

**THE COMMUNITY SECURITY INITIATIVE:
LESSONS LEARNED**

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Executive Summary

In most communities, sustainable gains in public safety depend on broader efforts at community development, and community development depends just as heavily on public safety. Recognizing just how closely intertwined these two activities are, the Community Security Initiative (CSI) has sought to develop partnerships between police and community development corporations (CDCs) in each of several cities around the country in order to develop a broad program for improving the quality of life in neighborhoods. Arising out of a collaboration among the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), and the Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management (PCJ) at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, the CSI has offered funding and technical support to one CDC and one police agency in each city where it has operated. The project has worked with an open-ended design, insisting only that each city use most of its funds to hire a single "coordinator" for its efforts, and that each partnership must assemble a "steering committee" made up of police, CDC representatives, and community members. But the CSI has consistently emphasized a guiding vision—an intention to strengthen the cohesion, vitality, and quality of life in communities by forging a relationship between police and CDCs. These partnerships are expected to take a pragmatic approach to problem solving, taking careful stock of local conditions in order to craft appropriate solutions that combine public safety with community development.

This report reviews the lessons learned from the two flagship CSI projects in Seattle's Chinatown-International District and the East New York neighborhood in New York City. Participants in these two cities are enthusiastic about their results, believing that their projects have been able to reduce crime, forge better relations between police and the community, and promote economic and physical revitalization in each neighborhood. In fact, over the course of their collaborations, these projects have improved information sharing among the police, the CDCs, and many neighborhood residents; enhanced physical

security in several neighborhood institutions; built influence with a number of government agencies and private sector players; and strengthened the guardianship and responsibility exercised by many community institutions, generating crime-resistant community development in the process. There are good reasons to believe that all of these activities contribute to public safety and neighborhood revitalization, and many of them simply could not have been accomplished without close coordination between police and CDCs. The authority to carry many of them out is shared between these two institutions. Some of them demand close sequencing of police and CDC actions, and most of them benefit from the “double voice” that partnerships create when they bring together institutions that can speak credibly to complementary audiences.

It would be foolhardy to try to quantify the full range of the CSI’s efforts, but in Seattle, at least, police data support the view that the project had an impact along the important dimension of public safety. Crime began to fall more rapidly in the targeted neighborhood than in the city as a whole after the project began. The CSI is the only obvious explanation for this decline. Comparable evidence does not exist for the New York project (although crime apparently did fall dramatically in that neighborhood, many other New York City Police Department efforts probably contributed to the decline); moreover, its participants admit that their project has faced some organizational difficulties that may have limited its effectiveness so far. However, the project has spawned some valuable public safety and community development activities, and it has forged relationships that participants see as a springboard for future success.

For all of these reasons, the two flagship CSI projects—and particularly the Seattle effort—show promising signs of progress. They suggest the potential that police-CDC partnerships have for improving safety and fostering revitalization in troubled neighborhoods.

The projects also contribute to the field by revealing the challenges that working in partnership involves even when it works well—together with many potential strategies for coping with those challenges. Four challenges cropped up repeatedly in both sites:

1. Turnover. Turnover of personnel was one source of difficulty in these partnerships. There is no reason to believe that turnover can or should be avoided. But the CSI reveals a number of intriguing strategies for coping with it, such as taking care that key relationships do not fall entirely on the shoulders of any single person and purposefully trying to “hand off” ties to new people when they are broken. Technical assistance providers and managers in each partner agency play especially important roles in both of these tasks.

2. Guerillas in the bureaucracy. Most of the “liaisons”—the people each organization relied on most heavily to represent it in its partnerships—became marginalized in varying degrees from their home organizations. This dynamic seems to be common to a wide variety of partnership efforts (for example, it also arose in the community planning experiments of the 1970s). In the process, these liaisons endured considerable stress, which partnerships need to recognize and find ways to cope with. Once again, technical assistance providers played a crucial role in accomplishing that job, both through their own assistance and by forging support networks with the wider professional community. Partnerships may also need to recognize that the liaison role is a volatile one that cannot be considered a permanent position.

3. Conflict between partners. These projects repeatedly encountered deep disagreements among partners that threatened to undermine their relationships. Conflicts like these are probably an unavoidable part of interorganizational relationships, which demand cooperation from agencies with different and sometimes even contradictory goals, and from personnel who hold diverse opinions. The CSI experience suggests that in order to make their partnerships work, organizations may have to check their deepest disagreements at the door. To those that remain, they will need to apply honesty, diplomacy, and clear rules about shared decisions. Most important, these projects reveal how valuable it is to have an honest broker who can mediate the disagreements that will inevitably arise—a person skilled in constructive engagement who has built trust and credibility on *all* sides of the partnership. In these projects, the national technical assistance providers often played the role of the broker.

4. Accountability. Both projects faced ambiguity about how to maintain accountability for key tasks. This problem probably arises from the relative lack of formal structure that is an inherent feature of partnerships—from the fact that management information and control systems are inevitably less well-developed across organizations than they are inside them. Because this problem is a consequence of the very nature of interorganizational relations, there is no reason to believe it can be completely solved. However, the CSI helped to mitigate it by funding a paid “coordinator” assigned the overall responsibility for the project. These coordinators then enhanced accountability further by monitoring commitments in a clear and public way. Both strategies seem like valuable ones worthy of emulation in future partnerships.

The area of overlap between the missions of these two institutions is rocky terrain—no one intending to embark on a project like those in New York and Seattle should expect it will be easy. But the public and private partners in these cities did develop ways of coping with the inescapable challenges they faced. In the process, they were able to devise many innovative strategies for tackling public safety and neighborhood revitalization. Cities that build on this experience will have an advantage that their predecessors did not, and we can expect that their achievements will be even more impressive than the already considerable accomplishments of the CSI.

Introduction

Police departments and community development corporations (CDCs) both play crucial roles in urban neighborhoods, tackling some of the most difficult problems the inner city faces. In many ways their tasks are complementary, and whether they know it or not, the work done by one often matters a great deal to the other. In extreme but by no means uncommon cases, CDCs have seen their progress in housing and economic development washed away by crime; and police have found it impossible to sustain their victories in safety without the sort of economic, social, and physical development that CDCs have made their business.

Given how thoroughly their work has become intertwined, it may be surprising to learn that police and CDCs typically have little to say to each other. To this day, it is not hard to find police who think the only “CDC” is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. Similarly, many people who work for CDCs do not know the names of the officers who patrol their neighborhoods, or even those of their police chiefs. When police and CDCs take notice of each other at all, it is often with suspicion. Frequently, police treat CDCs as one more voice among a chorus of selfish demands; and CDCs take guidance from their most disaffected residents, complaining that police alternate between harassment and neglect. The result has been a wall of silence and suspicion that has separated these two institutions for years.

The Community Security Initiative (CSI) represents an earnest effort to break down that wall. Arising out of a collaboration among the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), and the Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management (PCJ) at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, the CSI has offered funding and extensive technical support to one CDC and one police agency in each of several cities around the country. The project has operated with an open-ended design, insisting only that each city use most of its

funds to hire a single “coordinator” for its efforts, and that each partnership assemble a “steering committee” made up of police, CDC representatives, and community members. What has been constant in the CSI is its vision. The project has aimed to strengthen the cohesion, vitality, and quality of life in communities by forging a relationship between police and CDCs. These partnerships are expected to take a pragmatic approach to problem solving, taking careful stock of local conditions in order to craft appropriate solutions. They also are expected to embody the ideal of “community empowerment,” with residents playing an active role.¹ Another common element of these partnerships has been the hands-on technical assistance provided by LISC, PERF, and police consultant Bill Geller. In fact, it is safe to say that the partnerships were not simply bilateral relationships between police departments and CDCs, but trilateral relationships among these organizations and the technical assistance providers.

Had the CSI come out of nowhere, we should not expect much from it. As a rule, failures of “cooperation” between agencies are not as irrational as first impressions might suggest. Different organizations often serve different or even incompatible goals, and isolating them from one another often serves the useful purpose of giving them needed independence and focus. (For example, few of us expect great cooperation between police and defense attorneys. If we discovered that it was happening we might well disapprove, fearing that the attorneys were compromising their ability to defend their clients.) That is one reason why “collaboration” often runs into great resistance.

However, the CSI came at a time of transformation for both community development and policing, and these changes opened up a new space for collaboration between the two institutions. The shifts in policing are well known. During the past decade, most U.S. police departments have pledged their allegiance to “community policing”—to the idea that they should look to the community for guidance about

¹ Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Police Executive Research Forum, and Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, “Proposal to the C. S. Mott Foundation for the Community Security Initiative,” May 1994.

their priorities, and that they should look beyond the criminal justice system for ways to achieve them.² Equally significant changes have overtaken CDCs. First, although during the 1980s most CDCs focused chiefly on housing development, recently more and more of them have announced an intention to go “beyond bricks and mortar”—to look more holistically at the needs and opportunities in their neighborhoods, and to provide services that go beyond the basics of shelter. Second, many CDCs have loosened their more radical roots in the 1960s, taking a less confrontational approach to established institutions—a shift registered in the paradoxical phrase “consensus organizing” (paradoxical, that is, given the roots of organizing in advocacy), which has emerged as a guiding principle for many in the field.³

It is not hard to see why the CSI might benefit from these trends. In a world where CDCs focused primarily on housing development, and where they saw themselves as outsiders in opposition to city hall, they simply did not have much to gain from a relationship with the police. And in a world where police viewed arrest and conviction as their major aims, and where they saw themselves as “spit and polish” professionals on guard against corruption, they too had relatively little to gain from outside ties. But as CDCs and police have shifted their missions over the past decade, a new area of overlap has emerged.

² For a discussion of community policing and how its ideals influence policing in practice, see Malcolm K. Sparrow, Mark H. Moore, and David M. Kennedy, *Beyond 911* (New York: Basic Books, 1990). Herman Goldstein’s *Problem-Oriented Policing* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990) describes equally important ideals in policing that involve a pragmatic problem-solving approach to public safety.

³ For a discussion of the ways in which CDC aims have broadened (or, more precisely, how their tendency to narrow down during the 1980s has been reversed), see Local Initiatives Support Corporation, “NCDI: Past and Future,” January 2000., which identifies changes in funding as an important force that has driven this trend. As efforts like the National Community Development Initiative have increased funding for CDCs, they have also broadened the range of activities that are supported. Another force driving many CDCs to expand their mission has been the emerging need to *manage* their properties once they have built them. Doing that has made it more and more difficult for CDCs to ignore the broad issue of neighborhood livability. See Rachel Bratt et al., *Confronting the Management Challenge* (New York: Community Development Research Center, Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy, New School for Social Research, 1994). For a specific discussion of the role public safety plays in this evolving mission, see Langley Keyes, *Strategies and Saints: Fighting Drugs in Subsidized Housing* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 1992). For a discussion of the shift away from an advocacy posture, see Michael Eichler, “Consensus Organizing: Sharing Power to Gain Power,” *National Civic Review* 84 (Summer 1995): 256-261. For a less sanguine view of this sort of trend, see Randy Stoecker, “The CDC Model of Urban Development: A Political Economy Critique and an Alternative,” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 19 (1995): 1-22.

The CSI represents the most deliberate effort to date to explore the potential and the frustrations that this area holds—to try, as an early CSI proposal put it, “to learn and document the principles for police/CDC collaboration, to examine the impact of such collaborative efforts on crime and safety, and to provide opportunities for partners in a variety of cities to learn from each other’s work.”⁴

This paper will take stock of what the two flagship CSI projects in East New York and Seattle have to teach us about these subjects. As a part of the project’s design, the CSI asked the Program in Criminal Justice to document how these pilot efforts unfolded and to analyze the lessons that they can offer to others. That process began with the development of two descriptive case studies, written by Kennedy School casewriters John Buntin and Harvey Simon, which chronicled the CSI’s progress in each city.⁵ This analysis takes the next step and asks what lessons the CSI’s two pilot projects hold. Although the analysis is based on the experiences described in the case studies themselves, this writer also visited each site personally to follow up on central themes. The approach used in the analysis is described in a later section.

The Seattle and East New York experiments offer two types of lessons to other cities that might want to emulate them. First, they suggest what police and CDCs might gain from partnerships with one another in two very different types of places. This analysis cannot answer that question to the satisfaction of the traditional social science criteria that are often expected in “program evaluations” (something this

⁴ Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Police Executive Research Forum, and Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, “Proposal to the C.S. Mott Foundation for the Community Security Initiative,” May 1994.

