Club.** The Boys and Girls Club mission states the agencies purpose is to “enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens.” As a part of the citizenship component there is a two-tiered leadership program, which is based in character development for the primary age youth, and a civic engagement project under the self-governance of the high school age Teen Club members. A Teen Club graduate, now of college age, envisioned the Club KC partnership with Kids Camp now an integral part of both programs. The BGC leadership program may fulfill the vision of the PPP in suggesting the future leaders of the neighborhood would be come through the Club. The BGC and the Cafecitos outreach may develop leadership capacity as an asset towards future development initiatives in the neighborhood. Indeed a B & G Club youth leadership winner is the adult child of a Cafecitos Mom, and possesses a strong sense of place with Barrio Promesa. (BGCBM, BGCD0, PPP, GM2, PL1, NP, NS)

### **Collaboration**

Various aspects of collaboration have been alluded to throughout the discussion of leadership above and the case study generally. The neighborhood is rich in networking and partnerships in realizing the development initiatives there. These partnerships between the school, the city and various civil society entities were intentional in producing resources required to meet the needs of the residents. A few collaborations were proactive in their vision to bring new capacity, asset and institution to the neighborhood. Not all initiatives succeeded and few have been sustained long term.

### **Social Capital Analysis of Collaborations.**

The realization and sustaining of initiatives seems to be correlated with the individuals involved. Collaborative partnerships manifest in the relationships between persons, and their agencies. The lens of social capital may bring into sharper focus an understanding of these relationships in the context of community development and school community partnerships. It is a worthwhile exercise to analyze collaboration through the framework of social capital. The framework provides a means of differentiating the types of partnerships taking place in a unique urban development scenario with significant global characteristics as the “gateway”. These three types of social capital: bonding, bridging and linking are applied as lens for analysis of the relationships across the three sectors of development initiatives in Barrio Promesa. The three types of social capital are applied in the analysis of the community development collaborations that occurred in Barrio Promesa. As depicted below it is the zone of overlap of the three types of socio-economic relationships where a robust collaboration can materialize in development initiatives.



*Figure 2* Bonding, Bridging and Linking Types of Social Capital

**Bonding types of collaborations in Barrio Promesa.** The bonds of family, culture and ethnicity are implied in the realities of the census data and played out daily at

the two schools, and in the multifamily complexes. These bonds provide an internal foundation for the families providing a sense of security within barrio life. Hispanic family life and the common cultural mores provide a shield that protects and pushes back against economic, social and political hardship. Many confidants speak to the “struggle of daily survival” including food insecurity, risks to health, and getting by on the wages of the days’ work. The cash-based informal economy cuts both ways in providing flexibility and at the same time leaving families vulnerable. The risk of deportation and the fear of seeing families torn apart are mitigated by the cloak of family and cultural life. (PPP, GM1, GM2, PL1, PL2, CAO, CPS)

Development initiatives from the school complex and the faith-based community have been the most successful in bringing initiatives as there is a fundamental structural connection to family life embedded within these two institutions. The trust and respect for the teacher and the pastor are fundamental in Hispanic culture. School agents tell of the parents bringing their children to the edge of the school-yard though no further as a metaphor of the boundaries between school and family. On the one hand, a show of respect of the institution of the school; and on the other hand, an explication of the challenges of engaging Hispanic parents in the educational life of their children (Valdez, 1996). The PPP tells of her instinct that to engage the family system it was necessary to “win the trust of the abuela,” the grandmother. The pastor who founded the Family Church tells of his earliest successes in ‘meeting with 4 or 5 families in the living room’

of one of the matriarchs of the barrio; not surprisingly the same abuela.<sup>31</sup> (PPP, BPFCP1, GM1, CPS, CAO)

Police and NSD agents have a more challenging time in entering into the culture and impacting family life. As they are representative of the city, they are “suspect of being of the larger social and political environment that is a constant source of fear.” As the HA/DWCD frames it these agents are “a part of the occupation forces.” The CAO and CPS tell of their efforts to build relationship within the multi-family complexes by way of discovery and outreach to the abuelas. The CAO comments that “every multiplex has a matron that the other women and children trust and listen to.” (HA/DWCD, CAO, CPS)

The Community Prosecutor, Promesa Primary Principal, the Family Church Pastor and the Community Action Officer speak to the significance of having been raised in Latino or Hispanic culture, understanding poverty and the struggles of barrio life first hand. Each actor attests to the bond of being bilingual and a person of color. These actors speak to the trust that developed as consistency of presence and fairness of communication were applied in helping to meet the needs of families and their children while performing their obligations. Interestingly the GM2, KCD and BGCBM attest to the same possibility of acceptance when consistent, present and fair in offering resources and assistance. (PPP, BPFCP1, CPS, CAO, GM2, KCD, BGCBM)

There is a darker side to social capital (Portes, 2000) that is perhaps manifest in the barrio through the code of gang membership. Participation in gang life can be

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<sup>31</sup> Efforts in engaging this grandmother, the abuela referenced in both the Principal’s and the pastor’s story were nearly realized. At the last moment the GM2 called to inform me that the matron’s interview would need to be cancelled. Various attempts to interview long-term residents to hear their ‘community voices’ was repeatedly met with the same suspicion and refusal.

generational and in this way embedded in family and cultural life (Horowitz, 1987). Indoctrination into the code of gang membership can start very early in life. Fathers and older brothers can influence the perspective of children within the family structure (Shelden et al. 2013/2004). The pressure for recruitment of school-aged children was witnessed at the adjacent park and within the school boundaries. City agents are challenged to engage families of gang members. The CAO and HA/DWCD come to the same conclusion that to engage these families about gang activity can be asking them to reveal their own sons and therefore be confronted with the protective bond of family. Apparently a similar form of denial of gang life can take shape inter-agency as well.

A form of intra-agency bonding can also have negative effects on the internal culture of organizations with negative effects on collaboration between agencies. Intra-organizational bonds can be so close as to undermine communication and proactive action between agencies. The CAO and the CPS tell of the pushback from the school district and building administrators in acknowledging gang activity. Apparently there had been some resistance to engage in recognition of the influence of gangs within the school system. This disconnect resulted in red and khaki colors being chosen for the Intermediate school uniforms without realizing this would place children at risk of being mistaken as members of one gang in rivalry with another. (CPS, CAO, CCR)

Expectations for performance within an agency can also negatively affect collaboration between agencies. This can lead to interagency disconnect that can have nearly disastrous effects. The efforts of NSD to establish a Good Neighbor Program by recruiting a parent (a mother of a known gang member) could have undermined police and gang unit intelligence gathering and enforcement. (CPS, CAO, CCR)

**Bridging types of collaboration in Barrio Promesa.** The academic and social outreach of Promesa Primary and the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program combined in building bridges with access to family and neighborhood life. The PPP, GM 1 and II, and KCD confirm the trust and openness established with parents for programs on behalf of their children. As the Promesa Primary became the center for outreach and resource initiatives into the Hispanic community it became significant for any agency to be seen in partnership with El Centro Comunidad perceived as tacit approval of the PPP. The RRT, CAO, the CPS and the BPFPCP all had offices in the expanded complex of Promesa Primary. The Family Church moved its Sunday services to the cafeteria. The BPNAA, BPRC and the IC held their monthly meetings there.

Academic achievement and the social outreach combined to establish the centrality of the school and the PPP as essential to the credibility of any agency seeking to collaborate. GM2 acknowledges the goodwill and trust built through these types of bridging social capital efforts as parents grew to accept and embrace the intentionality of these development actors in the initiatives of their initiative, the emphasis on the individual development actors more so than their agencies. Residents confirm the impact of individual agents as being of good intention and therefore trust worthy people; and the recognition of those who were not as genuine as well. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC parent outreach coordinators tell of the bridge and trust built through the Cafecitos where a mom could seek assistance with immigration, school concerns, or confide as to domestic challenges at home. The PPP and both PLs benefited in their agential roles as they were also identified within the community on the bonding cultural level as Hispanic women.

As there are negative consequences to bonding social capital there are unintended effects between agencies seeking to build bridges into the barrio. The CAO acknowledges candidly that during the Knock and Walk outreach mistakes were made. This effort was intended to build communication and trust with city services and the BPBA. However, the door-to-door outreach occasionally turned up a resident with warrants for their arrest. It was necessary for police to follow up and make arrests of these individuals. The CAO acknowledges with frustration the undermining effect these arrests had on the Knock and Walk program. Tying these arrests to the Fight Back crime prevention effort had a negative effect for building trust and communication.

Developing bridging social capital can be intentional as a matter of common sense and yet be the most profound in sustaining development initiatives. The collaborative effects of individual business entities forming the BPBA, the collective initiative of the IC, and the power of bringing diverse stakeholders into the BPRC are testimony to the efficiencies and “public value”<sup>32</sup> of intentional efforts to build purposeful social capital. Very real change occurred for the synergies created through these collaborations as is reported through the virtuous phase of development initiatives in Barrio Promesa.

**Linking types of collaboration in Barrio Promesa.** Collaborating vertically to various city, state and national agencies can be a matter of voice and access. For Barrio Promesa, established early on as a disenfranchised county island, to achieve sustained agency and institutional response and resources is a transformational story at the macro

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<sup>32</sup> Moore, 1995; Bozeman, 2007 consider public action in the public interest defined in market terms as to efficiency of resources for results though both explore the social sphere in expanding the criteria to one of “public value” giving flesh and heart to such narrowly defined definitions of the common good based solely on neo-liberal terms.



level of analysis. Linking vertically through neighborhood-based entities to the next levels of government and private institutions, and leveraging these resources, is significant in understanding the development initiatives failures and successes.

The establishment of the Barrio Promesa Business Alliance and its relationship with the City Council Representative is instructive. The new BPBA and the CCR were able to leverage the newly formed relationship into accessing program, technical and financial support for the barrio. The Fight Back grant; the Day Worker Center; enhanced efforts and accountability from NSD; and enhanced collaboration at the city, state and federal levels were made possible through the link between the CCR's office and the Alliance. This linkage of relationship flows both ways as is revealed in the CCR's access to federal senatorial power in seeking the release of city monies already approved by the city Council to build the Day Worker Center. As anti-immigration forces escalated, a recall campaign of the CCR the BPBA leadership came out in support of her leadership undermining the recall effort. (CCR, BPBAP, BPNAAP, CPS, HA/DWCD, Local Press 2002)

The Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition established a collaboration of stakeholders at the neighborhood level that was able to leverage the voices of its diverse stakeholders in helping to bring the linkages and resources of the school district, city and the Boys and Girls Club leadership to the table. The effort established a model for inter-governmental collaboration and building of a club on school grounds now central to the well-being of the youth of the barrio and two other communities in the metropolitan area. (BGCPD, CPS, PPP, SDS, BPRCP)

It appears that linking social capital can also be initiated through a regional entity as was the case in founding the Barrio Promesa Family Church in collaboration with the Regional Lutheran Parish leadership and its access to the national institution of the church. Resources can flow in both directions up or down across the levels of institutional analysis. Similarly, the collaboration from the Mayor's office in networking nonprofit institutional support for the Day Worker Center was vital in sustaining that initiative. State and federal policy can also be impactful as the "tools of public action" (Salamon, 2000)<sup>33</sup> can drive the linkages necessary in bringing federal funding and accountability through the state and school district institution and manifest real transformation at the neighborhood school. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant requires networking efforts bridging the primary school with nonprofit, faith-based and city service providers in fulfilling the mission of building a stronger school and community partnership in order to enhance academic achievement and quality of life.

There can be a dark side to the power of linking social capital as is evidenced by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funding given leadership at the State Department of Education decision not to seek funding as the second grant for the primary school was about to run out. The result of this established further the dismantling of El Centro Comunidad and the significant impacts after school programs and community outreach. Less clear is the impacts of the grant on academic achievement as Promesa Primary slipped from passing to a D grade on States system of accountability two years before the program funding

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<sup>33</sup> Salamon (2000) finds for a New Governance commenting: "Instead of relying exclusively on government to solve public problems, a host of other actors is being mobilized... often in complex partnerships with the state."

ended the initiatives. This may have something more to do with the change in leadership and internal curriculum and school climate choices.

More repugnant are the reactionary forces of race intolerant political endeavor that mounted repeated attacks in the barrio and against the community development initiatives that took shape there. These forces are negatively linked to the barrio in their vehement reactionary responses that manifest through formal and informal action. The reports of Anglo bikers waving pistols and shouting anti-immigration and race infused slogans at the jornaleros appear to be individual acts of conscious (or unconsciousness) clothed in patriotism and civil rights jargon. These acts are in fact linked to anti-immigration campaign and/or white supremacist, separatists, and neo-Nazi agency (ADL, 2012). The ‘crime sweep’ of the sheriff’s department of 2008 was given legitimacy through the efforts of one anti-immigration actor who petitioned ten business owners on the periphery though not a resident of the neighborhood. The Sherriff’s department continues to be under investigation by the Department of Justice given allegations of abuse of power and racial profiling.

### **Resources**

The willingness of people to “care about the children and families” of the barrio, to bring a sense of “meaning and purpose to their work”, is the essential thread in understanding how actors reshaped the discussion about resources to be about human agency. Many confidants acknowledged the significance of financial resources, policy and programs in development initiatives. Every confidant elevated the discourse to be about caring and compassion; i.e. compassionate people determined to make a difference.

Very few development actors spoke of technical resources; i.e. development expertise, asset development, or capacities.

The GM2 refocuses the discussion of resources to an understanding of developing opportunities for the “children and their parents to have success”. That to create the opportunity for the school age children to “change their perspective” to one of possibilities *is* the process of creating resources...human agency and dreams. For this development actor “the most important resource is to continue to have the conversation” and to “ask the question how best can needs be met with what resources are available.” For this neighborhood agent the most significant resource is to act with “intention [and] purpose” on behalf of the children and their families.

PL1 confided that “people have to want to do the things that matter... that grants and money are important [however] without people that care to make a difference in peoples’ lives...without care you are just using money to use it...and not really making a difference.” The PL1 made note as to the self-reinforcing qualities of compassion amongst the women of the cafecitos exclaiming: “We all motivated each other!” PL2’s belief in the vitality of self-empowerment shared her mantra of encouragement challenging the Cafecitos women that “you can do it!”

The CPS noted that the essential resource of development initiatives was the internal motivation of actors who experienced a transformation in discovering the “desire to find meaning and purpose in their work through helping others.” He differentiates this internal motivation from those who appear satisfied to, “simply check the work off their to-do list.” The BPNAAP extends this observation in speaking favorably of those actors

who bring “compassion, and heart” to their efforts suggesting those who “bring their own agenda or egos don’t last very long”.

Some confidants criticize on the NSD for being “disconnected’ from the realities of the barrio” not bothering to bring lasting and meaningful services. To be fair by taking into account the internal tensions from agency leadership it could be said that many city agents exercised a willingness to bring resources beyond the limitations of policy interpretations motivated by the same sense of purpose in serving others. These public actors applied a street level sense of policy exercising their own discretion in delivering development services judiciously. (NSDC 1 – 3, NSDPI, CPS, CAO)

It is clear from these testimonials that human agency matters as an essential resource in development initiatives. It can also be observed that technical knowledge and financial resources are impactful. Any or all of these resources when challenged present negative impacts. As funding for the Day Workers Center, the Fight Back program, and the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant became challenged, programs were diminished. Efforts to sustain development initiatives by growing leadership and resources and engender a resident governed agency did not materialize. Confidants from all three sectors recognized the absence of “anchor families” and the “missed opportunity” of growing those leaders in fulfilling the next phase of development. The unanswered question that surfaces is whether an actual community identity, leadership and core of self-governance can be created given the challenges of the gateway that is Barrio Promesa. (CCR, CPS, BPRCP)

In the discourse above regarding collaboration, the asset of relationships framed as social capital was applied fruitfully. Social capital embraces the nature of relationships in development initiative and in this way surfaces a fundamental thread in the tapestry of

the barrio uncovering the richness of ethnicity, cultural mores and common history that can be a resource for civic capacity building (Saegert, 2012, p. 220). Politics too plays a part, as political agency is beneficial in the provision of resources, leveraging representation, and policymaking. The absence of political access of the Hispanic immigrant population has an impact too. The CCR, now a lobbyist, assesses the present council representative as under serving the barrio given his calculation that there are no votes there. This may prove to be a political liability in the long term. The resilience of the immigrant community can be a launching point for productive discourse, collaboration between residents and local government, and development of civil society; rather than a point of conflict undermining development relationships and initiatives (Greenberg, 2012, p. 231). A more productive view for community development practitioners espoused by Merton in the preface to Portes' discourse on the "sociology of immigration" finds for the robust economic characteristics of immigrant communities as a "social asset (1995, p. ix)."

### **Inclusiveness/Exclusiveness**

The criteria of inclusion (or exclusion) of stakeholders can influence development initiatives and school community partnerships. Best practices in development and organization program planning supports application of the "logic model. (Kellogg, 2004)." The logic of this project framework supports that the more robust the inclusion of stakeholders at the planning stages the better chance of sustaining project and program outcomes. The same concept is supported in the praxis of democratic participatory policymaking for it is argued that the more robust the voices included the more successful the implementation (Deleon, 1997). Weaving these threads of public engagement in the

development process supports Turner and Hulme's (1997) finding for, "participation [as] an important dimension in the administration of public services (p. 20)."

Inclusion of resident voices in the development and governance milieu is complicated in an immigrant community such as Barrio Promesa. The majority minority is for the most part Hispanic residents who are not citizens and do not hold legal status, a social security card or a state driver's license. Bridging and linking within the Hispanic resident neighborhood is complicated further given the pressures of an undocumented life, the fear of deportation, and the resulting self-selection of being invisible persons surviving in the 'shadow society' of the barrio. Locally driven development and governance becomes difficult if not impossible to achieve. Unresolved political, economic, legal and civil rights issues become impediments to efforts for inclusion.

Participants' comments on inclusion or exclusion uncovered two levels of impact given the demographics of the barrio: 1) external (mainly related to the pressures of anti-immigration politics); 2) internal (within the organizations across the three sectors of development initiatives). Instructive through the external lens of analysis is the clamor around the Day Labor Center as it became a lightning rod surfacing the tension between a reasonable local solution on the one hand, and the anti-immigration actors and their organizations on the other. As one confidant shared "a cloud hung over the neighborhood" in the sense of fear and disenfranchisement of the barrio and its residents. (HA/DWCD, CAO, CCR, CPS, PPP, BPNAAP, BPFCEP 1 and 2, PL1 and 2))

The dynamic of inclusiveness/exclusiveness affects the city, school and civil society development policy on an organizational level. Actors from all three sectors commented as to the tension between interpretations of policy versus implementation of

program initiatives. This lens of analysis reveals a challenge regarding the internal culture of these organizations as open, inclusive and accessible systems; or as closed, exclusive and defensive cultures. In sum, organizational dynamics are impacted by the external political milieu as well as internal formal and informal practices when considering expenditures of resources and program accountability. (CAO, NSDC 1 - 3, NSDCPI, CPS, CCR)

Actors cited that from inside NSD, some leadership conscripted the primary activity of development service as the management of problems from escalating to City Hall, not of a resolution of those challenges on behalf of residents. A shared perception amongst actors that internal leadership projected a level of disconnect with the realities in the Barrio itself manifest at the neighborhood level as an outsider image projected at NSD agents. Few agents assigned to the barrio were bilingual which would present a complication at the very least and perhaps project a slight of the neighborhood culture on a deeper level. (CAO, NSDC 1 -4, NSDCPI, CPS, CCR)

Some actors criticized that a sense of accounting for services delivered within the neighborhood prevailed over considering the value of those services to improving the lot of residents. This may be an unintended consequence of accounting for initiatives and perhaps too, a blind spot within public organizations if the efficiency of services takes precedence over people served (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2003). In this way inclusivity may be defined as number of services rendered to a community as opposed to number of persons whose quality of life were enhanced. (CAO, NSDC 1 -4, NSDCPI, CPS, CCR)

Politically it is safer to account for units of service delivered than numbers of illegal immigrants provided public goods. Some confidants working within city agencies



suggested that it was acceptable to discuss programmatic issues but not in the context of the immigrant population of the neighborhood. Providing tangible public goods including safer streets and park facilities, cleaning up graffiti and blighted multiplexes is understandably less politically loaded than accounting for the number of individuals accessing health, education and public services.

The dominant perception on the part of many actors was that inclusion of the resident community did not take shape on the human level and that only a few agents working within the organization embraced the residents as a people. The services rendered perspective may lead to a balance sheet approach to community development initiative. This approach to development is criticized in the ABCD as a prescriptive external process that is reactive and risks creating a “client” mind set. Preference is shown in the literature for an internally driven proactive approach that is inclusive of residents and therefore producing a more sustainable community development practice. Perhaps this is the point made by one neighborhood services agent who commented as to the “ameliorative cycle of initiatives” provided through NSD. (NSDC1, CPS, CCR)

Promesa Primary appears to have served as a catalyst energizing the challenge of inclusiveness and provision of public services similar to the tensions that evolved around the Day Worker Center. The inclusive or exclusive dynamic impacted the school district and school community. The Office of Civil Rights actions of the Department of Education in the early part of the decade 2000 through 2004 were based on neighborhood families’ complaints (as represented thru LULAC) that the school district administration and school board were “insensitive to the needs of the Hispanic community.” Several confidants noted that the social initiatives flowing from El Centro Comunidad evoked

formal and informal challenges from outside and within the school district. The PPP found herself in a recurring pattern of accounting for her educational philosophy, programs and services provided to the barrio.

The PPP reported that at the beginning of her tenure there was a high rate of teacher turnover. She tells of new staff confiding in her that during their intake at district derisive remarks were made referring to the culture of Promesa Primary as a “black hole.” This type of informal pushback exacerbated the formal rebuke by mid-level administrators regarding the need for ‘equality of resources across the school system’. The PPP found this response to be a projection of inequality or “jealousy perhaps” on the part of other building administrators for the robust initiatives accruing at Promesa Primary.