⁵ Harvey Simon and John Buntin, “The East New York Urban Youth Corps and Community Policing Part A: A New Initiative in the ‘Dead Zone,’ Case No. C14-99-1528.0, Kennedy School of Government Case Program, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 1999; John Buntin, “The East New York Urban Youth Corps and Community Policing Part B: The Community Security Initiative Gets Underway,” Case No. C14-99-1529.0, Kennedy School of Government Case Program, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 1999; John Buntin, “Community Development and Community Policing in Seattle’s Chinatown International District: Part A,” Case No. C14-99-1531.0, Kennedy School of Government Case Program, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 1999; John Buntin, “Community Development and Community Policing in Seattle’s Chinatown International District: Part B: The Community Action Partnership

report most definitely is not). From that perspective, it is very difficult to know for certain what benefits the projects in East New York and Seattle produced, and it is even harder to know whether the same benefits would accrue in other cities. However, from the perspective of broad-aimed organizational innovations, these projects reveal something about which activities a partnership makes possible. It turns out that several of those activities—such as encouraging guardianship by property owners, helping to develop social responsibility among neighborhood businesses, and developing crime-resistant community development—are both innovative and effective. The first section of this report reviews those lessons.

The second type of lesson these projects offer is of the how-to sort—lessons about challenges that police and CDCs face and the steps they can take to overcome them. Once again, it is impossible in any narrow scientific sense to know for certain whether the strategies East New York and Seattle chose were the right ones. But their experiences do reveal some key obstacles to partnerships in two very different environments, as well as a few possible ways to approach those obstacles. In other words, they suggest the kinds of trials and tribulations that other cities might expect, along with some strategies for coping with them. The second section of this report discusses those lessons.

The Value of Police-CDC Partnerships

A partnership like the CSI is potentially valuable if each organization offers something that can help the other to realize its mission—a mission that may be evolving. Participants in these two CSI projects were convinced that this was the case; they point to many achievements in community revitalization and public safety as evidence. This section will begin with their perceptions, focusing on what they tried to achieve and how they tried to achieve it. It then turns to an examination of police and survey data—as well as the views of those who observed and participated in the project—that are relevant to some of those perceptions. Finally, and most important, it concludes with an analysis of the activities the partnerships facilitated and the reasons to believe those activities advanced the project's core goals.

Expectations of the CSI

First, the CDCs in both cities—Seattle's Chinatown-International District Public Development Authority (which locals call simply the PDA) and the Urban Youth Corps (UYC) in East New York—each found their core community development missions undermined by crime, and they believed a close relationship with police would help. East New York's problem was the more dramatic. Plagued by brazen drug activity and the highest rate of homicide in New York City, neighborhood life there was dominated by concerns about safety. At one point, the UYC's housing agenda was literally blocked by crime when squatters refused to let workers start rehabilitation of a drug house; and several UYC buildings had safety problems that undermined the quality of life they might have offered. Crime also helped to strangle the area's commercial zones, as casewriter John Buntin explains:

The stretch of Livonia from Hinsdale Street to Pennsylvania Avenue was once a thriving strip of merchants. By the late 1980s, however, it was almost entirely bereft of commercial activity. The few stores and take-out restaurants that remained looked more like fortresses than normal stores. Merchants refused to put up signs (signs would only be stripped or defaced); roofs were edged with barbed wire; ventilation units were protected by steel cages. The area around Livonia Avenue was full of deserted lots and abandoned buildings.

East New York's CSI approached these problems in a variety of ways. Most of its efforts focused on four hot spots identified at the outset by the project steering committee (made up of area residents, police, and CDC staff). Every time the committee met, residents and police would discuss activity at each spot, and police tried to follow through with patrols and enforcement. Other strategies also emerged from these discussions, including enhanced physical security and putting pressure on local liquor stores to cut back on some types of sales. Some of the project's work was apparently undermined by tension within the UYC, whose top leadership disagreed with the rest of the CSI about how to approach a number of issues. At one point, the UYC's executive director considered calling a press conference to denounce what he saw as the failure of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) to live up to its promises. But many CSI participants insist that these obstacles were minor and that front-line staff worked together amicably.

In comparison with the challenging public safety picture in East New York, Seattle's Chinatown-International District (where the partners adopted the name "Community Action Partnership," or CAP, for their collaboration) faced a less dramatic situation. But there, too, safety had been a concern for both quality of life in general and commercial development in particular. A 1992 survey had found widespread perceptions in the Chinatown-International District that the area was unsafe—particularly at night—and local merchants reported that crime and fear were hurting their business. Given concerns like these and a mission to help revitalize the neighborhood, the PDA began to treat public safety as an important priority in its work. Even before the CAP started in Seattle, PDA staff had begun asking police for more attention to the Chinatown-International District (though these first overtures apparently had little impact).

When the CAP began, police and the PDA tried to approach these problems systematically. At the outset of the project, the steering committee developed a few key priorities, including dealing with chronic public inebriates and cleaning up what in Seattle were widely known as "transient camps" underneath a freeway overpass. (Many community members believed that these camps harbored serious

criminality and drug activity, and evidence gathered by the police—such as stolen property they recovered in the “camps”—supported that view.) With this initial agenda in hand, the committee promptly set out to develop strategies to tackle it. One prong of the effort involved working with the owners of the troubled properties near the freeway overpass; with CAP’s assistance, eventually that area was completely cleared and redeveloped. Another involved working with local businesses to cut back on liquor sales and otherwise take more responsibility for neighborhood safety—and where necessary to replace irresponsible businesses with responsible ones that would make productive contributions to the community. Seattle’s project got off to a rocky start, and for about a year many of the participants felt that little progress was being made. But after that initial period, the CAP went more smoothly than East New York’s CSI.

Safety concerns and the associated strategies clearly lay at the core of the CSI, but in both cities, police and the CDCs also worried about the state of local police-community relations. Put bluntly and only a little too simply, police began their partnerships in these two neighborhoods largely isolated from a wide range of community members—including residents, service providers, business owners, developers, and even other government agencies. The CDCs also found themselves isolated from important institutions. That isolation, in turn, limited the effectiveness of all sides in their common goal of creating viable communities. Both the police and the CDCs saw the CSI as a way to strengthen police-community relationships and thereby build capacity for neighborhood revitalization.

Both sides mostly framed the issue of police-community relations in terms of the deep distrust with which many residents viewed the local police—a distrust that made them reluctant to cooperate with police when needed. This was particularly true in East New York, where the neighborhood’s predominantly black and Latino youth held the police in such low esteem that UYC staff report that the problem was too glaring to ignore. As a result, youth development played an important part in the CSI’s efforts there. Distrust of the police also was rampant in Seattle’s Chinatown-International District. Police there had been embroiled in corruption scandals in the 1970s, when some officers had taken bribes from

the neighborhood's prostitution and gambling industries. There was widespread suspicion that the police did not do enough to avert or redress a gambling-related massacre that involved contending organized crime interests. Many residents still remembered these events and deeply distrusted the department because of them.

For police, poor community relations presented a dual problem. In part, they saw it as a problem in itself, believing that part of being an effective police department was earning the support and respect of the community. This was particularly true in Seattle, where recently-appointed Chief Norm Stamper was committed to the idea of community policing and saw the distrust in the Chinatown-International District as unacceptable. But police also viewed the community relations problem as an obstacle to crime fighting, believing that it blocked the flow of vital information from the community. Some of them even held out grander hopes that the community and its institutions could help police devise and implement novel strategies for tackling crime problems. In all cases, the opportunity to work closely with a CDC looked like a promising way to strengthen their community ties. Police viewed CDCs as important community institutions in their own right, as well as windows to neighborhood residents (though at the beginning of these projects, most police probably leaned towards the latter view).

Underlying these two goals of improving safety and strengthening police-community relations was a third and larger goal that united them—the idea that these projects could help to revitalize the economic and social fabric of these neighborhoods. The partners themselves apparently warmed up to this view of their role over time as they gained a deeper understanding of what it meant. Initially, they often treated the troubles with safety and distrust in their neighborhoods as their immediate concerns. While they hoped that making progress on those fronts would eventually pave the way for community revitalization, they did not always focus on that goal directly. But the CSI's founding documents always stated a broader view. For example, one proposal explained that “the central goal of neighborhood revitalization must be to increase communities' cohesiveness, vitality, and quality of life.” It allowed that “reducing crime rates and

building housing are likely to be critical steps to this end,” but warned that these activities “should not be taken as ends in themselves and, in any event, will be difficult to sustain unless the underlying social and economic fabric can be reinforced.”⁶ This view of the project’s aims played an important role in its search for synergy—for example, its recurrent efforts not only to eliminate obnoxious land uses and practices but also to replace them with something constructive.

The project’s technical assistance providers played an important role in sustaining this vision by reminding participants repeatedly of their ultimate aim. That was especially true of Lisa Belsky, the founding program director of the CSI at LISC (where she had worked since 1989), and Bill Geller, an independent policing consultant who worked closely with Belsky on the projects.⁷ Belsky and Geller explain:

It was predictable that the practitioners—police and community developers alike—would regularly get lost in the details of an immediate crime-control effort. Someone had to be “keeper of the mission,” and that is a role we played. Innumerable meetings on site involved either or both of us reminding the local participants that there are many police-community efforts to control crime; their distinctive role in this project was to try to foment safety-inducing community development and conditions of safety that would stimulate further positive neighborhood development.⁸

Over time, Belsky and Geller report, these constant discussions helped the partners to deepen their understanding of the CSI’s most fundamental aims. That, in turn, meant shifting the way CDCs thought about their development and property management decisions and the way that police thought about their efforts to improve public safety. The goal for both was to be sustainable improvements in community quality of life.

⁶ Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Police Executive Research Forum, and Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, “Proposal to the C.S. Mott Foundation for the Community Security Initiative,” May 1994.

⁷ At the CSI’s inception, Geller was an Associate Director of PERF and its point person for the Seattle project. When Geller left PERF to found the Geller & Associates consulting firm, he continued as a technical assistance provider to the Seattle site.

⁸ Memorandum, January 3, 2000.

Viewed in this way, the immediate goals that each side hoped the CSI would realize were threefold: improvements in safety, police-community relations, and neighborhood viability. One important but difficult question about the CSI is how well it accomplished these aims.

Sponsors of broad-aimed projects such as the CSI have long struggled with the challenges of answering that sort of question.⁹ Particularly for holistic and long-range aims like “revitalizing the neighborhood fabric,” it is difficult to know how well a project “succeeded.” For that reason, this analysis is not, and cannot be, an “evaluation” of the CSI’s efforts. However, the remainder of this section will try to shed some light on the question of what these two CSI projects accomplished in two ways. First, it will describe some overarching trends during the CSI in crime and in some aspects of police-community relations—the two goals for which relevant neighborhood-wide data were available. It will then ask what these trends tell us about the CSI’s impact in those two areas, which do not encompass the full range of CSI goals but are still significant. Second, and most important, it will take a more nuanced look at the specific activities that the CSI made possible, examining them from the perspective of the full range of CSI goals. The argument will then be made that these partnerships developed important innovations that seem closely related to the CSI’s overarching objectives, and that the examples they offer reveal novel

⁹ Alice O’Connor, “Evaluating Comprehensive Community Initiatives: A View from History,” in James P. Connell et al., eds., *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods, and Contexts* (Washington, DC: Aspen Institute, 1994), pp. 23-63; Howell Baum, “How Should We Evaluate Comprehensive Community Initiatives,” paper prepared for the Urban Affairs Association annual meeting, Los Angeles, CA, May 2000. “The analytic framework,” O’Connor has written elsewhere, “denigrates community development for its inability to define and achieve clear-cut quantifiable goals and outcomes. After all, ‘building local capacity,’ ‘mending the social fabric,’ ‘cultivating indigenous leaders,’ and, most of all, ‘encouraging community empowerment’ are amorphous objectives and difficult to measure.” Of course, “revitalizing neighborhoods” and even “improving police-community relations” in the senses used in this paper deserve places on this list as well. That is why the more formal analyses in this section should not be overemphasized, and why the qualitative analysis of the strategies the projects made possible offers a more complete way to appraise their accomplishments. Note that this is said not as an apology for lack of quantifiable results but *even though* the quantitative evidence that is available is quite positive, in that it suggests the Seattle project (the more fully-implemented of the two) “worked.” See Alice O’Connor, “Swimming Against the Tide: A Brief History of Federal Policy in Poor Communities,” in Ronald Ferguson and William Dickens, eds., *Urban Problems and Community Development* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1999), pp. 77-138; quotation on p. 80.

ways in which police departments and CDCs can complement each other in their efforts to revitalize communities.

Did the CSI Reduce Crime and Improve Police-Community Relations?