The PPP explains that she understood this tension as a rub between an “American” perspective based on individualism vs. a “collective perspective” based on equity. Her explanation centers on an internal conflict within the school system that at the institutional level of analysis opportunity is construed through an *equal measure* of services rendered and at the classroom level of analysis, creating *equal opportunity* for students through an equitable provision of services is essential. There is merit in her analysis as it is historically ingrained in the differing perspectives regarding public education: 1) the democratic politics of education administration based on the equality of allocation of public good; and 2) the allocation of resources equitably in mitigating the limiting effects of poverty that schoolchildren are provided an equal opportunity to succeed. As the PPP summarizes, “for me a political solution was one that would have worked for the district but not for me and especially not for my students and community.”

The CPS commented as to his sense that the school district presented itself as a “closed and defensive system.” The first of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant managers suggested that the system had a “blind spot” because it was “doing for people” instead of “doing with people”. Along the same lines, GM1 explained that the system should aim at empowering students’ and their families. The point is parallel in scope with the PPP philosophy regarding a communitarian perspective. The GM1 observes that schools are not engaged in the business of social justice remarking: “Social change is not the school professional’s gig!” The GM2 commented regarding the “unconventional approach of the PPP” as outside the norm of the expectations of the school and education system culture. The PIP2 confirms the perspective that the social outreach perspective is outside the focus of her school and expectations of providing an education.<sup>34</sup>

Criticism about the perceived insular nature of the school district administration may be explained simply as a difference in perspective between education and community development practice. The PIP2 supported this point when she commented that the social outreach programs were important although “our job is to teach children.” This philosophy appears to be consistent with the mainstream interpretation of the mission of education. This sense of educational mission undermines the policy framework for engaging families as equal partners in education decision making and partnerships. There are those community voices who shared that the previous leadership at the Intermediate school was open to engaging the entire family system and that in

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<sup>34</sup> The PIP2 shared this position in interview. Perhaps there is more to her thinking about the significance of the “social work” side of her education program as there is a renewed effort seeking funding for a third round of 21<sup>st</sup>CCLC programming and outreach.

failing to continue the social outreach efforts closed itself off to the embrace of the neighborhood families.

The Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Action Alliance may also suffer a similar blind eye within its culture regarding inclusivity of all stakeholders. Indeed the founding membership, in the earlier Business Alliance, was comprised of white men who were business owners and not residents of the neighborhood. The HA/DWCD attended in those early years though found the alliance to unrepresentative of the Hispanic residents. The pastor of the Family Church explained that he does not attend due to the weight of his obligations to his parishioners though he had attended earlier in his tenure. Observations of those who attended meetings revealed that the dominant voices at the alliance table were Caucasian, business owners, city services agents, school administrators and nonprofit directors. Further interviews indicated that none of them were local residents. A few persons of Hispanic heritage who have attended regularly include the CAO, the CPS, the NSDPI and the PPP (during her tenure). A resident and parent of school age children commented that she “does not feel comfortable” at the alliance meetings. (HA/DWCD, BPF2, NP)

### **Sustainability**

The criteria of sustainability in community development initiatives and school community partnerships is linked to resources and technical knowledge, policy and implementation, leadership and the people and entities willing to take ownership of the initiatives. Sustainability of development initiatives and partnerships in Barrio Promesa are affected by the unique realities of functioning as an urban gateway and enclave for Hispanic migration.

Sustaining city resources, school community partnerships and programs, and a variety of civil society initiatives are all affected by the shadow of race politics hanging over the neighborhood. Sustaining development initiatives demands local residents stake a claim in their neighborhood and help to give it an identity and work towards the vision of its future (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). The realities of the dominant Hispanic residential community of the barrio, being undocumented and labeled as alien [and/or] illegal does not lend itself to becoming visible through public participation in neighborhood affairs. Such labels undermine the openness to creative policy initiative that might address these challenges in real terms of a humane and socially just civil society (Warnicke, 2014). To transcend these barriers development actors would need to intentionally engage the resident Hispanic neighborhood long term in order to secure socio-political solutions that could accrue economic benefits for the neighborhood and civil society.

The development initiatives that have stood the test of time were able to be self-sustaining outside the impacts of immigration politics and policy. The three most prominent examples are driven by nonprofit entities anchored by parent institutions of prominence at a regional or national level. For example, the regional health agency continues to operate a satellite office at the primary school site. A clinic nurse commented recently that the collaboration with school leadership had diminished. The health clinic agent shared frustration given an apparent disconnect with the current building administration in her effort to “reach the neighborhood families” in regards to the free health resources available to them. Another example of a nonprofit sustaining initiative is the Promesa Family Church that operates under the wing of the Regional

Lutheran Parish. The service mission of the parish benefits from protections as a nonprofit entity. Additionally, the Boys and Girls Club, also a nonprofit entity, is supported locally by an inter-governmental agreement, and nationally by the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

Physical infrastructure initiatives by their nature are less likely to meet with opposition because they are perceived as public goods serving to improve public amenities. The initiatives from the parks division of the city have brought substantial improvements of lighted soccer fields and a basketball court, playground space, and pick nick ramadas. Reports from school and police actors commented that family use of the park space has improved. Collaborations between city agencies continue to establish sidewalk and street lighting, and the Safe Path to School continues to provide a secure and family friendly route to the elementary complex. A variety of city agencies: Planning, NSD and Housing have collaborated in restoring two multifamily complexes and facilitating home ownership. (CPS, CAO, GM2, NSDC1, NSDC2, BPNAAP, BGCBM, Local Press 2010)

The executive leadership of the neighborhood Boys and Girls Club understood the necessity of funding outside of the public sphere and in so doing avoided any backlash regarding the use of public goods. The Club continues to serve some 250 children and teens in their afterschool programs, and serves many more during the summer session (BGCDO, BGCBM). The BPFC under the auspices of the RLP continues to thrive in its service within the neighborhood (RLPP, RLPCA, BPFCP1 and 2).

In contrast, there are nonprofits within the metro area that provide outreach as Hispanic agencies and enjoy significant funding and contracting through a variety of

public programs. Philanthropy is the lifeblood of these nonprofits and as they are regionally based they become more vulnerable to the political milieu. Three such agencies were engaged in supporting the Day Worker Center but as the politics and protest against the center became vehement these agencies drifted away from providing further financial support. This scenario as reported by the HA/DWCD forced the foreclosure of the mortgage and the closure of the center “leaving the jornaleros with no choice but to return to the street.” (HA/DWCD, CCR, CPS, Local Press 2009)

Two nonprofits have established their outreach into the barrio in the last few years. A local nonprofit began “one to one mentoring with at risk youth” as is their mission established in 2010-2011. Another nonprofit began their work in 2009 with the mission of providing a response to food insecurities for children and families with “bags of hope” full of food staples on Fridays for the students to take home to sustain healthy diet weekends. Co-ordination with a local food bank in providing a monthly farmer’s market style distribution of food was established in 2010. Both of these nonprofit entities strive to establish a change of perspective of hope, security and academic achievement.

Sustainability of initiatives also appears to be directly linked to the actions of leaders who prove to be resilient in sustaining themselves as well their initiatives. Leaders have a tendency to grow into new obligations and opportunities, or choose to retire for a variety of reasons. Therefore sustainability appears closely linked to the stories of individual leader’s succession. The CCR in choosing to run for mayor removed herself from council service after nearly nine years of facilitative representation and transformative leadership. Apparently, the new council representative does not have the same sense of allegiance to the neighborhood. He is reported to have attempted

redistricting excluding Barrio Promesa. The new councilperson has been observed in attendance on occasion at BPNAA meetings generally arriving in the last 10 minutes of the meeting and sharing his agenda items though not contributing to the forum otherwise. (CCR, CPS, GM2, BPNAAP)

The CSP keeps a watchful eye on the barrio though his role has expanded to oversight of the Community Prosecution unit. An assistant prosecutor attends and participates as an agent in the neighborhood however; he is not of the culture. A second Community Prosecution Specialist has engaged the “40 Moms” of the cafecitos program. A variety of city services actors have come and gone in their service to the neighborhood with two exceptions. The NSDPI continues to work to protect the quality of life for the residents as a member of the RRP going on 16 years. The CAO after 14 years of “taking ownership” of his beat may find himself reassigned given new leadership and policy at the Chief of Police’s office. Both the NSDPI and the CAO have functioned as street-level decision-makers through their transformative “acts of leadership” (Denhardt, 1981) in implementing their respective city agency policies compassionately. The CAO has been recognized as a neighborhood “Champion” for his service. (CPS, CAO, NSDPI, CCR, CPA, NSDC 1-4)

The PPP sustained her position from 2003 through 2010 academic years and in that period transformed her neighborhood school internally surpassing achievement standards. Her philosophy in engaging families and driving collaborative partnerships transformed the school externally to become a significant resource to the families in the neighborhood as “El Centro Comunidad”. She continues to keep contract with “friends still working in the school system”, and serves on the board of the health clinic.



## **A Brief Summary of Current Activities<sup>35</sup>**

It may be instructive to point out that in the three years since the retirement of the PPP the primary school has regressed to “underperforming” status in the 2011 and 2012 school years. Additionally, the social outreach programs of the pantry and the clothing closet had been removed from the school grounds. The Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Family Church continued to meet in the cafeteria though the relationship is reported to have changed to a more formal rental agreement with the district. In her own reflection regarding the dismantling of El Centro Comunidad the PPP celebrates that 8000 children’s lives were impacted positively during her tenure and that the outreach of the elementary complex has been enhanced by the addition of the Boys and Girls Club. (PPP, MG2, CSA, CAO, BPF2, RLPP, RLPCA, State Board of Education, PPP2, PIP)

The resilience of the GM2 in finding new funding to keep in tack any of the social outreach functions has been significant since the cessation of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant. However, what services have been maintained are problematic as the new location for the outreach programs is outside of the barrio. Various confidants observe the effort of the GM2 to go well past that of a job for her “personal commitment and heart” brought to the 21<sup>st</sup>CCLC program initiatives. Continuing collaborations through the GM2 office include: 1) the IC providing initiatives to the benefit of the primary school complex and meeting once a month at the Boys and Girls Club; 2) the Kids Camp continues in collaboration growing the program to offer winter and spring break support to barrio families; 3) the cafecitos program has continued at the new location (although the PL2 and BPF2 report a

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<sup>35</sup> Though outside the temporal bounds of the study the overview of current activities is considered instructive and contextual to the thesis overall.

considerable loss of attendance of the barrio residents); and 4) coordination of outreach efforts of a weekly ‘bag of hope’ (food staples) to eighty families and the monthly food pantry/farmers market provides 10,000 lbs. of support to help residents with chronic issues of food insecurity. (GM2, PPP, CPS, BPNAAP, KCD, PL2, CPSA, BPF2CP2, Non Profit Providers).