In asking about these projects' overall impacts on crime and police-community relations, the first thing to notice is that the participants themselves are confident that the CSI made a difference in these areas. In Seattle's Chinatown-International District, where the CSI focused its attention, police and the Preservation and Development Authority explain that the central safety problems they attacked have largely subsided. First, the transient camp that many believed was harboring some of the neighborhood's most troublesome thieves has been eliminated, and a multi-million dollar residential and commercial building is currently being erected on the site. Second, the problem of "chronic public inebriates"—another key CSI priority—has diminished markedly. A more serious problem with drug distribution has recently come to the fore, but CAP members—police and community alike—insist that they are ready to deal with it effectively, and that they never expected to rid themselves permanently of safety problems.

Equally important, Seattle's participants report that a good relationship has developed among several police, PDA staff, and other area institutions. Some police still view the PDA with suspicion, and only a modest number of Chinatown-International District residents have participated directly in the project (area professionals—including PDA staff, businesspeople, and service providers—have mostly represented the community side of the partnership). But CAP members insist that the relationships they *have* developed are an important sign of progress in police-community relations. Police and community members view one another with considerably more trust than they did before working together, and the CAP network has grown to encompass most of the major institutions in the neighborhood. Although some CAP members are concerned about the modest level of direct participation by residents, they explain that culture and language have always made it difficult to organize the Chinatown-International District's mostly elderly Asian population (more than 25 mother tongues are spoken in the area). Moreover, they

point out that they have cultivated many indirect ties with the community by working with local organizations such as the International District Housing Alliance, which is dedicated entirely to organizing the area's tenants around housing issues, as well as the Business Improvement Association, a local chamber of commerce.

Because the Seattle CSI surveyed the Chinatown-International District community only once, no hard data are available about how community perceptions have changed during the CAP. Moreover, police were unable to provide information about many types of crime that the CAP was concerned with, such as drug activity and public drunkenness;¹⁰ many CSI participants explain that it was exactly this sort of neighborhood disorder that the project was most effective at reducing. But police records offer some evidence about neighborhood trends for more serious crimes and support participants' perceptions that safety has improved. Table 1 displays some of the relevant evidence:

¹⁰ The immediate problem was simply that the Seattle Police Department information systems could not easily parse these incidents out by neighborhood. The larger problem is that even if they could, that type of information is rarely reliable. As a rule, the less serious the crime, the less that data about it reflect the incidence of the crime and the more they reflect the degree to which police and the community officially "notice" it. For example, drug "incidents" shoot up when police make drug sweeps not because there is more drug activity at that time, but because police have taken official action against it and generated records of it in the process.

Table 1
Crime Statistics for the Chinatown-International District and Seattle, 1993-1998

	Violent Crimes		Property Crimes	
	Chinatown-ID	Seattle	Chinatown-ID	Seattle
1993	110	7,449	652	49,953
1994	90	6,539	609	51,669
1995 (CAP begins in Dec.)	89	4,910	535	50,862
1996	73	4,543	554	51,343
1997	72	5,002	540	51,855
1998	54	4,475	507	48,576
% change '95-'98	-39%	-9%	-5%	-4%

Source: Seattle Police Department. “Violent crimes” are murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. “Property crimes” are burglary, theft, auto theft, and arson.

Although crime also fell in the city as a whole during the course of the CSI, it fell faster during this period in the Chinatown-International District.¹¹ These data reinforce the perception that the Chinatown-International District became safer over the course of the CAP (though of course they say nothing about whether CAP caused these changes).

It is important to note that the drop in neighborhood crime started as early as 1994—a year before the CSI came to Seattle. Crime was also dropping in the city as a whole during that earlier period, but it

¹¹ The size of the difference between the crime reductions in the Chinatown-International District *versus* Seattle is somewhat sensitive to the year chosen as the “start date.” But the basic conclusion is not. For example, if 1994 rather than 1995 is used as the “base year” (on the argument that the project “started” before the steering committee met, since key players were working together to create it), then the Chinatown-International District still shows steeper declines in both property and violent crime than Seattle—although the drop in violent crime is not *much* larger (40% *vs.* 32%) and the decline in property crime is almost three times as large (17% *vs.* 6%). If 1996 is used (on the argument that the CSI only hit its stride in 1997 and cannot have been expected to produce significant results until then), the differences look more like they did with 1995 as the base year. Violent crime dropped much more in the Chinatown-International District than in Seattle (26% *vs.* 1%), while property crime dropped more rapidly but not remarkably so (8% *vs.* 5%).

Ideally, all these comparisons would involve crime rates per 1,000 population (rather than crime totals), but no annual estimates for the Chinatown-International District’s population were available, and there is no reason to believe that it changed markedly over this period. Even if such estimates were available, it probably would not be appropriate to use them. Such totals inevitably count only residents, and much of the Chinatown-International

did not *continue* to drop as rapidly throughout the city as it did in the Chinatown-International District. Particularly in the area of violent crime, the Chinatown-International District's crime reductions began to outstrip the city's quite consistently after the CSI began. For example, the differences between the Chinatown-International District's reductions and Seattle's during 1993, 1994, and 1995 were +46%, -6%, and +24%; but the differences during 1996, 1997, and 1998 were -11%, -11%, and -14%. (Negative values indicate that the Chinatown-International District's violent crime totals dropped more rapidly than Seattle's did, and the annual drops in each area are calculated as the crime totals for the year in question minus the totals for the previous year.) All of this is consistent with the view that crime began falling in Seattle as a whole around 1994, but that CAP accelerated this decline in the Chinatown-International District. *Something* caused the Chinatown-ID's drops in crime to begin to accelerate relative to Seattle's around 1995, and the CAP (which did make a visible dent in several specific safety problems, such as the camps) is the only obvious explanation. The Seattle Police Department (SPD), at least, had no other major public safety efforts afoot in the neighborhood at that time.¹²

In East New York, participants are, if anything, more enthusiastic about the changes in their neighborhood, despite the fact that most CSI members—including many in New York itself—concede that the East New York partnership traveled a rockier road than Seattle's did. The East New York project took on one of the most difficult neighborhoods imaginable, located in the heart of the NYPD's drug-ridden 75th Precinct. The precinct as a whole logged 129 homicides in 1993, more than any other precinct in the city; the Red Zone (the area targeted by the CSI) accounted for 20% of this number, even though it

District's daily traffic comes from outsiders. It is difficult to estimate how large that population is, much less how it changes over short periods of time.

¹² Geller comments that "a political benefit for police departments may emerge from this discussion. Suppose that when a police department has no special initiative of its own that accounts for an improvement in crime problems, the unsung hero of crime reduction is a host of community development efforts—from bricks and mortar to job placement, reintegration of ex-offenders into community life, etc. By diversifying its portfolio of strategies beyond crime-busting to include community development, a police department can enjoy a share of the credit for public safety accomplishments achieved by its community partners."

covered only 7% of the precinct's land. Five years later, the area has improved markedly. It is worth quoting casewriter John Buntin's description:

The neighborhood that had once been East New York's worst was now considered by the police to be one of the safest. "We still have our drug problems, but it's mostly marijuana-related," says Officer Hinchey. "Three years ago, four years ago, five when it was the worst, you'd never see anybody out on the streets. It wasn't a safe place. You'd see people running to the store and running back home. Now you go down there any time of the day, especially when school's out, and there are people everywhere. There's kids on every corner—young kids. I mean, parents will sit on the stoop and let their kids roam the streets. I like to see that. To me, that means there's an improvement. Four years ago, somebody would have gotten shot if they'd done that."

Throughout the Red Zone, new shops had appeared. As Officer Hinchey noted, residents once again felt comfortable going outside, and kids were playing in the streets. Property values in the Red Zone, once rock bottom, shot upwards. Ten years ago, Rosa Fenton, a Red Zone resident and steering committee member, had wanted to sell her house and move out. She couldn't give it away. "I could sell my house now for \$150,000," says Fenton. "Before no one would touch it." However, Fenton no longer wanted to move. Instead, she was renovating.

Police echo these sentiments, insisting that crime rates in the neighborhood have fallen markedly—though they were unable to provide data specifically for the Red Zone for this report, making it impossible to quantify or confirm these intuitions more precisely. No one interviewed for the case study doubted that the Red Zone has gotten much safer over the past few years. The one cautionary note comes from a resident survey carried out by the CSI, which found little change in perceptions of neighborhood safety during the funded part of the project.¹³ But this survey was not designed as a tool for evaluation; for many reasons, the trends it reports may be misleading.¹⁴ The more important question

¹³ For example, the proportion of respondents who reported feeling "very" or "somewhat" unsafe when they were outside in the neighborhood at night fell slightly, from 29% to 26%; while the proportion of those surveyed who reported that they were "very" or "somewhat" concerned about being physically attacked in the neighborhood went up from 56% to 64%. Neither change is statistically significant (and that concept may not even be meaningful in this context, as explained in the next footnote), though the numbers for the fear of being attacked come close. (The 95% confidence interval for these surveys is about $\pm 8\%$, based on a sample of 117 households out of an estimated 702 total in the neighborhood. The survey was given to every sixth household in order to create a random sample.)

¹⁴ The survey was not designed primarily to support research but as a tool for the project itself (e.g., to learn about resident concerns so that the CSI could tailor its strategies to them). Three of its limitations are particularly important. First, it is not really a "before-and-after" comparison because the CSI had been running for several months before the first wave was administered; moreover, the CSI built on earlier, informal efforts in the UYC that had begun three years earlier. Second, because the two waves of the survey happened at different times of the year (the first in the fall of 1996 and the second in the summer of 1998), their results are not strictly comparable. Since crime and disorder peak in the summer months, perceptions of safety may also be seasonal. Third, it is possible that the

about the view that the Red Zone got safer over time is whether the CSI caused the trend or if one of the many other initiatives afoot in East New York did. This question will be addressed shortly.

In addition to believing that the Red Zone got safer, police and residents report that the CSI improved police-community relations in the neighborhood. More than in Seattle, the New York project focused much of its attention on outreach to neighborhood residents, developing strong resident participation in its steering committee. The result, one participant insists, was that Red Zone residents developed “a real relationship with law enforcement on several levels,” going on to explain that “the development of real leadership in the community and an active steering committee was the greatest accomplishment [of the CSI].” This relationship among police, some UYC members, and the residents recruited to the project’s steering committee must count as one of the project’s most important accomplishments, in the sense that it represents a new capacity for joint action on a variety of fronts.

Nevertheless, New York’s improvements in police-community relations were clearly not universal. As described in some detail below, many of the relationships in New York were filled with tension (though recently some of them have begun to improve). Moreover, it does not appear that the strong relationships that did develop “spilled over” in any way to the broader community. Once again, the project’s survey was not designed to answer this sort of question, and there are many reasons to question its results. For what it is worth, however, that evidence does not offer a basis for optimism—it suggests that resident perceptions of police-community relations actually grew somewhat worse over the course of the CSI.¹⁵

CSI raised the community’s expectations about safety and police-community relations; less sanguine “perceptions” over time may reflect those raised expectations rather than any change in the environment they describe. Nevertheless, the survey does seem to have reached a random sample of neighborhood residents, and although other difficulties with its implementation lend an air of uncertainty to its findings, it is still the best available gauge of neighborhood sentiment about the police during this period. If there were large changes in neighborhood perceptions, they should be visible even through an imperfect optic.

¹⁵ For example, the proportion of survey respondents who believed the 75th Precinct had been “very” or “somewhat” effective in dealing with neighborhood crime problems over the past year grew slightly (from 71% to

There is, however, a larger difficulty with this sort of analysis. Because many things other than the CSI happened in each neighborhood during this time, we cannot assume that the CSI rather than those other things caused whatever changes each project observed—either the changes for the better or the changes for the worse. In East New York, reductions in crime may well have resulted from NYPD strategies that had little to do with the CSI, including a massive attack on city drug markets that paid special attention to the Red Zone (which was planned before the CSI existed) and the order maintenance and performance management efforts that garnered national attention for New York City. Moreover, if the community relations problems suggested by the survey are real, they may reflect the influence of high-profile police brutality charges that arose elsewhere in New York (both the Abner Louima and Amadou Diallo cases erupted during the CSI). Perceptions of police might have gotten even *worse* if the CSI had not existed. In Seattle, because there are no comparably obvious alternative explanations of the crime trends in the Chinatown-International District, there is good reason to conclude tentatively that the CAP did make a dent in the neighborhood’s crime problems. But it would be reckless to claim that its impact has been proven on the basis of this analysis.

For reasons like these, it is not possible to draw any ironclad conclusions about what impact the CSI had on safety and on community perceptions of the police—which, in any case, represent only a narrow subset of the CSI’s broad aims. What can be said is that the data are mostly consistent with participants’ informed beliefs that the projects made important gains in safety and police community relations. That conclusion is less true in East New York (which stands to reason, since the CSI was not

73%). But the proportion who believed police treated people “very” or “somewhat” respectfully fell from 54% to 43%—one of the few large changes reported in the survey. A similar question, which asked respondents whether they thought police were beginning to treat people better, also revealed growing pessimism. The proportion who believed police were getting better fell from 27% to 15%, while the proportion who actually felt police were getting worse rose from 17% to 19% (the remainder were either unsure or felt that the way police treated people had not changed).

implemented as completely there as it was in Seattle). But safety began to improve markedly in Seattle's Chinatown-International District at about the time when the CSI started there.

Partnership Strategies

In the end, it may be unreasonable to expect to measure the overall impacts of a broad program such as the CSI.¹⁶ Partnerships do not have much in common with the discrete “interventions” that evaluation researchers are sometimes able to test. Instead, it is probably better to think about them as specific organizational structures—the same way that hospitals, police departments, or CDCs are organizational structures rather than “interventions.” Medical researchers do not test the health benefits of “hospitals”; rather, they test the drugs and treatments whose appropriate distribution hospitals make possible.

One way to appraise an organizational structure is to ask what specific activities it makes possible, leaving rigorous study of *their* impacts to other research.¹⁷ Following this route rules out absolute certainty about the ultimate “impacts” of a partnership. But it may well be a necessary step toward understanding these broad and essentially organizational innovations. In the meantime, the more modest

¹⁶ In principle, the CSI might have been carried out as the sort of randomized experiment that has become increasingly popular among criminal justice researchers. For example, the national sponsors might have solicited applications to participate in the CSI and then given resources at random to half of the top applicants; this analysis could then compare outcomes in the funded sites to those that received no formal support. Alternatively, the research might have looked for evidence that links overall trends in safety and resident perceptions of police directly to the CSI—e.g., a drop in particular types of crime that the CSI had targeted. (It is difficult, however, to imagine how this strategy could be carried out. The CSI aimed to impact a wide variety of safety problems, and reliable data simply do not exist for the few crimes to which the CSI *did* pay special attention—such as public inebriation in Seattle.) Nevertheless, despite some recent practice in police research, it has long been recognized that these approaches are not entirely appropriate for innovative programs with broad and evolving aims. See, for example, Robert Weiss and Martin Rein, “The Evaluation of Broad-Aimed Programs,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 15 (1970): 97-109; and the work by Alice O’Connor cited in an earlier footnote. See also David Thacher, “Policing Is Not a Treatment: Alternatives to the Medical Model of Police Research,” unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, November 1999.

¹⁷ More formally, this strategy involves a qualitative analysis of the many activities each partnership undertook in order to identify common themes among them. That analysis led to the development of the six categories presented here (information sharing, human development, crime-resistant property, guardianship, imposing responsibility, and crime-resistant community development). After articulating what each of these activities

question can be asked of whether it is plausible to think the activities they support are relevant to their larger aims.

Looked at in this way, several aspects of the CSI stand out. In East New York and especially in Seattle's Chinatown-International District, the project led to many intriguing tactics, some of which would be difficult or impossible to accomplish without a partnership. These tactics ranged from familiar ideas like information sharing to more unusual innovations like improving guardianship by place managers. At their most inventive, the strategies the CSI projects developed reveal novel views of what each partner can do and how its capacities influence safety and community development.

Information Sharing. At the most basic level, many CSI participants insist that their partnerships have improved the flow of information between the community and the police. The projects always aspired to go beyond the simplest police-community dialogues that are common in community policing. (This was particularly the case in Seattle, where one CSI member explains that “having participants act ‘as the eyes and ears [of police]’ is a citizen’s role which the Seattle CSI participants would generally reject as too narrow.”) But as one arrow in a quiver of many, information sharing emerged as a straightforward benefit of these projects. What is particularly notable is the way these projects leveraged the distinctive capabilities of CDCs to develop two-way communication between the police and the community.

In East New York, many police enthusiastically suggest that information sharing is the single most important benefit of their project. First, they explain that residents recruited to the project’s steering committee have been able to give them detailed information about where and when crime (particularly drug crime) occurs, all the way down to the location of drug “stash”; they insist that this knowledge has made them far more effective. Equally important, they argue that these relationships have kept them in

involves, it becomes possible to appraise each one with respect to the CSI’s goals, drawing on past research about

touch with community sentiment about their actions and have given them at least one outlet to explain them. For example, after area police learned that one drug sweep had upset the community, Red Zone police used a steering committee meeting to explain why they carried it out. More broadly, the CSI worked with the UYC's youth center to instigate "police-youth dialogues" intended to help each side better understand the other (though some participants concede that the dialogues may not have realized this goal, given the deep distrust that divides youth and police).¹⁸

Seattle never achieved the same level of direct resident participation in its project that New York did. From the outset, its steering committee did have two members who were Chinatown-International District residents, but neither of them represented the elderly Asian population that made up the plurality in the neighborhood (in 1990, over half of the neighborhood's residents were Asian and nearly two-thirds of those were over 60 years old). Most CAP members tried to take a realistic approach to this problem. They understood that community organizing in the Chinatown-International District had always been difficult. Although they always tried hard to solicit direct participation by residents, they recognized that they would need to find other ways to learn about community needs and to develop strategies for coping with them.¹⁹ One approach was to work closely with the few neighborhood organizations that *did* have

their impacts in the process.

¹⁸ This type of information sharing was intended to help reduce crime and improve the general tenor of police-community relations. This author does not know of research that specifically asks how effective this strategy is in those terms—it is again a fairly broad form of "intervention" that may be difficult to test. But related research suggests reasons for both skepticism and hope. Studies of neighborhood watch generally find few crime prevention effects (Dennis Rosenbaum, "Community Crime Prevention: A Review and Synthesis of the Literature," in *Justice Quarterly* 5 [1988]: 323-95), but studies of criminal investigation reveal that private citizens are the most important source of leads for police (Peter Greenwood, Joan Petersilia, and Jan Chaiken, *The Criminal Investigation Process* [Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1977]). With respect to community relations, it is hard to know what impact to expect from "justifications" such as those that the East New York officers say they were able to give because of their new contact with the community. Although such dialogues probably do not hurt, James Q. Wilson has suggested that problems with police-community relations cannot be completely solved in such a simple way. See "The Police in the Ghetto," in Robert Steadman, ed., *The Police and the Community* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), pp. 51-90.

¹⁹ Sue Taoka, the PDA's director, explains: "I've worked down here for a really long time and getting the typical resident to sit on a board, come to a meeting, is very difficult. Our typical resident, one, is older and doesn't

reasonably strong ties to at least some neighborhood residents—notably the International District Housing Alliance, which had as much contact with neighborhood residents as anyone. Through efforts like this one, CAP participants believe that the flow of information between the police and the community improved. But few if any of them describe better information as the main benefit of their partnership. Indeed, as already noted, most of them felt the “eyes and ears” role was an overly narrow conception of what the community might accomplish. The truly innovative aspects of the Seattle partnership lie elsewhere.

Using the community as the “eyes and ears” of the police and opening up a dialogue aimed at understanding are both staples in the community policing cupboard (although many adherents of community policing also emphasize engaging the community for their brains and their other problem-solving capabilities). What made the CSI unique was that it worked through CDCs to develop police-resident relationships. There are good reasons to believe that this approach made sense.

First of all, the CDCs in these two cities—and particularly in New York—had more experience with organizing than police did, and they had resources and expertise in the area that police lacked. As one NYPD sergeant explains, “I don’t have time to go knocking on doors to organize people. It helped a lot to have the Youth Corps doing it.” Moreover, part of the UYC’s advantage was that it didn’t *have* to go knocking on doors. UYC staff had many contacts in the Red Zone, both because some of them lived there themselves and because the agency’s work (such as running apartment buildings and youth programs in the area) put them in contact with other neighborhood residents. Several steering committee

like to sit still... Many of them don’t have a good grasp of English, if they even speak English. It is not something that they can follow well in a meeting. And I don’t think they believe that is where the real work gets done. I mean, they’ll come to resident meetings and talk about issues that are more specific to them and their concerns and their needs, but sitting on a board is not what they think is important. I think that we’ve kind of experienced that in just about every one of the organizations down here.” The result was that the CAP steering committee was largely composed of people concerned about the community rather than actual Chinatown-International District residents.

members were recruited through these channels, and some UYC employees believe that even more might have been recruited if the CSI had worked more closely with all the Youth Corps's divisions.

Second, for some Red Zone residents, the UYC apparently acted as a “buffer” between themselves and the police that made them more forthcoming. Buntin writes that one of the most committed members of the steering committee “believed that most neighborhood youths did not associate the ENYUYC . . . with the police.”

“They don’t know that this is going on here,” he says. “They know that you go down here [to the Youth Corps] for apartments, you can come down here to see if there’s job openings or [to see if] somebody could help you out, hook you up with a job. That’s all they know the Youth Corps to be. They don’t know about the inner parts like the CSI project or anything like that.... They’ll see the police come down every now and then. But they think the police is down here just trying to see what’s going on...”

Other steering committee members were still apparently reticent because of their fear of retaliation. But using the UYC as an intermediary apparently made at least some of them more comfortable acting as the police’s eyes and ears.

Human Development. A second set of activities associated with the CSI, also emphasized mainly in New York, involved human development in general and youth development in particular— attempts to help build skills, confidence, and civic consciousness among individual neighborhood residents. The clearest example involved the neighborhood’s Police And Community Together (PACT) program, which over time developed an array of programming for neighborhood youth that included academic tutoring, an entrepreneurship program, and art projects. Seattle had fewer activities like this (as with information sharing, project participants there suggest that this was not a major priority for them), but its CSI did occasionally sponsor art projects for area youth.

Project members insist that these activities reduce delinquency and contribute to community development by giving youth a constructive and educational outlet for their energy.²⁰ On the other hand, many community organizations and a few police departments have developed programs like these independently; they do not require a police-CDC partnership to flourish.

Developing Crime-Resistant Property. A third set of important CSI activities joined the expertise and authority of CDCs in land use and property with the focus and knowledge police have about how to make places safer. Seattle used physical design strategies repeatedly to improve neighborhood safety. For example, CAP provided funding for a lighting project for neighborhood businesses, and the PDA has begun asking police on the project to review its new development plans with an eye to security. In New York, the CSI sponsored a physical cleanup in one commercial area that grew into a larger façade improvement project; project members argue that reducing physical disorder in this way also reduced crime in the area.²¹

As in the case of human development, some of these projects could probably be performed independently by either police departments or CDCs without a close relationship between the two. But others, like the review of PDA site plans by police, clearly require a direct relationship between police and the CDC.

Improving Guardianship. Fourth, some of the most innovative and important activities the CSI advanced were probably those that helped improve guardianship of institutions and property in the

²⁰ Some research suggests that intensive youth development efforts do reduce crime. See Eisenhower Foundation, *Youth Investment and Community Reconstruction, Final Report* (Washington, DC: The Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation, 1990).

²¹ Research on the impact of physical change strategies is mixed, but some of them do seem to make a modest difference. See Ralph B. Taylor and Stephen Gottfredson, "Environmental Design, Crime, and Prevention: An Examination of Community Dynamics," in Albert J. Reiss and Michael Tonry, eds., *Communities and Crime* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 387-416. Some researchers suggest that physical disorder does affect crime, especially Wesley G. Skogan, *Disorder and Decline: Crime and the Spiral of Decay in Urban Neighborhoods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

community. In both the Chinatown-International District and East New York's Red Zone, the people who had responsibility for many businesses and vacant lots simply were not taking safety problems seriously. But police and CDCs proved to be a dynamic combination for getting their attention.

Seattle's project truly distinguished itself in this area. One example involved the freeway area described above. Police and their community partners solved this problem by identifying the property owners, pressuring them to take responsibility for the problems on their property, and helping them to do so. Eventually, the area was completely cleared, secured, and prepared for a new mixed-use development that broke ground shortly thereafter. Police took the lead on many aspects of this effort, but throughout they were in constant communication with the PDA, and their work was guided and supported by the experience of the CDC's senior staff. Another example involved a Chinatown-International District restaurant that had become a hotspot for violence. CAP members initially tried to gain cooperation from the restaurant's owner, who essentially refused to cooperate. Therefore, while police continued enforcement at the business, the PDA worked its contacts to try to replace the owner. They eventually convinced the property's landlord to put pressure on the owner to sell his restaurant, then found another Asian businessman to buy it—an entrepreneur who hired more local residents and finally put a stop to the crime that had plagued the restaurant. This example shows how Seattle's efforts combined crime prevention with neighborhood revitalization.