The BPNAA continues to meet monthly at Promesa Primary. The president has served in his capacity since 2004 and recently received accommodation as a “Champion for the neighborhood” from the nearby Community College Foundation. Asked as to how the Alliance has been able to continue through the political issues and the Great Recession he shares that in his role he has hoped to “stay firm in providing a cohesive presence for the alliance participants [and to] concentrate on the positive events occurring in the neighborhood.” The President commented that in this way the BPNAA provides a “continuous networking environment with neutrality.” The President was asked about the possibility of establishing a nonprofit agency. He felt strongly that the dynamics of the relationships change once there is money involved, and pointed out that it is better to “not get money involved.” This approach may have been instrumental to the longevity of the Action Alliance and the access it enjoys in the barrio thru the school complex given the limitations on the use of public goods. (BPNAAP, CPS, CCR)

In sum, this analysis of the accomplishments of development initiatives and partnerships suggests that capacities and assets have evolved through efforts carried by the three sectors that collaborated to meet the needs of the neighborhood. A variety of city services, though apparently diminished in resources, continued a presence through

the RRP, neighborhood policing, community prosecution and attendance at the monthly BPNA meeting. (NSDC1, NSDPI, CPS, CAO)

Challenges and initiatives at the neighborhood school complex in meeting state standards for academic achievement at Promesa Primary, and maintaining performing status at Promesa Intermediate continue. Though outreach to the community has diminished since the end of the past federal grant cycle there is a new 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant application in process with the hope of growing after school programs and family outreach once more. The PIP reports that if this funding does not come in for the following school year of 2014-2015 these programs may not exist. (PPP2, PIP, GM 2)

The efforts of the GM2 and PL2 continued at the new location and are instrumental in support for the next grant cycle. Collaborations thru the IC and a variety of nonprofit agencies continue to respond to established needs within the school and family structures. The monthly Farmer Market style food bank is celebrated as a significant resource to the families, and for the self-management provided by some members of the neighborhood. There is conversation as to the relocation of the cafecitos within the barrio at the Boys and Girls Club to accommodate the transportation challenges and fears faced by many of the “40 Moms” hopeful of restoring full access within the neighborhood.

Civil society initiatives continue thru the networking efforts of participants at the monthly BPNA meetings. Indeed, this forum provides a space for collaboration that would not exist otherwise. There has been criticism that these meetings simply are about ‘meeting to meet’ however, there is the “buzz” regarding establishment of a nonprofit entity to advance the work of the Action Alliance.

The presence of the Boys and Girls Club continues to sustain the variety of initiatives enhancing the lives of children and families who participate, in partnership with the elementary school complex and in collaboration with the IC. The openness of the Club to collaboration and outreach within the neighborhood presents a promising asset going forward. There are alumni of the Club, now of adult age and many in college, who appear to have a close bond with the Club. It may be possible that thru these alumni new energies and leadership for development initiatives to the neighborhood can occur. There is notable leadership capacity being developed thru the Club's programs that can present a new asset for community development and partnerships.

The primary threads of development initiatives from the city, school and civil society continue to be woven into the tapestry of the barrio as the work continues to be promising for the children, families and residents. Certainly the capacities and assets for the weavers and leaders of Barrio Promesa are better now for the past initiatives and partnerships.

### **Lessons for Research, Policy and Practice**

This last section of the Findings chapter discusses question four which states: What lessons can be drawn from the Barrio Promesa story for further research, policy and practice in community development and school-community partnerships? Not every development initiative has been sustained and some were never intended to be. Other initiatives and partnerships fell short. A few efforts changed the neighborhood for the better. The neighborhood has become a little more stable, safer, and an infrastructure exists now given the vision, resilience and transformative efforts of many from the street level of leadership and development outreach to the national policy milieu.

Contextual challenges of economics, culture and politics compounded development initiatives and partnerships impacting policy and implementation within all three sectors of initiatives. The economic incentives of agriculture and various trades brought with it an investing class of developers and landlords, and the in-migration of a working class of people from Mexico. The socio-economic challenges of undocumented life in the gateway island of Barrio Promesa have run headlong into the underlying socio-political sentiments and policy of anti-immigration politics.

The risk of deportation (and the fear of being separated from family in the process) burdens everyday life in the barrio though the tradeoff appears to be worth the risk for quality of life is better for many residents than across the border. Life in the barrio is enhanced by the quality of social services, education, and health and safety initiatives of urban life. The neighborhood holds the promise of a better life and has become home for many who have grown their families in the neighborhood.

Barrio Promesa becomes a shroud protecting the anonymity of individuals who choose to remain invisible. There are powerful and apparently inaccessible forces at work against a more public life. As the politics of immigration play out on state and national stages the residents of the neighborhood live their lives as if they are refugees. The city, school, and civil society community development and school community partnership initiatives have evolved in response to their needs. A virtuous cycle of events took shape that changed the footprint and the capacity of the neighborhood. A review of development actors' musings over the lessons they take away from their experience and the hopes they have going forward for Barrio Promesa follow.

## Summary of Lessons in the Voices of the Confidants

As a last question in the interview process confidants were asked to consider what lessons they would suggest are important as take-a-ways for development initiatives in the neighborhood going forwards, and what are the next steps they suggest to be taken? Their responses are summarized here across the three sectors of initiatives into the barrio: city, school and civil society.

**City Actors.** The four principle neighborhood actors interviewed who are affiliated with NSD offer a unified and nuanced opinion advocating for fully understanding Hispanic culture.<sup>36</sup> Their criticism and assessment going forward is to: 1) engage the neighborhood voices, 2) take into account the social, economic and political realities in the barrio, 3) facilitate a capacity towards self-governance and 4) build collaborative relationships understanding “you have to do what you say to build trust!”

These development actors are of like minds as to their role in “meeting the basic needs” of the residents of the barrio. All of these agents commented as to the challenge of working in a “transient and undocumented community.” They acknowledged the tension in knowing how far to push given political realities. Being “persons of commitment and heart” was shared as an important value in community work.

Their assessment was that the neighborhood is in better shape now given the infrastructure and organizational capacities developed through past initiatives. The existence of the Boys and Girls Club, the sense of security provided by the Safe Path and

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<sup>36</sup> In keeping with IRB, Institutional Review Board, ethics of anonymity most of this city section of the review presents a compilation of responses shared by confidants. Quotations are used as appropriate to signify individual statements. Removing identifiers in this section is thought to provide an additional layer of anonymity in honoring the contract I am bound to on behalf of the confidants.

at Barrio Promesa Park, were cited as symbolic successes. These street level agents commented as to the “resilience” of the Hispanic community in making life work on a daily basis remarking “... that the neighborhood is only as poor as it believes it is!”

These agents review of the agency included: 1) commentary as to a “mixed bag of expertise” in community development; 2) the essential value of “knowledge on the ground” through “being present”; and 3) support from agency leadership for “discretion” in resolving issues. Concern of a loss of focus in providing services to the neighborhood was shared. Apparently, some agency actors were more concerned for their own self-advancement. As one agent summarized, “... to not pour any gravy on your own mash potatoes!”

Engagement of the Hispanic population “as a people [rather than] a confrontational approach” was advocated. Concern about the school district was shared while discussing the challenges of poverty and the underperforming status of the school. It was suggested that a policy of “concentrating the problem within the barrio” was intentional. The observation was that the district could be more responsive to the needs of the families. Additionally, challenges of inter-agency collaboration were mentioned. The actors observed that the Boys & Girls Club and After the Bell program had given the children “options and a vision for a better life” in confronting the pressures of barrio life, especially gangs.

The CPS assessment going forward is that the “major work is done [that] the infrastructure is in place” recommending “the next move is to become self-governed.” He had been advocating for the establishment of a nonprofit to drive the development process in the neighborhood. Additional lessons included: 1) continuing to establish

stakeholders through home ownership; 2) developing more and smaller block watches; and 3) continued accountability of the school.

The CCR is adamant in her point that “government cannot be the answer in the long term.” During her tenure, she points out: funding has run out; policies and programs have come to an end; and leadership and/or alignment changes course with the political wind. The lesson in this has been the failure as of yet to “establish a nonprofit that could grow neighborhood based leadership” for the long term. The partnership of the school is essential. She is frustrated that the “district not except underperforming status”, and suggested the need for buy in from the middle school to unify the education process. Lastly, the CCR hoped to see the branding of the neighborhood change from a crime zone to a renewed identity as Barrio Promesa.

**School Actors.** The SDS tenure aligns remarkably closely with the years of the virtuous cycle of development initiatives that took place in Barrio Promesa. His suggestion of the potential value of the primary school as a center for the community was perceptive and proactive. Hiring new leadership at that school possessing of appropriate educational certification, leadership experience and cultural knowledge was strategic. Facilitating the program that unfolded under the PPP’s principalship without micro managing may have been essential for the transformation of the school educationally and socially. The successes of the primary school were also politically fortuitous. His own assessment of 2 to 5% of his time devoted to the challenges of the neighborhood school complex is instructive.

The uniqueness of El Centro Comunidad (as Promesa Primary became known) is cited by the SDS for “the importance of schools to build partnerships” though by his own



admission they “do not do too well at that.” In his assessment he suggested “educational leaders are not trained and/or resist community outreach and partnership by default” relying instead on an education culture assumption. “Principals: engage parents at the elementary level; teachers during the middle school years; and students at the high school level of administration.” His lesson, based on his own experiences engaging the Hispanic community, is the “need to sit down and listen” so as to build trust and have an informed response in meeting the needs of the community.

The lessons shared by the PPP mirror the inside/outside realities of her tenure as educational leader and architect of El Centro Comunidad. She was adamant in the mission to “elevate and empower children through education, not by testing but through a love for learning.” The Promesa Primary Principal was absolute about needing to embrace the Hispanic immigrant families “day to day struggle to survive” in order to engage those families and their children in the educational process.

She was adamant in the philosophy that there would be “no excuses” for students, that they be given every opportunity to be able to meet the school day without health deprivations. The PPP was unapologetic for pushing back against the criticism from the administrators that did not embrace her philosophy as she explained, “to find a way around no, you can’t do that!” That she transformed the school academically and its role as a social center uncovered a resilient passion for children and families of the school community. Elevating the neighborhood through collaborative partnerships given the organizational conservatism and endemic blind spot regarding race and class was transformational if not also transcendent. She acknowledged finding opportunity for

sustaining the effort in the synergy and diversity of those people “choosing to engage from the heart.”

The PPP was self-critical in suggesting a “failure to establish 10 or 15 anchor families” for sustaining the neighborhoods development trajectory. However, she was conscious of the need to develop “the leadership piece” during her tenure as she contributed to the founding of the Boys and Girls Club and the success of the After the Bell program in “building the future generation of leaders.”

Central to any successes of development initiatives in Barrio Promesa was the technical and financial support embedded in the Federal Department of Education guidelines of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center policy. Title I funding for schools serving impoverished communities provide ameliorative support in helping to address food insecurities and some degree of funding for creating after school interventions. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC policy is transformative given the strategy is to construct community development initiatives that require collaborative partnerships engaging families and community agencies.