New York also made several efforts to improve guardianship, particularly for apartment buildings and vacant lots. Officers report spending considerable time tracking down property owners to get them to take responsibility for their lots, but they also report that working with the UYC—whose daily fare involves property development—made this task much easier. One explains: “I could go to a... community board and look up tax maps [to identify a property owner], and they're usually about three years old and there's no information. But in East New York, I can go down to the basement and talk to the right person; they can pull the information up on the computer and tell me exactly down to the last day

who owns a building if I want to find out that information or where to contact somebody.” Another says: “It takes me two days to find out who owns a property. It takes them [the UYC] one minute.” Police also initiated a program of vertical patrols through troubled apartment buildings (nicknamed “FTAP”), but they had to get permission from each individual property owner. The Youth Corps, active in the property management community, helped to open these doors when necessary; in some cases, the buildings police wanted to patrol were owned by the UYC itself.

In all these ways, the partnerships between police and these CDCs proved to be effective at improving guardianship of important properties and institutions in these neighborhoods. That, in turn, almost certainly made them safer places.²² In some cases, such as the Seattle restaurant example, it also advanced community development directly.

Imposing Responsibility. A strategy similar to improving guardianship involved persuading neighborhood institutions to respond to community concerns about the impacts of their businesses. In particular, both projects tried to convince convenience stores to stop selling the types of alcohol that local troublemakers favored. In East New York, police explain that although they quickly became aware that many of the people they stopped were buying fortified alcohol in the neighborhood, they felt it was inappropriate for *them* to ask neighborhood stores to stop selling it. But the UYC could, and CSI members believe that the strategy worked.

Seattle embarked on a more elaborate program, recruiting area businesses to voluntarily sign “good neighbor agreements,” in which they agreed to stop selling products such as malt liquor. Some CAP members concede that businesses have ended up breaking their promises because these products are an important source of revenue for them. One business told the city that it could not pay its dues to

²² Recent research demonstrates that good guardianship does make places safer. Lorraine Green Mazerolle, Colleen Kadleck, and Jan Roehl, “Controlling Drug and Disorder Problems: The Role of Place Managers,” *Criminology* 36 (1998): 371-403.

the Business Improvement Association, which participates actively in the CAP, because it had stopped selling malt liquor at the request of the CAP and the BIA itself. Nevertheless, participants in the project insist that the agreements helped pave the way for stricter regulations, and that they have begun to make significant progress with the Liquor Commission on this front. Some CAP members have begun thinking about other products that the convenience stores could sell in order to offset any revenues lost from sacrificing malt liquor. That, one participant explains, captures the essence of the community economic development function of the CSI—replacing an offensive practice with an acceptable alternative that generates legitimate income and economic development.

Crime-Resistant Community Development. In that way, the idea of “imposing responsibility” captures only one side of the CSI’s most innovative accomplishments. Particularly in the minds of the project’s technical assistance providers, the ideal CSI strategy involved not just eliminating crime, but replacing it with something productive—something that would resist any tendency for crime to return and that would also advance the goal of sustainable community revitalization in the process. The Seattle liquor store example is only one of many instances of this strategy. Another came immediately after police cleared out the area under the freeway, when the CAP worked with the local BIA to turn the spot into a gateway to the Chinatown-International District. In doing so, CAP members hoped to reclaim the area permanently and take an important economic development step in the process (i.e., help to define and advertise the Chinatown-International District).

These sorts of strategies arose in large part because of the constant encouragement of the technical assistance providers. For example, when New York’s project began concentrating on a specific problem with drug dealing, LISC’s Lisa Belsky pushed the group to think about the community development opportunities the problem raised. That meant asking, for example, what use could be made of the vacant lot that the dealers used as a base of operations—for some type of development, for a community garden, for play space for neighborhood youth, or for something else entirely. Outside of

individual strategy sessions like this one, Belsky and Geller constantly tried to keep the community revitalization mission in view through subtle encouragement: through what they talked about, noticed, and applauded in group meetings, and through what they encouraged CSI participants to emphasize when they discussed their accomplishments at professional conferences.

The Importance of Partnership. Within this long list of CSI activities, some (such as youth development) probably do not gain much from the partnership structure. If it is these strategies that other cities are after, a CSI-type partnership may not be necessary; but several others probably do benefit from collaboration between police and CDCs.

The first group of these activities is characterized by *shared authority*—i.e., police and the CDC each contributing something essential. The FTAP patrols of Youth Corps buildings, where police carry out the patrols but the Youth Corps must give permission, is a simple example; the review of PDA site plans by Seattle Police is another. In these examples, it is not possible to accomplish the tasks without some degree of cooperation between the two institutions.

A second group of activities benefits from the *double voice* a partnership creates. As one CSI member explains it, “you can’t say ‘no’ to both of us.” The convenience store examples show the power of this idea: that one side sometimes has credibility with an audience that the other one does not and, in any case, the partners together have influence that neither would have alone. When the police complain about liquor sales, no one is very surprised or moved. However, it appears that when a CDC joins in the chorus, it commands special attention from businesses and the liquor board.

Finally, a third category of activities benefits from the close *sequencing* that partnerships make possible. The Seattle project in particular developed a pragmatic and targeted version of the “weed and seed” idea, with the PDA trying to follow up each police enforcement or “weeding” effort with its own effort at “seeding.” This sort of sequencing obviously requires some degree of collaboration between the two institutions in order to ensure that the baton is handed off smoothly—particularly when the sequence is

more complex than the “weed and seed” progression just described, as it almost invariably is. As Lisa Belsky and Bill Geller explained in response to an earlier draft of this paper, “The depiction...of a one-two punch is a bit oversimplified. There is a continuing upward spiral in which the weeding makes possible seeding and the seeding grows hearty stock that forestalls some new weeds, and then further weeding enables still heartier growth, and so on.”²³ Two agencies working independently—even if they are doing their jobs very effectively—simply cannot succeed with this kind of iterative and synergistic strategy. These partnerships, on the other hand, offer many examples of how they can.

Lessons Learned

For reasons such as the one above, it is clear that police-CDC partnerships have distinctive strengths that can make them very valuable for neighborhood development. The most interesting accomplishments reviewed here reflect novel views of what each partner can do and how its capacities influence safety and community development. Seattle’s project was especially productive in showing how the capacities of CDCs and police departments complement one another. There, the PDA was not simply a window to neighborhood residents (and some would argue that in these terms the PDA did not really help the police very much at all). It brought a host of valuable resources to bear on the area’s safety problems, including expertise with property development and relationships with area institutions. Moreover, police in Seattle did not simply make arrests; they also pursued civil abatements and even worked with the owners of problem properties to redevelop them or change their ownership.

In these ways, police-CDC partnerships are not simply another version of the police-resident partnerships that have become popular in community policing. They are a specific type of relationship that commands the distinct resources of an important institution. They also are not simply a separate

²³ Memorandum, January 3, 2000.

“security” program of the sort that a few CDCs have added to their portfolio.²⁴ They are a tool that helps CDCs to pursue sustainable revitalization and influence a range of conditions relevant to neighborhood quality of life. Looking to future projects like those in Seattle and New York, it seems especially important to recognize the *breadth* of strategies that police and CDCs can pursue together.

In sum, these projects offer ample evidence for the value of police-CDC partnerships. Of course, it is not possible to be certain about the ultimate “impact” of projects like these in any academic sense (though the evidence that the Seattle project made a difference in safety is fairly good, and most CSI members agree that it was more fully implemented than New York’s CSI—in part because the Red Zone’s challenges were so difficult). Nevertheless, these relationships clearly made it possible to develop and implement several sensible public safety and community revitalization strategies, particularly when they worked from a broad view of the capacities of each partner.

²⁴ Some of these programs—which are potentially valuable but do not have aims as broad as the CSI—are described in Xavier de Souza Briggs, Elizabeth Mueller, and Mercer Sullivan, *From Neighborhood to Community: Evidence on the Social Effects of Community Development Corporations* (New York: New School for Social Research, 1996).

Coping with the Challenges

All of the above speaks to the question of *what* these partnerships can do that might be valuable for public safety and community development. However, cities that want to emulate the CSI will also want to know *how* that type of project can be designed and managed successfully. This section will investigate lessons the CSI offers in answer to that question. Although it is not obvious what steps police and CDCs need to take to ensure that a strong and productive relationship takes hold between them, these two CSI projects offer useful ideas that can help others to develop an answer.

Learning how to accomplish any organizational task involves learning something about the distinct challenges that preoccupy those who undertake it. That is especially the case with working in partnership because it is still a new and unfamiliar task for most organizations. Theory and practice do not even have a clear picture of the problems that partnerships raise, much less a picture of the possible solutions to those problems. One of the most important ways these two CSI projects have contributed to those who would emulate them is by revealing what these challenges have been and illustrating a few ideas about how to overcome them.

A review of the challenges of organizational work inevitably highlights the dramatic and the contentious. Taken by itself, it overemphasizes crisis and conflict at the expense of the things that went well—at the expense, that is, of the sorts of accomplishments reviewed above. However, precisely because these are the most difficult moments in partnerships, it is vital to examine how others have approached them. When practitioners of any craft get together—even when they are especially effective at what they do—their conversation invariably turns to the challenges they share and advice about how to cope with them. What follows should be seen as an extension of that sort of dialogue for those engaged in the craft of building partnerships. It reviews the moments of trouble not because they are what most

defined these projects, but because they raise the most urgent demands for professional reflection and awareness.²⁵

Thus, although participants in these two cities were generally very satisfied with what they accomplished during the CSI, each site ran into stumbling blocks along the way, many of which were strikingly similar across the two cities. That should not be surprising, for it is naïve to expect the history of isolation and mistrust between police and CDCs to evaporate overnight. These projects indicate that rough spots will almost certainly arise even in the most innovative projects of this kind.

This section will describe what participants in the Seattle and East New York projects saw as the critical challenges they had faced in their partnerships. The challenges are organized into four categories: the problems of turnover, accountability, and conflict—as well as the “guerillas in the bureaucracy” problem, an admittedly cryptic label that will be explained shortly.²⁶ Each of these problems arose over and over in Seattle or New York, and many of them arose in both cities. Thus, there is every reason to

²⁵ Martin Rein suggests that genuine professional knowledge—including any contribution academic research makes to it—always takes this form. Professional inquiry involves understanding the moments of unease that first present themselves as “worries,” or a vague sense that something is not quite right. The inchoate “worries” are first given shape as “problems” (presented in this paper through the naming and framing of the core challenges involved in partnering), and then ways of coping with the problems are proposed (a few of them have been culled for each problem and presented as various “strategies”). See Martin Rein, “Practice Worries,” in *From Policy to Practice* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1983). Rein and coauthor Peter Marris loosely followed something like this strategy of analysis in their classic study of early community development efforts: *The Dilemmas of Social Reform* (New York: Atherton Press, 1967).

²⁶ Academics will recognize the methodology of qualitative analysis here. Events that practitioners identified as troublesome were classified into the four categories that have been described. The research did not begin with these categories already established. Instead, they emerged from a review of the troublesome events, in which this researcher tried to figure out what some of them had in common and how they might be grouped together (though, of course, some preconceived ideas probably helped some categories but not others to so “emerge,” just as they do for any researcher). Each category is illustrated with examples upon which it is based, enabling the reader to judge whether the categories describe the examples fairly—whether, in other words, the four categories cover the range of “difficulties that arise in police-CDC partnerships” adequately. Ultimately, of course, the test of their usefulness comes from future work: Do other academics and, especially, other practitioners find them to be useful ways of diagnosing the struggles that arise in this sort of project, do they fairly describe the most important challenges, and do they suggest ways of responding to those challenges? For discussions of qualitative methodology that reflect the approach taken in this paper, see Charles Ragin, *Constructing Social Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1994); Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1967).

believe they will arise elsewhere. Police and CDCs should expect them, be prepared for them, and not be deterred by them. If either side intends to walk away from the table at the first sign of trouble, the partnership is guaranteed to fail. Funders should learn the same lesson. They must have patience and long-term commitment if they are to give these projects a fair chance, since partnerships are complicated and inherently fragile, faced with an obstacle course of inescapable challenges. They must also recognize that the projects will need support and technical assistance to help them cope with the challenges as they arise.