The first of the Grant Managers for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC commented as to the challenges of creating external partnerships that “school systems are closed by their nature, not open.” However, she is clear and exuberant in exclaiming, “we [educators] can do hard things, the pioneering work is never done!” She advocated that: 1) school personnel “need to be the champions”; 2) that “partnerships need to be based on authentic conversation”; and 3) was strategic in stating the “pressure is on superintendents and principals [so it is] vital that they are supported.”

Management of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant changed hands with great care as GM1 sought out her replacement for the second five-year cycle in 2008. The continuity of programming and advancing the trajectory of outcomes was significant given the care taken in planning for this transition of leadership. With careful succession planning the *Before the Bell*, *After the Bell*, *cafecitos* and outreach activities continued to progress.

The new GM2 shared the same philosophy of partnership in “seeing the value in people who choose to be a part, not those who have to” because of their title or obligation, as the basis for networking. She felt strongly that in going forward “communication is the greatest resource... [that]... we need to sit down and have the conversation!”

The GM2 commented that the residents’ “need to take ownership [and the] professionals need to step back and not speak for them.” She clarified the need to “remove the technical blinders of our way is the right way” in the process of engaging residents. She found that the objective of empowerment is grounded in the educational strategies of giving people “the tools and knowledge to navigate!” A subtle lesson shared by the GM2 was for the importance of “documentation of the process along the way;” for as she suggested without the record of achievement “we risk losing the heart and passion for the work.”

The Parent Liaisons for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant traversed the bridge between policy and people served on an intimate basis. The relationship they built with the mothers who attended the *cafecitos* served as a vital partnership between classroom and neighborhood. The lesson both PLs shared was the essentiality of “care and compassion in building trust.” As Liaison 1 confirmed the intentionality of “passion and care to make a

difference” instills the internal belief of self- empowerment. Liaison 2 echoes this point though her mantra of encouragement that “each of the moms can do it!” One small but vital point shared by both PLs is the subtlety of understanding the sense protection the resident women have within the neighborhood. Each PL voiced concern that the cafecitos return to the barrio.

The same sense of purpose and intention in building trust with the youth in the neighborhood was found in the work of the Kids Camp Director. She noted the importance of investing in the lives of the children; i.e. providing surrogate role models as “parents are consumed in the demands of daily survival.” She suggested providing a “vision of possibilities” through role models and mentoring academic achievement driving an internal motivation for success within the children. She commented to the need of the neighborhood development program to be internally driven. Her opinion is transcendent of the politics of immigration in speaking to the resilience of the young people of the barrio, citizen or immigrant. The KCD advocates for federal policy in sustaining initiatives of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC.

The President of the nearby Community College advocated for the vitality of educational program outreach and services to the residents of the neighborhood. He was clear in suggesting that this is “not a question of resources but rather a decision to channel programming; i.e. to leverage educational outreach as a priority.” He was adamant that the expectation from leadership at the community college be in service to the local neighborhoods and that it is “vital to be informed about the community, not stereotype it!” As an administrator and public leader he advocated for immigration reform at the federal policy level in order to benefit civil society.

**Civil Society Actors.** “Macehualli”, in Nawak the language of the Aztec, is an intentional reference of respect for the jornaleros (day workers) which is translated as “those who deserve praise for their work.” The Director of the Day Worker Center shared this in making the point that the general public and the political environment “does not see the people, the Mexican people” as part of the governance process. He raises the issue that leadership has not come from the Hispanic people within the neighborhood because their aspirations are not aligned with the goals of the city. He celebrated his people as “natural organizers and natural leaders” as he discussed this disconnect. The Hispanic Activist acknowledged that it is not within the culture to know how to participate in the political system. He explained that given the sense of “occupation” projected in anti-immigration politics there was “no trust from the people who would prefer not to become visible and cause trouble for themselves.” He argued that in order to build trust and relationship with the Hispanic culture the people, “need to see familiar faces in leadership!”

The examples of organizational leadership set by the two Business Alliance Presidents are instructive, though they are quite different in their approach. The first embodied an energy for change in organizing the Barrio Promesa Business Alliance. It appeared that an assertive leadership was called for as he perceived the need to “change the trajectory of the neighborhood.” The BPBAP was intentional in his efforts to seek partnerships. He celebrated those transformational leaders of vision such as the CPS and the CCR as “proactive rather than reactive” in their public service.

A change in leadership and maturation of purpose of the Business Alliance expanded its title to reflect the broader mission as the Barrio Promesa Neighborhood

Action Alliance. The new president perceived the Action Alliance as always evolving in “celebrating the reality of people and program coming and going.” His approach was embedded in the recruitment of his leadership in keeping the organization going. Though less assertive than the first president the current servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) for the greater good proved to be appropriate. The Alliance continues to be purposeful in giving a space for collaboration in addressing the challenges that arise. What remains consistent from the Business Alliance to the Neighborhood Action Alliance is the concern for improving the quality of life for the children and families in the barrio.

This shared sense of purpose has given meaning to the work of the now defunct Revitalization Coalition whose leadership was exemplary in two ways. The first was a technical knowledge of the power of collaboration in linking city, school and civil agency to the mission of building the Boys and Girls Club. As the Home Builder/Revitalization Coalition President explained her sense of purpose was driven by “understanding families are important... [and the need to] ...hear the voices of the children.” A second observed lesson is the need for leadership succession planning and evolution of mission in sustaining coalitions. With the Club established, the BPRCP moved on to other commercial ventures leaving the coalition to fold into the Business Alliance.

The meaning and purpose embedded in the vision and mission of the Boys and Girls Club resonates through the leadership actions and commentary of the Director of Club Operations and the Branch Manager. Their application of the language of transformation is evident in reflecting on the collaborative initiatives in the barrio. The BGCDO notes a shift of consciousness in “changing the question of limitations to one of possibilities.” The DO finds that in this way obstacles are minimized; i.e. “not can we but

when can we!” She drives three instructive points of transformative leadership: 1) the need to work backwards beginning with the end in mind; 2) establishing the action steps for achieving the vision; and 3) how essential it is that leadership be committed to seeing the work through to completion.

Both leaders spoke of the significance of collaborative partnerships based on a common mission. They found these partnerships to be established in the trust of serving the needs of the children and families of the neighborhood. The BGCBM highlights this mission as “driven internally through staff that caring is the bottom line.” He commented as to the improvements of the physical infrastructure in the neighborhood as a source of building pride of place. The BM explained a sense of “esteem building” for example “the park had become a point of pride in the barrio.” He added that through academic success and community activities the self-esteem of the young people was enhanced. The Branch Manager explained that as these young people become self-empowered through their achievements a sense of purpose is engendered internally to “come back and give back in their neighborhood.” He described that the logo created for the Teen Club by the teenagers themselves of a ‘circle around the Block’ was symbolic of their transformed perspective of neighborhood identity and civic responsibility.

Hearing from the voices of the neighborhood, especially those who are undocumented residents, proved a challenge and provided an important lesson. Criticism from both the neighborhood mother and her daughter uncovered a weak and shallow trust across all three sectors of initiatives. Their experience of the city was explained as a “waiting for response.” Their perspective on communication from the police was that it’s “a good idea but also scary.” Their experience of the business alliance was that they “felt

out of place!” Both women acknowledged their trust in the actors and programs of the after school programs, and the Boys and Girls Club. Similarly, both mother and daughter found a sense of “refuge at the primary school and the cafecitos outreach.” Both expressed a desire to lead change within the community however, they wished for “more communication and support from the city and school district.” Their concern that the cafecitos be re-established in the barrio belies the realities and fears of the residents.

**Faith-based Community Initiative.** The faith-based community proved to be a unique source for development initiatives given their status as nonprofits and their transcendent position as faith driven actors. The willingness of lay members of their respective congregations to serve the ‘felt needs of the children and families’ is instructive on several levels. The social justice embedded in the ministries of these agents of faith is central to their service and society. The awareness, commitment and intentionality to respond to the needs of the neighborhood revealed again the mission of compassion and heart as foundational to development initiatives. The Regional Lutheran Parrish pastor was strategic in suggesting that initiatives are not a “zero sum game [and that development efforts] are an additive process that is self-sustaining.”

The founding pastor of the BPFC observed that politicians couldn’t afford his kind of leadership as their hands and allegiance are tied whereas the holistic and compassionate work of the faith community answers to a higher power. He described the “passion and partnerships to bring change in the neighborhood as unique and ahead of other like communities.” Both faith leaders, the first and second of the Family Church pastors, observed their community to be a “people of compassion, not complainers; and to be people of faith.” Both pastors embraced their Hispanic culture and suggested that



through educational efforts the sense of responsibility of the resident community as members of civil society would be enhanced. There is the long view of community development and social change in the hope that city and school agencies continue to bring their resources, and “continued to do what they are doing.” The RLPA activist observed that to “continue to work for a better community takes a long-term commitment not a short-term one.” Speaking to the social justice issue of immigration reform he was adamant that “establishing legal status needs to be a primary focus of political leadership” in growing community.

In this response to research question, four lessons for community development and school community partnerships have been put forth in the process of summarizing the comments of the actors shared in the process of this case study. A review of the community development and school community partnership initiatives that took shape in Barrio Promesa, and a synthesis of the vitality of these actors ideas is offered in the Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations chapter that follow.

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This case study originates with the year 1998 reviewing community development initiatives and school-community partnerships through 2010 in the neighborhood Barrio Promesa. Development actors affiliated with the three sectors of initiatives; city, school and civil society entities were interviewed for this case study. Development initiatives and school community partnerships were woven together positively impacting the physical, social, educational and organizational systems of the neighborhood. The consensus perception of the actors interviewed for this study is that the overall ecosystem of the neighborhood; i.e. quality of life, safety and security, resources and services, capacity and assets have improved as a result.

Barrio Promesa was first established as an enclave of the county, then annexed by the city, becoming what many actors referred to as a county island; i.e. insinuating an underserved area as if remaining outside city boundaries. The in-migration of labor from Mexico transitioned the neighborhood into a urban island of Hispanic working class immigrants. The square mile enclave became a densely populated global gateway. No centralized comprehensive strategy or agency guided the initiatives and partnerships. Development actors expressed being internally motivated by a shared sense of compassion and heart in responding to the needs of the residents. From this perception of needs, and the compassion to positively influence the quality of life in the barrio, were woven the threads of development initiatives and partnerships.

The development actors and their agencies appear to have been diminished in the later years of this study. Portions of the collective work had pulled apart slowing the momentum and putting at risk the promising trajectory of initiatives. The evolution of a

neighborhood governed entity that could proactively sustain and grow development initiatives and partnerships did not materialize.

What is concrete is the organic synergy of collaborations anchored by the centrality of the neighborhood school changed the physical infrastructure and organizational capacities of the neighborhood's social, organizational and economic systems in fundamental ways. Given these accomplishments, and the improved capacities and assets of the barrio, a neighborhood governed development entity and plan may be possible going forward.