Accompanying the descriptions of the four key challenges are discussions of the ways in which each site tried to confront them. It is often hard to tell whether these strategies “worked” (much less whether they would work elsewhere) for the same reasons that it is hard to tell whether the projects had their desired impacts overall. Although an analysis like this one is probably not the best way to make those judgments, it can at least identify the different options that are available. Then, trial-and-error in the field can help determine the conditions under which each makes most sense.

Turnover

Probably the most familiar challenge that long-term partnerships face is the constant shuffling of players. “Just when we got to know our beat officer,” community groups complain, “they transferred him downtown.” The same thing also happens on the community side, as CDC employees shift or community activists drop out of the groups they had once joined. The partners would like to believe that their relationship is broader than ties between individuals and can outlast their inevitable transitions.²⁷ In truth, though, much of its capacity resides precisely in these interpersonal relations. The participants come to trust particular people rather than roles; they develop detailed knowledge of each other’s needs and wants

²⁷ Alternatively, they may deny that the transitions are inevitable and do everything in their power to stop them. Many police departments that have grappled with community policing have taken this position, trying mightily to keep officers assigned to the same beats over time. While some of these departments have reduced the turnover problem, none has solved it.

that someone who replaces them will not have. There is certainly more to a successful partnership than just these interpersonal understandings. However, these two partnerships, at least, drew much of their energy and effectiveness from relationships of trust that developed between key players.

Consider the position of the project coordinator, which was funded through LISC and formally located within the CDC. The coordinator was the linchpin of the partnership in both cities, serving as the main organizer of meetings and events and as the point person for most participants. In both projects, however, the person who held this position moved on. Most dramatically, when East New York coordinator Manny Burgos announced his planned retirement, those at the meeting were stunned and dispirited. Casewriter John Buntin writes:

In March 1997 at the end of a partners' meeting, Manny Burgos announced he would be resigning from his position as coordinator of the CSI project and moving to Southern California in May. "I thought it was a joke for a minute," says [PERF director Chuck] Wexler. The partners had just concluded a particularly productive meeting, and, while it was evident that Burgos and [UYC director Martin] Dunn were often at loggerheads, Wexler and [PERF consultant Mary Ann] Wycoff felt operations were going well. "I said, 'What?' He said, 'Yeah, but there's going to be transition time and everything.' We were just floored." Less than three months later, Burgos was gone.

Burgos' departure was a major blow to the CSI. As a long-time resident of East New York, Burgos had won the trust of community residents and steering group members, as well as the police officers assigned to the Red Zone. Many steering committee members had signed on to the CSI with very high hopes about quickly addressing the neighborhood's problems; Burgos' sense of élan and shared purpose had sustained many members through the delays and frustrations they had encountered. To some steering committee members, Burgos' abrupt departure called into question the continued existence of the CSI itself.

At the time, these fears seemed warranted. Buntin reports that one of the problems faced by John Jones, the UYC director who temporarily took on Burgos's job, was that "he simply did not have the history with the police that Burgos had had." Even when the UYC hired a permanent replacement for Burgos, some steering committee members never returned—they had trusted Burgos in particular, not the project in general.²⁸

²⁸ Burgos returned to the UYC in 1999 as an Assistant Executive Director.

The same problems with turnover echoed elsewhere in both cities. In East New York, chronic turnover among NYPD precinct managers raised concerns that the project would constantly need to backpedal. In Seattle, a key sergeant was transferred to another neighborhood, and one of the central players on the PDA side left his organization for work in the private sector. Both transitions stand out as critical moments in the partnership when participants wondered if their efforts could continue. Of course, changes like these were clearly not all unwelcome. Sometimes the partners were grateful for them, as when an unsupportive police lieutenant moved on in Seattle, or when new CSI coordinators in New York introduced the project to new community contacts (some of whom eventually became steering committee members). But even that type of transition often raised challenges. For example, the Seattle project actually *asked* coordinator Max Chan to resign from her position after participants decided that she had not moved the project forward. Nevertheless, some of them still worried that the CAP would lose her extensive ties to the community.

The important question is not how to stop transitions from happening. Some always will occur, and sometimes that will be a good thing. Instead, we should ask what projects like the CSI can do to reduce undesirable turnover and, most important, how they can manage the transitions that do occur in ways that minimize their damage.

Benefits of Overlapping Ties. In East New York, two things helped to soften the impact of Burgos's departure. The first was the existence of some overlap in key partnership ties. While Burgos was the key person who tended to the link between police and the CDC, there were others who found time—as part of many other roles they played—to monitor this relationship in the background. Particularly important was LISC grantmaker and technical assistance provider Lisa Belsky. She did not have the same level of contact and trust with all the players as Burgos had, but in the course of providing much advice, support, and troubleshooting, she did come to know them all relatively well. When Burgos left, Belsky stepped in and encouraged others (like police Sergeant Bill Goodbody) to take over some of his

duties. The CDC itself also took action upon Burgos's departure, assigning Assistant Director John Jones—who had had *some* interaction with the project despite many other duties—to the job. Although these were only stopgap measures, they were something. What they point out is the value of a second layer of people in the project—people like Jones, Goodbody, and especially Belsky—who do not necessarily keep the project moving on a daily basis and obviously play many other roles, but have a relationship with key players. By cultivating those relationships, they can step in to help smooth over the transitions.

Thus, ensuring that key ties did not rest solely on the shoulders of one person made those ties less fragile. Some police departments have used this strategy deliberately. For example, the police department in Norfolk, Virginia, assigns two officers to every beat and never rotates both of them at once. That way, the officer who remains can help the new one to make the transition into her role. It would clearly be uneconomical to put two people in every liaison role—to hire two coordinators, for example—but that much overlap is not necessary. What is important is that someone take on the role of the fixer, or even be designated to play it—someone who steps in (at least temporarily) when a key tie is broken, and who has enough history with the key players to play that role effectively. Making sure a key manager is involved in addition to the front-line workers may be one way to satisfy this need. Regardless, it is important to recognize the danger of relying exclusively on one “liaison” to maintain a relationship between organizations.

Handoffs. The second, closely related way that East New York coped with Burgos's departure was to deliberately *hand off* his ties and knowledge to his successor, a young woman named Nathaly Rubio, who started work several weeks after Burgos left. Burgos himself helped out in this process by announcing his plans in advance and offering continual information and advice to Rubio during her first few months—things like background on police and community participants, advice about how to navigate the UYC organization, and ideas about problems she encountered. Rubio ultimately developed her own

style on the job, but by handing off his ties and knowledge, Burgos probably helped to jumpstart the process and preserve a degree of continuity.

This process has many echoes elsewhere in the CSI. Even in Seattle, where Max Chan was *asked* to leave, she was apparently asked in a sufficiently tactful way that she was still willing to help her replacement, Aileen Balahadia, make the transition. The PDA kept Chan on the project two weeks after Balahadia's start date, and Balahadia reports this period was invaluable. "Working with Max [Chan] was very, very helpful because she was a long-time person down here," Balahadia told Buntin. "She grew up down here, and she knows all the people and all the players. So it was really helpful for her to first give background on all the people in the district and the history and then tell me how she had run the project."

The national technical assistance providers played an especially important and deliberate role in the job of handing off ties and knowledge. As police consultant Bill Geller explains, "our immediate question when someone told us they were stepping down was 'what's the transition plan?'" In Seattle, each time new police personnel in the CAP officers' chain-of-command came to the West Precinct, Geller and Belsky scheduled meetings with them to bring them up to date on the project. They did the same for the PDA when it hired Aileen Balahadia, aiming to familiarize her with what the CSI had been doing in Seattle and at the national level. In New York, PERF's Chuck Wexler performed this briefing role for the series of commanders in the 75th Precinct, especially Ed Cannon, who played a pivotal role in the project. In both cities, the technical assistance providers also tried to prolong the tenure of individuals who were planning to move to other roles, making sure that there would be at least some period of overlap between the old personnel and the new. Aside from providing an opportunity for effective transitions, those efforts preserved a critical mass of participants at key points in time.

As noted above, while in some ways the trust and knowledge that are essential to a partnership *are* specific to the individuals who develop them, it is possible to try purposefully to hand some portion of them off. Put somewhat differently, partnerships can and should try to socialize new participants into the

expectations, knowledge, and relationships that these efforts rely on—the same way that individual organizations try to train and socialize *their* new recruits.²⁹ All of the examples reveal an awareness that this hand-off does not happen automatically—deliberate attention to making it work is needed. Transitions are critical moments that demand special care.

That is not to say that the problem of turnover can ever be solved. To be sure, the design of the CSI probably mitigated some of the problems associated with turnover. By defining a particular role—that of the project coordinator—to include the duty of making the relationship work, the CSI *did* make some part of the partnership larger than the individuals who participated in it. That is an important lesson of these cases. Another very simple lesson, though, is that there is no reason to believe that the turnover problem will ever disappear. It is a challenge to be expected and coped with, not something that anyone should expect to avoid. Building some overlap into crucial ties and attending closely to the moments when they must be handed off are two important ways in which it can probably be mitigated. Another is simply to plant the expectation of turnover from the outset, reminding participants to anticipate it and discussing in advance how the project should respond to it.

Guerillas in the Bureaucracy

The most explosive tensions in these two projects did not, however, involve the common problem of turnover. That honor goes to conflicts inside the partner organizations themselves. By its nature, a partnership asks each organization to assign one or a few of its members to its efforts; these people serve as the *liaisons* between the partnership and their own organization. When a partnership works well, it exerts a strong pull on these liaisons. It saddles them with new responsibilities and even a new outlook, all

²⁹ This point is similar to one made below about management information and control systems. In both cases, organizational systems (in this instance, personnel systems) are much less-developed between organizations than they are within them, and one of the first imperatives of partnerships is to overcome that lack of structure.

of which can put the liaisons in conflict with their organizational homes. It may even be that the more successfully a partnership gains the liaisons' commitment, the more likely this sort of conflict will erupt.

Some experience in community planning, far removed from the subject at hand, offers insight into this problem. In the 1960s and 1970s, many urban planning departments created new positions called "community planners." These people were asked to build partnerships with community residents in order to develop plans for their neighborhoods. However, whenever the community planners were at all successful at their charge, they found themselves on the outs with the planning agencies where they formally worked. They began to "go native," seeing themselves as advocates for community residents in opposition to city hall, which then aggravated their colleagues and superiors. The two scholars who studied this movement most thoroughly coined the term "guerillas in the bureaucracy" to describe the role these planners played—a term that captures both their renegade methods and, most important for this discussion, their sense of siege within their agencies.³⁰ The dynamics this concept describes may be one of the most general features of partnership efforts, and yet one that has not been articulated as a widespread problem for them.

In East New York, project coordinators Nathaly Rubio and Manny Burgos were both clearly guerillas in their bureaucracies. Both found themselves in direct conflict with their superiors—especially with UYC Executive Director Martin Dunn, who accused the two of becoming "too friendly" with the police and subverting the directives he gave them. Over time, both of them came to feel isolated from their own organization and withdrew from it in the same way the community planning "guerillas" did from theirs. Burgos, for example, grew weary of the hostility he faced from his supervisors. Buntin writes:

Confronted with managers who seemed to alternate between indifference and belligerence, Burgos turned for advice with increasing frequency to Lisa Belsky, the program director for LISC. Belsky, in turn, was

³⁰ Martin L. Needleman and Carolyn Emerson Needleman, *Guerrillas in the Bureaucracy: The Community Planning Experiment in the United States* (New York: Wiley, 1974).

increasingly drawn into internal ENYUYC management disputes. As the program advanced, Burgos came to think of Belsky, not Jones or Dunn, as his supervisor.

Rubio underwent the same process of withdrawal. Buntin writes of Rubio that she “was housed in the ENYUYC’s offices and was technically an ENYUYC employee; nevertheless, she felt more like an independent contractor than a member of the ENYUYC team [Eventually] Rubio saw no real reason for operating from within the Youth Corps at all and occasionally day-dreamed of operating independently.” In both cases their work became stressful, and they turned to outsiders like Belsky for advice and support.

It is striking that a similar story played out on the police side in Seattle, where Officer Tom Doran (the key police participant in CAP) and Sergeant Michael Meehan found themselves in the midst of a sometimes hostile work environment. On one occasion, recalcitrant supervisors went behind the back of the precinct’s captain (who strongly supported the CAP) to transfer Doran and his partner out of the sector that served the Chinatown-International District. Although the most significant problems for Doran and Meehan were created by Seattle Police Department managers who were hostile to the CAP, even some CAP supporters had concerns that these officers sometimes took the community’s side too readily and too unequivocally—precisely the concern about the community planners. Similar, if less dramatic problems arose for police in New York. Some of them felt pressure from their supervisors to spend less time with the UYC and more time on the streets logging arrests and summonses—a pressure that apparently stemmed from the NYPD’s well-known emphasis on the quantity of enforcement activity.