The compelling resource revealed in this story is the resilience and agency of development actors who in working to meet the needs of the residents experienced a transformation in themselves. Revealed in the stories of many of these confidants is their own metamorphosis from an individualized sense of need to a heightened sense of meaning and purpose of their collective humanitarian agency. The determination of actors' intent to make a difference in the lives of barrio residents transcendent of social, economic and political challenges is inspiring.

In this chapter, I summarize the story of Barrio Promesa in the context of the development and school-community partnership literatures reviewed. From the analysis of the Findings (Chapter Four), I reframe development practice reconstituting public agency, extending school partnerships further into community, and evolve the school as an asset in community development. Additionally, five strategies are offered for research and practice in community development addressing: 1) political and organizational tensions, 2) embracing a shared set of values, 3) leadership abilities and succession, 4) social capital as a tool in development, and 5) extending the policy milieu.

## **Community Development and School-community Partnerships in Barrio Promesa**

In understanding the community development and school community partnerships in Barrio Promesa it is important to note that the findings reveal threads of a variety of development frameworks. It is difficult however to find a sense of one comprehensive development approach. Rather than perceived as a deficit this eclectic mix of initiatives may have been the strong suit for development partnerships in a milieu such as the barrio.

All three of the primary models of the Community Organization Practices framework (Rothman & Tropman, 1987) are present in some part. There is a sense of locality development strategy in the initiatives sponsored through the business alliance such as the Fight Back Knock and Walk program, the facilitation of partnerships and coalition building through community prosecution, and infrastructural emplacements from various city agencies such as the Safe Walk and park enhancements. Examples of social planning intervention would include the Rental Renaissance program, the Community Action Officer's strategy, and the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant as a policy intervention of the NCLB Act. There are applications of social action interventions through adult education courses and council via the school community partnerships. Examples include efforts for self-empowerment through the Women's Expo and the cafecitos initiative, and perhaps the Day Workers Center. The criticism of this framework for an external prescriptive and professionally driven approach (lacking of resident participation) is appropriate to apply in the analysis of development initiatives in Barrio Promesa.

The grassroots-based Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Church, and the assets and capacity building efforts of the Day Worker Center, are parallel in function with aspects of the ABCD framework of development. The realization of the Boys and Girls Club as

an asset for the neighborhood is a solid example of capacity building through the Barrio Promesa Preservation Coalition.

The criticism of initiatives from the NSDC1 as “ameliorative” aligns with the criticism put forth by the ABCD theorists (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). They find that conventional community development interventions are needs driven, reacting to symptoms rather than proactively building capacities, and result in the establishment of “client neighborhoods.” Whether such consequences are intended or the result of structural blind spots is grist for a different study regarding race and public policy. There is criticism in the development literature regarding marginalizing of communities along the lines of race and poverty as found in building a case for community learning and growing civil society (Green & Haines, 2002). The capabilities program of Sen or the participatory logic of Stiglitz if evoked could transcend these issues under the umbrella of community development endeavor.

What is clear is that the terminology of capacity and assets were not a part of the development discourse practiced in the neighborhood. Such technical expertise was not apparent or applied as a framework for development initiatives and partnerships on a formal basis. There are development actors who facilitated grassroots coalition building and perceive the next step in initiatives is to empower community leadership and vision through local institution building via a nonprofit agency. This advocacy for neighborhood leadership is commensurate with the ABCD model, the IAF strategy, and the “public action” component of the Green and Haines model.

There are examples of an IAF approach to leadership development however, limited to the purposes of the local church. Leadership of ministry within the

neighborhood church community would be one example though limited to the mission of the church rather than a broader focus on the neighborhood overall. The focus of the S.A.L.S.A. leadership initiative is based on self-esteem building and personal empowerment. The Boys and Girls Club framework of leadership education focused on self-empowerment and the civil projects of Club Teen aligns with the IAF model.

A secular and resident based leadership effort has not materialized under the sponsorship of any of the three sectors of development initiatives. There has been discussion put forth at the Neighborhood Action Alliance meetings regarding neighborhood leadership initiatives though such a program has not evolved. Few if any of the Alliance regular members reside in the neighborhood. Membership of the alliance does not reflect participation by residents. Their absence is a detriment to the development of shared governance and leadership within the neighborhood. The public value and public interest strategies of Moore (1995) and of Bozeman (2007) support an inclusive strategy facilitated through city and civic society sectors. Perhaps the closest the neighborhood has come to grassroots leadership are the Block Watch though their purpose is focused on crime prevention. Additionally, it appears that these groups are not sustainable as their leaders' burnout or move on.

There are robust examples of the School, Family and Community Partnership framework given the influence of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. It does not appear that engaging families in school governance has been part of the implementation however. This said the criticism of the SFCP model as biased towards school reform can be applied to the school district goals and program vision.

During the phase of the virtuous cycle of development initiatives anchored at El Centro Comunidad (Promesa Primary), nearly the full framework of a community school model inclusive of community evolved. The events and partnerships achieved a school-centered model of development initiatives though apparently derived more so from compassion than a comprehensive and intentional community schools development plan. Perhaps too, a bit of providence was at work given the synergy of initiatives and resilience of development actors. Leadership, policies and funding mattered as changes in all three criteria proved to bring about the dismantling of the social outreach of Promesa Primary as a retrograde series of events pulled apart the promising evolution of a true community school model.

Of the three ingredients: leadership, policies and funding; leadership appears to be the most vital. Though the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC policy and funding continued past the tenure of the Promesa Primary Principal however, her departure marks the turning point in the schools academic trajectory and the disassembling of the social outreach program there. This is in no way a criticism of the significant outreach that was achieved for the children and their families positively influencing their quality of life and the opportunity of those children to achieve academically. Perhaps the virtuous trajectory could have been sustained with continued support for the ‘no excuses’ program, planned leadership succession of the Principal at Promesa Primary, and an inclusive development effort supported by the district in partnership with city and civil society agencies.

The Promesa Primary model evolved as one part social work intervention (based on Maslow's (1943) needs hierarchy) and one part policy intervention of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant. There are grounds for questioning the intentions of implementation of the grant as

it is suggested in the literature to be derived from the Community School model. There is scant evidence of a shared governance process being implemented. The governance component of the model may not have translated at the federal level of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC either.<sup>37</sup> Regretfully neither the grant nor the social work philosophy have been sustained as of this thesis.

There is an aspect of the healthy communities/healthy cities framework of the WHO as Promesa Primary offered medical and dental care, nutrition support and education in meeting the basic needs of the children and families of the barrio. This effort continues to be significant in the sense of providing a baseline of wellness for the children enhanced through Title I funding and nonprofit support in addressing food insecurities of the children and their families. The shared governance component of the WHO model (based on community empowerment towards social justice) was not a part of this development initiative.

Perhaps the most successful and sustainable intervention into the neighborhood could arguably be the establishment of the Boys and Girls Club. Applying a social capital analysis of the initiative surfaces a comprehensive application of the framework: bonding via the engagement of the predominately Hispanic enclave; bridging the resources and leadership within the neighborhood through the Revitalization Coalition; and linking the development effort successfully with the school district, city and the Boys and Girls Club agency. Replicating this public-private model could align the capacities and assets now

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<sup>37</sup> Though such a practice is advocated in the literature regarding community schools the articulation and accountability of reforming a school organization as a community school is minimal at best in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC description. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>



present in the barrio thru a self-governed agency as is supported throughout the literatures of development and school community partnerships.

### **Reframing Development Practice**

**Reconstituting Public Administration.** Transformative and facilitative development initiatives from a variety of city agencies and actors have brought significant resources, evolved capacities, and built assets in the neighborhood that did not exist in 1998. The Community Prosecutors Division, the Neighborhood Services Department, the Police Department and the City Council Representative's office had provided resources and expertise in establishing the present sense of safety, security and possibility.

There have been tensions internal to these agencies, and between them, that evoke other lines of inquiry regarding public organizations, participatory policymaking and public value. Best practices regarding network governance (Goldsmith & Eggers 2004) and facilitative public leadership (Svara et al., 1994) would be a good place to engage these threads., I feel safe in suggesting (given the findings of this study), that where intra-agency policy and implementation do not align with the realities on the street organization leadership, policy and culture issues need to be addressed. Where inter-agency issues are apparent strategies found useful in achieving collaborative partnerships can be applied in aligning initiatives and resources; avoiding redundancy, unintended consequences and issues regarding turf.

The NSD Rental Renaissance Program set out to achieve such collaborative and network practices and apparently had the greatest impact in the barrio under the originating leadership. The turn of events at NSD are instructive. The political issues of

immigration, as well the possibility of special interest pressures, influenced policy implementation apparently adversely impacting the program over time. The change of leadership of the RRP may have been the result of a push back by property owners given the early successes of the program.

The criticism of a disconnect existing between the Neighborhood Services Department and barrio residents may not have considered the subtleties of government agencies operating in a political milieu that criminalizes access and services within undocumented immigrant communities. The absence of relational ties is impacted by the realities of the barrio. The deficit of trust that manifests as a result may simply be too much to bridge under current social, economic and political circumstances.<sup>38</sup> Jacobs (1961) comments as to the intimacy of partnerships between city and community actors in her discourse for city planners. She states:

“... the art of city design, in real life for real cities, must become the science and art of catalyzing and nourishing close-grained working relationship...that give each other constant mutual support, both economically and socially (Jacobs, 1961, p. 14).”

Agency actors delivered services and initiatives at the street level of implementation that were transformative and facilitative in advancing development initiatives. Allowing agency actors the discretion to implement program to the full intent of policy would appear to deliver the best possible public administration of policy (Lipsky, 2010/1980; Vinzant & Crothers, 1998). Follett (1926) may have made this point best as is often cited “...of course we should exercise authority, but always the authority

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<sup>38</sup> Granovetter (1973) discusses these ideas in his contribution to network theory regarding the “strength of weak ties” and the challenges in bridging across macro/micro social networks. He finds that without these relational bridges little trust can exist between local community and agency leadership.

of the situation.” Jacobs extends the point finding for a local level of authority as to a strategy for urban planning in nurturing “localized self-government.”

“We shall have something solid to chew on if we think of city neighborhoods as mundane organs of self-government. Our failures with city neighborhoods are, ultimately, failures in localized self-government. I am using self-government in its broadest sense, meaning both the informal and formal self-management of society (Jacobs, pg. 114).”

*There is a social, political and development imperative for the Neighborhood Services Department (and similar public agencies) to establish an intentional commitment to facilitate grass roots leadership and governance providing the technical training and access to resources to sustain a localized development initiative within Barrio Promesa. Additionally, supporting public administrative agent’s discretion is an important strategy in facilitating the implementation of policy and the administration of public services.*

**Extending School - Community Partnerships.** The virtuous cycle of community development initiatives and partnerships founded at the Promesa Primary school were driven through the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant, and the leadership vision of the PPP. The school’s program accomplishments resulted in internal and external achievements flowing between community and school that transcended social, economic and political challenges for eight years (2003 – 2010). The resulting initiatives elevated the quality and trajectory of the lives of the children, their families and the neighborhood. The partnership that secured the shared use of the Boys and Girls Club complex is exemplary. All of these development initiatives are remarkable given the global cultural realities of this urban neighborhood.

Extending the public school reform discourse inclusive of social, economic and civic initiatives is embedded in the history of public education. The education policy milieu as reviewed in the literature highlights the interdependent reality of public school reform in partnership with community development initiative. In the literature, and in Barrio Promesa, the principal's leadership surfaces as a strategic force for moving the neighborhood school to the center of development events in the implementation of education reform, policy, and community development. As established in the literature review principals' are reaching further across the boundaries and comfort zone of their school turf to engage community residents and agencies in the effort of benefitting from these resources in achieving learning outcomes; and in sharing school resources in mutually productive ways with the neighborhood community (Hiatt-Michael, 2003; Sanders, 2006; Berg et al., 2006; Henderson et al., 2007).

*The success at Promesa Primary under the stewardship of the Principal (2003 – 2010) suggests the possibilities in extending a comprehensive and intentional community schools model for positively impacting community partnerships and initiatives. The caveat of a fully supportive milieu emerges in the findings; i.e. a constructively engaged district administration is essential.*

**Community Development with School Partnership.** For community development initiatives to be inclusive and sustainable the neighborhood school should be a primary partner in the process. Intentional and robust inclusion of the school can reorient development planning internally within the neighborhood through the schools relationship with resident families. The literature of the community schools movement outlines the validity of community-based organizations in full partnership and shared

governance with schools to the benefit of both community initiatives and school reform. Additionally, schools have been shown to constitute a significant community asset (Chung, 2005/2002). The evolution of the Boys & Girls Club as a school and community asset is instructive as an example of evolving a collaborative governance model. Several development actors suggest the next step of development initiative in Barrio Promesa is a self-governing entity.

*Schools can be essential partners and provide vital resources as community centered institutions within community development initiatives. Additionally, there is precedent for the evolution of a grassroots based development entity that could be sponsored by a neighborhood alliance, faith based agency or community based organization (CBO) in full partnership with the neighborhood school.*

### **Five Strategies for Community Development Praxis**

The data collected through the interview process of this study has been robust and instructive in discussing community development and school community partnerships. Descriptions of initiatives and partnerships have been analyzed through the process of thick description (Geertz, 1973) and triangulation (Stake, 2008). The case study method of iteration (Eisenhardt, 1989) was applied in the analysis of the findings. The exploration has uncovered important detail specific to understanding the subtleties of development and partnerships in Barrio Promesa and through the case revealed salient observations and generalizations (Stake, 2008). In sum, extending the analysis of the findings leads me to propose five strategies that cut across all three sectors of development initiative; city, school and civil society that can be useful to practitioners

and catalysts for further research. These five proposed strategies for development and partnership praxis address the following areas:

- 1) Incorporating political and organizational tensions.
- 2) Promoting a shared vision.
- 3) Leadership styles, development and succession.
- 4) Active social capital analysis.
- 5) Proactive public policy.

**Incorporating Political and Organizational Tensions.** Significant tensions that have direct and indirect effects on development initiatives and school community partnerships are revealed in the findings. There are three types of tension that surface. Each tension can inhibit development efforts. Incorporating these tensions within development planning can work to limit the negative impacts and perhaps circumvent unintended consequences that undermine development initiatives and partnerships.

The first source of tension exists at the geo-political level of influence as manifestations of the politics of immigration. To be more specific the rhetoric, politics and policies of immigration have evoked significant effects on and in the neighborhood. A second type of tension (surfaced at the internal organizational level of analysis) manifests between policy administrators and the implementation of those policies by agents operating at the neighborhood level. Specifically, the realities of anti-immigrant policies and politics exacerbated internal organizational tensions between leadership and the discretion of agents working in the barrio. A third level of tension is found in the socio-economic realities of the Hispanic population that has given shape to the dominant demographic of the neighborhood. In sum, the realities within an urban global gateway such as Barrio Promesa are rife with challenges that flow from the international to the

local level of impact. The events taking place around the day worker center were exemplary of all three types of tension.

These tensions are layered in their effects on the three sources of initiatives and partnerships from the city, school and civil society. Every confident spoke of the pressure of the race based political milieu and the impacts on policy, organizational culture, program implementation and the relational challenges of building trust within the barrio. Development actors shared their frustration in managing the pressures of bridging the perceived gaps between policy leadership, and implementation at the street level. Outreach within the barrio is a daunting if not improbable challenge for development actors.

*Strategy One: A comprehensive community development strategy should incorporate all three levels of tensions in the planning process of evolving and sustaining development initiatives and partnerships from within the neighborhood generally, through organizations of influence specifically, and supporting development actors fundamentally.*

**Promoting a Shared Vision and Mission.** It is clear that there were proactive development agents shaping the mix of development efforts in the barrio. The CPS for example applied an intentional understanding of facilitating transformative initiatives and by his own telling was guided by a heightened sense of compassion. The CPS approach as catalyst change agent was informed through the vision and mission of community prosecution as proactive community development through partnerships. He understood that working to establish collaborative capacities the trajectory of development initiatives would be elevated. He projected his vision of compassion and empowerment in

addressing the needs of neighborhood families and their children. A similar set of values informed the vision and mission of the Promesa Primary Principal, bolstered by the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant. The combined efforts of the two neighborhood agents are instructive.

Summarizing the development story in Barrio Promesa at its best the vision and mission partnerships and initiatives influenced the neighborhood for the better. From a less generous point of view, the consequences of ameliorative initiatives and school policies could be perceived as managing the challenges within the neighborhood. At its worst, a program of containment and enforcement of the boundaries of the ghetto were at work. Neither perspective was fully realized for in concrete terms achievements have occurred. The potential to grow a development vision and mission in the barrio inclusive of the voices of the neighborhood could evolve as a next phase of development practices.

Three is the sense that the development story of the barrio went thru three phases. In sum, the time line of events in the neighborhood suggested a transitional phase followed by a virtuous cycle of partnerships elevating the trajectory of initiatives and outcomes. Then there appears to have been a retrograde or dismantling of some development initiatives. There are indications of new initiatives, renewed leadership and energy since the close of this study. Perhaps these phases are parts of a first cycle of partnership and capacity building, infrastructure and institution asset development, in setting up for a next phase of participatory neighborhood development? An intentional effort in establishing a shared vision and mission for development and partnership in the barrio would be a good place to build from previous endeavors.

*Strategy Two: At the outset of any comprehensive development effort the fundamental values that inform the vision and mission of the development trajectory*



*should be robustly considered, vetted and embraced by all stakeholders (inclusive of residents), agencies and development actors. Establishing a shared set of values is foundational to the objectives of development initiatives and can foster a synergy of partnerships fostering an internal resilience amongst actors for achieving and sustaining development practices.*

**Leadership Styles, Development and Succession.** The vision of the Community Prosecutor Specialist and pragmatism of the City Council Representative worked together as a transformative force in organizing the alliances and coalitions within the neighborhood. Both actors advocacy, access to resources, and technical support of program initiatives were facilitative of development initiatives and partnerships. The transformative and facilitative frameworks of leadership appear to complement each other.

The transformative energies of the Promesa Primary Principal would have been dissipated if not for the facilitative support of the School District Superintendent. The internal successes at the primary school and external outreach of El Centro Comunidad faltered without the advocacy of the Superintendent who departed in 2009, and the Principal's retirement the next year. As of the absence of the PPP in 2010, the academic trajectory of the school regressed even though the funding and program initiatives from the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC continued for two years beyond her tenure.

Best practices in the community schools and community development literatures, and a majority of confidants find that leadership from the neighborhood is imperative in evolving a comprehensive and sustainable development process. 'Putting a face' on the neighborhood thru grass roots leadership might best be achieved thru creation of a

community based organization (CBO). A governing council and executive leadership for the CBO could facilitate the process. The ingredients for the creation of such a transformative agency facilitating a neighborhood vision of its future are already present. Existing leadership and programs, combined with new resources and technical support could energize the Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Action Alliance in generating a comprehensive vision and supporting the establishment of a locally governed nonprofit entity.

Additionally, the caution put forth by the originating 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant manager in training the next of the grant managers was an exemplary effort in securing the continuity and trajectory of the program. By comparison, the demise of the Revitalization Coalition is instructional as the coalition president moved on to other construction projects outside of the neighborhood without new leadership or a sense of mission to continue the BPRC.

*Strategy Three: Transformative and facilitative leaders working in concert are imperative for generating and sustaining development initiatives and partnerships. Additionally, developing grassroots leadership and agency are essential to sustaining development efforts. Lastly, succession of leadership demands careful planning in order to maintain the trajectory of development efforts.*

**Active Social Capital Analysis.** Partnerships are relational by their nature and are foundational to development initiatives. Development practices are based on various types of relationships including: personal outreach; alliances and coalitions; and, agency and institutional collaborations. Where bonding, bridging and linking types of relational capital were developed the capacity to bring the asset of the Boys and Girls Club became a reality, the Day Worker Center came into being, and Promesa Primary became a

significant center of social and educational impact. The neighborhood primary school provided a rich foundation in fostering these relations, partnerships and collaborations.

The Coalition for Community Schools has embraced social capital as a strategy and resource for school and community development (Blank et al., 2003). Arguably, social capital can be a useful strategy in a globally influenced urban milieu such as Barrio Promesa. Social capital continues to be a significant leg of development practice of the World Bank in the research and practice of international development initiatives (Grootaert et al., 2002).

Several of the principle development actors shared a cultural, language and family experience in common with the Hispanic resident community. Actors discussed the significance of developing trust with barrio residents and between development agencies. The understanding that all parties shared the same sense of purpose in meeting the needs of the children and their families allowed relational ties to form. It is remarkable that development partnerships were sustained in the absence of a comprehensive development plan.

*Strategy Four: Social capital offers a framework for analysis and a strategy for the development of relational networks and collaborative partnerships in driving community development and school-community partnership initiatives.*

**Proactive Public Policy.** The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers policy from the Federal Department of Education, and the AYP policy of the State Department of Education impacted institutional agency, program management and resource allocation at the Promesa School complex. The policy tools employed had both punitive and promising affects in motivating development initiatives. There are political and policy

ramifications for a school that does not make the Average Yearly Progress criteria. Additionally, there is a projection of inadequacy if results come up at a grade of 'D' or 'underperforming' as has been the case at Promesa Primary and Promesa Intermediate at different times. Achievement of such a distinction has its benefits as the elementary school complex received considerable federal support through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant; however there is the risk of creating a client cycle of initiatives (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), or perhaps a containment and disenfranchisement of community (Green & Haines, 2002).

The initiatives achieved at the neighborhood school with the funding and support of the 21<sup>st</sup>CCLC grant and staff is instructive of the possibilities of transformative initiatives embedded in the policy. Though the school was awarded two five year terms this was not sufficient to institutionalize the program however. The leadership piece as well the community governance part of the community schools philosophy of the policy did not fully materialize in either of the two terms of the grant and indeed the PPP appeared to have been the anchoring force for success. Clearly, the reality of establishing, growing and sustaining a community school model in the milieu of Promesa Primary is a long-term process.