Leaving It Alone. One response to the “guerillas in the bureaucracy” problem is to deny that it is important. This position was most prominent in New York, where some participants insist that although Dunn and others at the UYC were certainly difficult, it is easy to over-emphasize their impact on the CSI. They argue that the CSI work continued productively despite the dramatic but not very significant spats that Dunn and others had with their underlings.

That may be, but it is still important to take note of the guerillas problem for two reasons. First, the fact that the projects accomplished something does not mean that they might not have accomplished more. For example, it simply is not accurate to say that East New York was unaffected by the tension between the coordinators and UYC management. To the contrary, this tension probably *did* constrain the CSI by isolating it from valuable resources. Steering committee members who asked to meet with the executive director were rebuffed; requests for help from the UYC’s youth center sometimes went nowhere; a project coordinator deliberately avoided tasks that would require the director’s support; and another reportedly could not get a copy of the CSI’s own budget from the UYC, making it impossible for the steering committee to set spending priorities. More dramatically, one member of the steering committee reportedly quit because the UYC would not take seriously concerns about drug dealing in one of its properties. More generally, the development and property management agendas of the UYC were never influenced by the CSI. Even the UYC’s Police And Community Together youth center eventually had little interaction with the steering committee and the CSI liaison. Though the center did help to organize the police-youth dialogues, PACT personnel report feeling isolated from the CSI over time—despite the facts that key people in both efforts reported directly to John Jones, that the CSI funded PACT’s staff position, and that the substance of their work obviously had much in common (if nothing else, the PACT center had developed strong community relationships that the steering committee might have used to recruit new members).³¹ The failure to bridge the gap between the CSI liaisons and the rest of the UYC almost certainly exacerbated all of these problems.

Similar stories could be told of how the guerillas problem constrained the CSI elsewhere (for example, within the Seattle Police Department). One CSI participant poses the general problem clearly:

³¹ LISC’s Lisa Belsky clarifies that she and others always considered the PACT center to be an integral part of the CSI, and that if the two were ever isolated, the problem was temporary. Today, she explains, coordination between the PACT center and the rest of the CSI have “never been better.”

“The more estranged the guerilla becomes from her home organization, the less of a liaison she is and the more she becomes an independent entrepreneur—someone trying heroically to deliver services alone that perhaps would better be delivered by several people.” If the idea of a partnership between organizations is to be taken seriously, the guerillas problem simply cannot be left alone entirely.

Insulation. Nevertheless, it may well have been necessary to insulate the CSI from an unsupportive Youth Corps if it was to accomplish anything at all. In that spirit, *insulation* is one important strategy for coping with the guerillas problem that these cases describe. In East New York, the coordinators tried to insulate themselves from the Youth Corps (as in the case of the one who purposefully avoided tasks that would require the director’s support) in order to keep the project viable. In Seattle, many participants describe a deliberate strategy of protecting the CAP’s police officers from their organization—carving out “a space where they could experiment,” as one put it. At one point, this strategy even involved redrawing the precinct-level reporting structure for the CAP officers to insulate them from antagonistic supervisors in the SPD. Throughout, in both Seattle and New York, the insulation strategy involved cultivating support or at least forestalling resistance at key levels of management. The CSI’s technical assistance providers often used their ties with higher-level managers to accomplish these goals.

Coping With Stress. The second reason the guerillas problem is important is that it has dramatic effects on the work environment of the liaisons. In East New York, antagonism from their superiors made work very stressful for both Burgos and Rubio. Even if the tension with Dunn and Jones had not affected the project, it affected *them*, as it would anyone in their roles. The officers in Seattle felt exactly the same type of stress. Although Doran, for example, insists that “we were able to surmount these obstacles,” he goes on to say that “it also made it extremely stressful for me and for my partner. It made things very difficult and it very much polarized the work environment.” If the project was able to move forward, it

was at some cost to the people most directly involved in it, and sometimes that cost included foreshortened participation.

All of this is important because it points to the need to find ways in which these guerillas can cope with the stress they face. One response evident in these cases involves finding the right kind of people—people who have the resilience, independence, and strength of will that are necessary to withstand a turbulent workplace. Tom Doran, who was willing to challenge community policing’s naysayers openly and deliberately (including in op-ed pieces for the traditionalist police union’s newsletter), is one clear example of this temperament in action.

Building a New Network of Support. These cases also suggest the importance of a network of support outside of the organization that can partly substitute for the support that has been lost inside of it. For example, each of the guerillas reports taking some consolation from the colleagues they gained at national conferences, such as PERF’s Problem-Oriented Policing conferences, where the CSI sent them annually. From these like-minded people, they learned that others faced the same frustrations they did, and they found respect for the work that their own organizations spurned. This networking element of the CSI seems to be an essential feature that future projects will want to emulate. “It means you’re not in a bubble any more,” one guerilla explains of the benefits this network brings. Linking project members with supportive professional networks outside of their organizations seems to be an important role that technical assistance providers play; Geller and PERF in particular played this role effectively in the CSI.

The technical assistance providers themselves also acted as a crucial network of support for the guerillas. Noted earlier are ways in which the New York liaisons turned to Belsky in this capacity—as a constant source of ideas, advice, encouragement, and simple understanding. Police members of the CAP in Seattle had a similar relationship with Belsky and Geller, who repeatedly helped them to think through the challenges they faced within their agency and offered encouragement for sometimes-thankless work. For example, Geller describes how he and Belsky both “coached” Doran extensively to reassure him that

his most inventive ideas *were* worth pursuing—that they were consistent with CAP’s aims and had been ingredients of successful partnerships in other cities. Equally significant, Belsky and Geller assured Doran that they would act as a safety net for him if anything went wrong; the relationship they developed early on with SPD management (up to and including SPD Chief Norm Stamper) helped make those assurances credible.

These steps almost certainly help to make the liaison role more viable. Nevertheless, even if it is possible to postpone burnout, it may not be possible to eliminate it. Therefore, it may make sense to treat the liaison role as a short-term position that at the most lasts a few years.³² Even Doran, for example, asked for a change of assignment. Moreover, the most inventive strategies these projects developed never fully solved many of the problems that the guerillas dynamic creates, like lost access to organizational resources. None of this is intended as criticism of the projects, since these are unavoidable difficulties; the community planners, for example, never solved them. Instead, it is intended as a reminder to participants in future partnerships and their funders that they should not expect they can avoid these challenges (in fact, their absence may be a sign that the liaison has not taken the role seriously enough). The liaisons in particular need to be forewarned about the challenges they will face.

Nevertheless, some basic steps, such as ensuring that the liaisons make regular, in-person reports at staff meetings in their own organizations, would probably help to reduce the sense of being an outsider. Most important, partnerships can probably mitigate the effects of the guerillas problem in the same ways that these two CSI efforts did. Choosing resilient personalities with strong senses of integrity is one

³² The Needleman (pp. 335 ff.) make several interesting observations on this point in their study of community planners. They suggest that the guerilla role may inevitably be a short-term position—something like jobs with VISTA or the Peace Corps, which make immense demands on those who hold them but have an expected duration of only two or three years. Indeed, many police agencies have found that even their best community policing officers sometimes want to return at least temporarily to a more traditional role after a few years’ involvement. The irony, of course, is that coping with the guerillas problem may exacerbate the turnover problem. No one said these projects would be easy.

strategy. The value of that approach is exemplified by the experiences of Tom Doran. It is at least as important, however, to find some way to replace the networks of organizational support that will likely be broken for the guerillas. That is part of the significance of the relationships that these projects built between the liaisons and both their professional communities and their technical assistance providers. Sometimes it was also possible to “rewire the bureaucracy” (as Geller puts it) to connect the guerillas to a friendly captain or other high-level police manager. All of these relationships helped to fill in the gaps that had grown between the guerillas and their own organizations.

Conflict

A third problem that arose repeatedly in these projects involved conflict between the partners. This is probably the largest and most general challenge in the CSI. It is closely related to the guerillas problem. In both cases, tension erupts from the conflicting aims of the two organizations or at least potent members of the two organizations. On the one hand, when the liaison “goes native” and accepts the partner’s aims, she comes into conflict with her *own* organization and becomes a guerilla in the bureaucracy. On the other hand, if she refuses to do these things, she upsets the partner and creates interorganizational conflict.

These conflicts took innumerable forms. One example erupted in Seattle at the very beginning when the two sides disagreed about whom to hire as the CSI coordinator. The PDA favored Max Chan, largely because of the extensive ties that she had developed in the Chinatown-International District when she had been an organizer there. But the police viewed Chan’s organizing history differently. They saw her as an activist committed to her own agenda. Those who had worked with her (she had done some of her work as a civilian employee of the police department) simply believed that she was not cut out for the role of a coordinator. To make matters worse, the police got the impression that the PDA had come to agree with this view, and thus were surprised and distraught when it went ahead and hired Chan anyway. As a result, the partnership got off to a precarious start. Amazingly, almost the same story played out in

East New York when it hired its second coordinator. There, too, police and the UYC had different preferences about whom to hire, and the UYC ultimately hired its choice (a man named Xavier Diaz) after giving police the impression it would defer to them. Once again, strain engulfed the relationship.

The partners clashed over other issues that ranged from the right level of police presence to the proper role of the coordinator. A number of these conflicts led each side to question whether it should continue with the CSI at all. In East New York, UYC Director Martin Dunn brought many of the same disagreements he had with his coordinators directly to the police. He badgered them (at least, that is the way the police viewed his admonitions) to make specific promises about when they would patrol hotspots, to improve the way they shared information across neighborhoods, and to stop pulling Red Zone officers off of their beats. Police responded to all this with befuddlement and resentment, and Dunn in turn just became more frustrated—so much so that he considered calling a press conference to denounce what he saw as the failure of police to live up to their promises. Seattle’s conflicts never became so dramatic, but they were hardly absent. One moment of crisis came when Max Chan attached the CAP’s name to a flier that opposed construction of a new stadium. This move outraged police all the way up to Chief Norm Stamper because it put the department on record as opposing a project their mayor supported.

The problem in all of these examples (which could easily be multiplied) is clear. The partners disagreed about important issues again and again during the course of their relationship, and those disagreements sometimes threatened to do significant damage. A few specific conflicts that arose more than once may represent fundamental differences in the generic commitments of police departments and CDCs. The question, which is ethical as much as it is practical, was how the two sides could resolve these differences well enough to allow their relationship to continue to function—or whether to resolve them at all. There can be no hard-and-fast rules in answer to this sort of question, which raises unsolvable problems about the importance of different values, and the importance of the partnership itself compared with the aims people bring to it. Describing the different ways that CSI participants reacted to conflicts

and exploring the effects that each of these strategies apparently had may shed some light on this dilemma.

Advocacy. The extreme approach of John Jones and, especially, Martin Dunn is a strategy that clearly damaged the partnership. In the face of disagreement, Dunn and Jones invariably took uncompromising positions, ceding absolutely nothing to the police. To them, the UYC had something to teach the NYPD and nothing to learn. Jones clearly states this attitude in criticizing the very different stance that Burgos and Rubio took:

Your role is not to be chummy with the police department... it's about creating relationships not because of who they are but [because of] who you want them to become. That's what you have to focus on because you want them to move to a whole new level of how they think about this community, how they relate to the community, how they relate to the sergeant, and how they relate to the brass. If they're not liberated through the process, then what have we changed?

Working from this assumption, UYC management felt justified in taking strong stands that might even lead to public shaming of the police. It reflects what one participant calls Dunn's "Alinsky organizing style," referring to radical community organizer Saul Alinsky, or, less charitably, his "self-righteousness."