*Strategy Five: Building a fully functioning community school institution requires clearly articulated grant guidelines, technical support, and accountability in the implementation. Engaging the leadership and governance piece of the policy requires technical training and civics education in helping residents learn to navigate, engage and govern democratic public institutions. Additionally, a longer duration for funding the grant of perhaps twenty or twenty five years would help to fulfill the policy vision in*

*sustaining the transformative community schools model of education reform and community development initiative.*

### **Concluding Remarks**

In Barrio Promesa development actors responded to perceived needs evolving partnerships and development initiatives: 1) the district superintendent, school principal and grant writer endeavored to reform their underperforming school through impacting the well-being of the children and their families; 2) a local business person, assistant community prosecutor and city council person collaborated with neighborhood service agents and community police to bring safety and security to the barrio; and 3) a home builder presided over a neighborhood revitalization coalition that organized the capacity and assets to build a boys and girls club in the heart of the neighborhood. City, school and civil society actors were the catalysts in each of these development events. Clearly collaboration, leadership, policy and politics mattered for as the dynamics of these criteria changed so did the trajectory of development initiatives.

The transformation of Promesa Primary into El Centro Comunidad is instructive for community development and school-community partnerships. The synergy of collaborations, leadership, inclusiveness and resources gave rise to the development successes of the school and the community. The centrality of the school was perhaps the significant asset in the virtuous trajectory of development events in the barrio. That city, school and civil society actors should embrace the neighborhood school as a primary thread in weaving together a stronger tapestry of community development initiatives has been shown in this study to be functional as well as fundamental. The neighborhood school becomes even more significant in Hispanic immigrant neighborhoods such as

Barrio Promesa where no other institutions are as well placed for outreach and building collaborative relationships.

Going forward in Barrio Promesa a next step would be the inclusion of the neighborhood voices in driving authentic dialog and inclusive partnerships for addressing the challenges of the neighborhood. Engaging the residents (citizen or immigrant) in the development dialog would leverage the assets of the Hispanic community towards achieving social, economic and civil benefits. The present political milieu drives the people and the potentiality of the neighborhood underground. In Barrio Promesa, the Family Church bound by its faith-based mission could only go so far in its efforts of inclusion and strengthening of the neighborhood. It is the Promesa Primary school that provided the structure and the relationship outreach into the barrio. The next step would have been to empower residents in decision-making, and in the process embed further the unique model of community school as it was evolving as a community asset.

The social and economic challenges present in such a disenfranchised enclave suggest a more global lens of influence requiring innovative community development practices. Global social and economic realities influencing local development initiative suggest application of globally based development models. DeFillippis et al. (2007) finds that in global urban environments (such as Barrio Promesa) development “strategies become eclectic to include connecting service provision with political education, advocacy, and action (pp. 49 - 50).” The Barrio Promesa Action Plan (2003) suggested an aspect of this approach in calling for “civic education of the resident Hispanic community.” The “no excuses” philosophy of the Promesa Primary Principal established an equitable threshold for educational achievement and opportunity that parallels the

development philosophy of Sen. Sen's (1999) platform for removing 'unfreedoms' places the Promesa Primary framework at the crossroads of global development theory and practice. The philosophies of Freire (1973), Stiglitz (2014/1998) and Sen (1999) support connecting education to individual progress as a central strategy in strengthening community development and civil society. The empowerment of the individual through Freire's framework is similar to the philosophy of "learning to navigate the system" as practiced in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant at El Centro Comunidad.

In sum, the Rothman and Tropman Model of Community Organization Practice established a framework that is inclusive across a large landscape of community practices. The models established locality development, social planning and social action as three different strategies of interventions. This macro-framework attempts then to move past the rigidities of the models to a more realistic perspective of mixing and phasing leaving quite a bit of flexibility to community practitioners. The mixing and phasing strategy is validated in the overlapping and organic evolution of initiatives in Barrio Promesa. Comparing the mixing and phasing realities of the development efforts and school partnerships with the findings of the Barrio Promesa study suggests the three models of community practice to evolve as follows: a) local capacity and institution building; b) participatory policy and governance; c) social, economic and civil empowerment action.

The findings support a reframing of community development practices within the sectors of city, school and civil society; and for the centrality of the neighborhood school as a significant asset and primary partner in development initiatives. The influence of key development actors who bring vision and resilience to their roles as transformative and

facilitative leaders has been shown to be fundamental in the stewardship of neighborhood development efforts. Five strategies that cut across the development and partnership milieu have been suggested for further research and practice in the field. The unique realities of neighborhoods home to Hispanic migrant communities have suggested a global lens of development innovation along the lines of individual empowerment and civil education. The participation of residents (citizen or immigrant) in neighborhood development and governance has been supported in the findings of this study as well.

Barrio Promesa presented a robust mix of development and school-community partnership challenges facing many urban neighborhoods throughout the United States. As an urban gateway for Hispanic migration the unique realities of the enclave and the political context places the barrio at the intersection of immigration and development policy and practice. My research surfaces important lessons and implicates useful strategies regarding sector frameworks; and the criteria of leadership, collaboration, inclusion and resources. Application and research of these findings and strategies is promising for the neighborhood, and the practitioners and researchers of community development and school-community partnerships.



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APPENDIX A  
ACTORS AND DATA COLLECTION

## ACTORS AND DATA COLLECTION

Identifier	Title	Date/Time	Place	Comment
1. BGCDO	Boys & Girls Club Director Operations	3.12.14/ 2 - 4 p.m.	coffee shop, Down Town Center	web site
2. BGCBM	Boys & Girls Club Branch Manager	3.6.14/ 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.	club office	web site, follow up
3. BPBAP1 (2001 – 2004)	Barrio Promesa Business Alliance President 1	2006 pilot study	lunching at a local sports bar	retired, moved out of state, did not pursue follow up
4. BPBAP2 (2004 – present)	Barrio Promesa Business Alliance President 2	became BPNAAP, see BPNAAP below	n/a	same as BPNAAP see below
5. BPFCP1	Barrio Promesa Family Church Pastor 1	2006 pilot study	office at primary school	retired, moved out of state, no follow up attempted
6. BPFCP2	Barrio Promesa Family Church Pastor 2	4.9.14/ 4 - 5:30 p.m.	office/ home	web site
7. BPHLA	Barrio Promesa Homebuilders Lutheran Activist	see RLPA below	n/a	same as RLPA below
8. BPNP1	Barrio Promesa Nonprofit 1	scheduled 4.16.14 cancelled “flu”	phone and email	follow up on web
9. BPNP2	Barrio Promesa Nonprofit 2	considered/out of date of study	email	follow up on web
10. BPRCP	Barrio Promesa Revitalization Coalition President	12.12.13/ 2 - 3:30 p.m.	phone	not responsive to face to face interview
11. BPNAAP	Barrio Promesa Neighborhood Action Alliance President	12.18.13/ 9 - noon	restaurant	consultant: web site, minutes, documents, and follow up
12. BPRP0 (“abuela”)	Barrio Promesa Resident Parent	scheduled 3.1.14 canceled: “health”	21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC office, meeting room	did not pursue interview further
13. BPRP	Barrio Promesa Resident Parent	3.1.14/ 9 - 10:30 a.m.	21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC office, meeting room	n/a
14. BPRS	Barrio Promesa Resident Student	3.1.14/ 9 - 10:30 a.m.	21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC office, meeting room	focus group of peers considered
15. BWP	Block Watch President	moved out of state	n/a	attempts to contact unsuccessful

16. CAO	Community Action Officer	11.19.13/9a. - 1 p. 12.19.13/ 9 - 10 a.	ride-along, precinct	consultant: reports, web site, follow up
17. CCP	Community College President	11.27.13/ 7:30 – 9a.	C.C. office	
18. CCR	City Council Representative	12.12.13/ 9 - 11a.m.	convention ctr.	consultant: follow up
19. CPS	Community Prosecution Specialist	12.13.13/1-3 p.m. 12.15.13/7- 9 p.m. 2006 pilot study	retail plaza coffee shop	primary consultant: records/reports, web site, follow up
20. GM1	Grant Manager 1, 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC	12.16.13/ 12 -1:30p.	office	follow up
21. GM2	Grant Manager 2, 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC	11.26.13/ 9 - 11a.m.	office meeting room	reports, follow up
22. HA/DWCD	Hispanic Activist/ Day Worker Center Director	12.5.13/ 3 - 6 p.m.	charter school	local press writer
23. KCD	Kids Camp Director	12.13.13/10-11:30a	camp office	website, follow up
24. MBHAA	Metro Based Hispanic Artist Activist	3.1.14/ 10-11:30 a.m.	art gallery/studio	
25. NSDD	Neighborhood Services Department Director	2.10.14 4:50 p.m.	twenty minute phone discourse	no response to follow up for interview
26. NSDC0 (1998 - 2005)	Neighborhood Services Department Coordinator 0	retired out of state	n/a	attempts to locate, make contact, were unsuccessful
27. NSDC1 (2009 – present)	Neighborhood Services Department Coordinator 1	11.25.13/ 9 - 11a.m.	NSD Office	source of reports, research unit contact, follow up
28. NSDC2 (2005 - 2009)	Neighborhood Services Department Coordinator 2	12.2.13/ 9 - 11 a.m.	NSD conf. room	follow up
29. NSDC3	Neighborhood Services Department Coordinator 3	2.24.14/ 4 - 6 p.m.	CPS offices	had been NSDC/ trans to CPS
30. NSDPI	NSD Preservation Inspector	3.12.14/ 4-5:30 p.m.	fast food restaurant	
31. PIP1 (2003-2005)	Promesa Intermediate Principal 1	retired from school district	n/a	made several attempts at locating and contacting
32. PIP2 (2006 – present)	Promesa Intermediate Principal 2	2.12.14/ 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.	PPP2/AP attend by invite of PIP2 @ PPP2 office	interviews of staff unsupported

33. PPP0 (2002)	Promesa Primary Principal 2002	unable to locate	n/a	did not pursue further
34. PPP	Promesa Primary Principal	12.6.13/10 a.-1p. 2006 pilot study	Café/Grocery	consultant: follow up
35. PPSW	Promesa Primary Social Worker	interview unsupported	n/a	emails went without response
36. PPAP (2003)	Promesa Primary Assistant Principal	interview unsupported	n/a	emails went without response
37. PL1	Parent Liaison 1, 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC	12.17 and 12.20.14 3 p.m. and 4 p.m.	phone: out of state	n/a
38. PL2	Parent Liaison 2, 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC	12.9.13/9 – noon/ incl. IFC meeting	office meeting room, B&G Club	follow up
39. RLPP	Regional Lutheran Parish Pastor	12.11.13 7 - 8 a.m.	Parish Office	web site
40. RLPA	Regional Lutheran Parish Activist	12.13.13/ 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.	regional parish foyer lounge	same as BPHLA
41. SDS	School District Superintendent	11.21.13/9 - noon 12.2.13/11:30 – 1p.	coffee shop, Down Town Center	follow up

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

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Thank you