Strong and even inflexible convictions certainly have a place in public service, and they are an important part of the community development legacy that CDCs have inherited. Like Alinsky and the organizations he spawned, CDCs often see themselves as champions of neglected values (indeed, police sometimes do as well). In itself, this posture has accomplished a great deal of good, but it probably is not compatible with a partnership. CDCs that cling to it may simply be good advocates but poor partners. The partnership strategy is a choice; by making it, an agency indicates that it has enough in common with its partner to make a relationship worthwhile and legitimate.³³ In organizational partnerships as in foreign

³³ Of course, if it is truly to *be* a choice, funders cannot insist that it is the only legitimate option. Because partnerships demand a degree of acquiescence, they will not be appropriate in some situations. Those concerned with community development should make sure that more confrontational avenues are also open to those who need them.

affairs, a deep belief that the other side is absolutely antagonistic to one's own aims leads to conflict, not engagement.³⁴

Partners must continually ask themselves whether the issue that has led to an impasse is truly worth more than the relationship itself (and CSI members did make this calculation repeatedly).³⁵ As they make this calculation, the partners might recognize that even if the partnership itself does not engage in advocacy, other outlets for strong stands still exist. For example, this was exactly the position of Seattle's Michael Yee, who initially believed that a good coordinator *should* be an advocate but has since changed his mind. "There are others who do that, so Aileen doesn't have to play that role," he explains, referring to current CAP coordinator Aileen Balahadia. "[For example,] *I'm* still an advocate," he observes—going on to explain further that when he *does* take on the role of an advocate, he makes it clear that he is acting as a private citizen rather than as a representative of the CAP. Police, at least, should have no trouble relating to this sort of good cop-bad cop arrangement.

Accommodation. Indeed, with only one exception, the coordinators themselves reveal a different strategy for dealing with conflict, a stance that is quite opposite to Martin Dunn's. Belsky describes the contrast well in East New York:

It's a basic conflict between ... an Alinsky organizing style, where Martin's first knee-jerk [reaction] is to get some press and embarrass the people into doing the right thing and Nathaly's view, which is, "No, this is a partnership. We work with each other's limitations; we work to train each other; we ask the police to be patient when we behave like jerks and we get angry with them, and we ask ourselves to be patient when the police aren't coming through in the way we want them to."

³⁴ There is a tradition in sociology that sees conflict as itself a type of relationship, i.e., an alternative to simply giving up. As Georg Simmel puts it, "opposition is often the only means for making life with actually unbearable people at least possible," in *Conflict and The Web of Group Affiliations* (New York: The Free Press, 1955), p. 19. Simmel's point—that if we ruled out conflict altogether, participants might have no choice but the drastic one of ending their relationship altogether—is an important one. But the examples above suggest that extreme conflict may also *cause* people to give up on a relationship completely. Regardless, those who aspire to a "partnership" clearly aspire to something different from a relationship of pure conflict.

³⁵ There will certainly be cases where the answer is affirmative, and the partnership must be sacrificed. But those cases will involve very dear values, and that picture does not seem to describe the situation in East New York (where Dunn's concerns involved matters like whether police shifts shared information, whether violations of beat integrity had become too extreme, and whether the promises police made were sufficiently specific).

The same could be said of Burgos, who repeatedly rejected Dunn's advice to take confrontational stands and showed more willingness to compromise for the sake of peace. It is hard to believe that East New York's CSI could have survived if its coordinators had not been more moderate than Dunn and Jones. Similarly, the relative peace between Seattle's partners seems to have much to do with the fact that no one as inflexible as Dunn played an important role there.

The main exception was the first year of the Seattle project, when coordinator Max Chan did act the advocate's part, with predictably bad consequences. Starting on shaky ground because of her past advocacy, Chan alienated police further by taking what they viewed as inappropriate positions—positions that they believed reflected her views as an advocate rather than the shared concerns of the partnership. The lowest point came when Chan attached CAP's name to the anti-stadium flier, leading Chief Stamper to state that the SPD would have to stop participating in the CAP if this type of stand continued. The Seattle CSI dealt with this problem the only way it could—by ruling this sort of political activity out of bounds and taking the CAP's name off the flier. By contrast, Aileen Balahadia, who replaced Chan, is seen as having credibility on both sides, whereas Chan was clearly seen as aligned with the community as an advocate.

If this analysis is correct, it has obvious implications for the criteria that are important in selecting and hiring coordinators for projects like these. The coordinators, as the heart and soul of the partnership, will need to have especially diplomatic temperaments in order to make the relationship work. The coordinator position is simply not the best place to employ an advocate, nor someone intent on championing controversial values, even though these qualities may be absolutely indispensable in other contexts.

Gag Rules. It is also possible to look at the problem in a slightly different way—as a question of the type of *issues* a partnership can try to tackle rather than the type of *people* it can employ. From this perspective, the important lesson of the Max Chan story is that partnerships cannot take on every issue some of its participants might like. They will usually need to rule the most controversial subjects out of

bounds, saving their energy for the less intractable disagreements they encounter daily—and for the real work of improving safety and developing communities.

All relationships seem to obey some version of this principle. Friends who disagree vigorously about politics often agree to avoid the subject altogether; nations with diverse faiths often rule religious questions out of bounds in their politics.³⁶ Partnerships are no different. That does not mean that those who participate in them need to abandon their deepest convictions. However, they probably need to learn how to check some of them at the door—to take care to distinguish between their partnership role, on the one hand, and the stands they take as private citizens or employees of their own organizations, on the other.

These “gag rules”—admonitions to avoid certain stands and subjects inside the partnership, and to select participants who will respect these constraints—represent another strategy for dealing with the problem of conflict between partners. The stadium protest in Seattle was not the only issue where they were important. At several points in these projects, participants quietly agreed to drop intractable disagreements (like the level of police patrol a neighborhood deserved) and turn their attention to subjects that seemed more promising. When they did not—or when some participants simply were not sure whether a particular topic was “on the table”—trouble almost invariably ensued.

Clear Process. Of course, some controversies can not or should not be excluded. Therefore, it is important to ask how a partnership can cope with those that remain. Consider the hiring controversies reviewed at the beginning of this section. In each city, the dispute over who should get the coordinator’s job became worse than it probably needed to be. First, the hiring rules were not clear. Police and the technical assistance providers were certain that the coordinator was to be hired by consensus among the

³⁶ Bruce Ackerman, “Why Dialogue?” *The Journal of Philosophy* 86 (1989): 5-22; Stephen Holmes, “Gag Rules or the Politics of Omission,” in Jon Elster and Rune Slagstad, eds., *Constitutionalism and Democracy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 19-58.

partners, but the CDCs were just as certain that the decision was ultimately theirs. “The grant money flowed through the PDA,” one CDC participant explains. “The project coordinator would be a PDA employee. Why would we ever let the police tell us who we could hire?”

People often accept outcomes they would rather avoid as long as they have faith in the process that produced it.³⁷ But in these cases, participants did not know what the process was. The important lesson here is that there needs to be a clear, probably written framework for resolving key disputes in these partnerships. For example, the hiring decision might have been formally delegated to a committee of one CDC member and one police member, with consensus required for making the hire. Setting up such a clear and definite process may be one way to forestall unnecessary conflict.

Honesty. The second problem in the hiring process was that each side apparently failed to disclose its concerns completely. In East New York, Martin Dunn refused to explain his decision to disregard the steering committee’s recommendation (the steering committee had favored Nathaly Rubio, but Dunn gave the job to Xavier Diaz, who quit on his first full day in the job). Much later, Dunn revealed that his board of directors had wanted a black man in the position in order to reflect the neighborhood’s demographics. However, as LISC’s Lisa Belsky pointed out at the time, Dunn could have avoided offending the steering committee if he had explained the importance of this criterion directly to them; even Dunn eventually conceded this point. The same failure to communicate exacerbated the hiring conflict in Seattle. Today, PDA staff members insist that police never fully explained their objections to Chan. If they had, the PDA might not have taken the disruptive step that it did.

³⁷ Robert Lane, “Procedural Justice in a Democracy: How One is Treated Versus What One Gets,” *Social Justice Research* 2 (1988): 177-192; E. Allan Kind and Tom R. Tyler, *Social Psychology of Procedural Justice* (New York: Plenum Press, 1988). For an interesting application in policing, see Wayne Kerstetter, “Toward Justice for All: Procedural Justice and the Review of Citizen Complaints,” in William Geller and Hans Toch, eds., *Police Violence: Understanding and Controlling Police Abuse of Force* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 234-246.

In both cities, the lesson is simple: Withholding one's true beliefs and the evidence that underpins them is *not* the way to deal with conflict; doing that only exacerbates it. This point might seem to conflict with the observations about gag rules, but gag rules proscribe certain topics altogether. The point here is that when a topic *is* on the table, it is important for both sides to be forthcoming about where they stand. In these two cities, avoiding full disclosure only made the conflicts worse.³⁸

Of course, since honesty depends on trust and trust develops slowly over time, this advice may be impractical in newly formed partnerships. (It is no accident that the Max Chan hire was the first official action of Seattle's CAP.) That may be one reason why even successful partnerships often have rocky pasts.

The Broker Role. Finally, these projects suggest that when the partners themselves come to an impasse, they will need someone to act as a broker to help them escape it. Over the course of four years of confronting these conflicts and playing this role repeatedly in the CSI, LISC's Lisa Belsky developed a strategy for handling them: defuse the emotional tensions, extract the kernel of truth on each side, and keep people at the table until they resolve their disagreement. For example, Buntin summarizes the way she dealt with the conflicts between Burgos and Dunn:

Despite these problems and their sharply divergent perspectives on the state of the CSI, Belsky did see benefits to working with Dunn. Dunn was undoubtedly sharp and "if you could peel away the aggression, the way he communicated, the condescension he often brought to these kinds of interactions, there was always an element of truth in it," says Belsky. "He always had a good point. And so my job was to moderate or mediate—to hang on to Manny [Burgos] while Martin [Dunn] raged, to chill Martin out so that he'd stop raging, to find that kernel of appropriate criticism or guidance and then apply it back to the project."

³⁸ This is undoubtedly controversial advice. One school of thought about negotiation says that each side should hold its cards close to the chest. But the Seattle and East New York stories just recounted reveal some disastrous consequences that such a strategy can have in a partnership. For another view that defends full disclosure, see Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); and Donald A. Schön and Martin Rein, *Frame Reflection: Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

In this way, Belsky sought to show respect for each side's position and make room for it in the project. Participants in both cities valued her ability to help break their impasses and keep the project moving.

Belsky's role—which was reinforced in Seattle by Bill Geller—seems to have been absolutely indispensable in the CSI. Other projects like it will almost certainly need something similar. Brokering played a particularly important role in the two hiring controversies. For example, when the PDA hired Max Chan over police objections, Belsky and Geller immediately contacted the police, warning them about what happened, sympathizing with the police reaction, and trying to explain (but not justify) why a CDC committed to advocacy might take this sort of step. The two technical assistance providers also contacted the PDA to convey just how badly their choice had upset the police and why, and how they might repair the damage and ensure that the same thing would not happen again. All sides report that these interventions built mutual understanding and trust and defused a potentially explosive conflict. Belsky repeated almost the same process in New York during its hiring controversy.

All of these examples suggest that someone needs to be designated as the mediator, who will need the skills and temperament for constructive engagement that this role demands. Technical assistance providers seem particularly well-situated to perform it to the extent that they are not seen as “advocates” for either side. The Belsky-Geller team in Seattle was particularly effective in this regard because each of the two had credibility with a different audience. When Geller (a long-time police consultant) challenged the SPD, police did not immediately assume that he simply had more sympathy for the PDA or that he did not understand police problems. Belsky had the same sort of credibility on the CDC side. Over time, as the two forged personal relationships with the CAP partners, and as they educated each other about policing and community development, this division of labor became less important. But during early conflicts like the Max Chan hiring, Belsky and Geller's complementary backgrounds were probably crucial to their ability to act as brokers.

Trust and credibility are obviously important parts of brokering. Whoever gets that job needs to pay attention to developing them. Belsky and Geller report that they worked hard to develop their credibility even on their “own” sides of the partnership, and that the job demanded constant communication and a deep, long-term commitment to the sites. That is one reason that the sort of “technical assistance” they provided can never be based purely on expertise, nor can it take the form of short and widely-spaced consulting sessions.

Partnerships and Conflict. Thus, even while successful, these projects faced important conflicts between the partners. It is probably safe to say that if the two sides in a partnership do *not* have strong and differing opinions, someone is not doing his or her job (or else one side is not really needed in the partnership). Because different organizations have different mandates, they will inevitably view some important decisions in different ways. To make their partnership work, however, they may have to check their deepest disagreements at the door. To those that remain, they will need to apply honesty, effective brokering, and clear rules about shared decisions.

Accountability

The final worry that arose often in this project might have arisen more. It involves the vague sense that the partnership is not going anywhere—that it has “bogged down,” to use a term that arose more than once in these cases. This sense typically arises from a feeling that there is too little follow-through on the tasks that have been assigned.

Partnerships are strange structures that cannot avoid this problem. Even when they successfully get people around the table to plan a course of action, it is uncommonly difficult to get each partner to take responsibility for pieces of the plan, and harder still to get them to follow through on their commitments. A big part of the problem is that the partnership usually has no formal authority over the people who participate. Police sergeants can *order* their officers to take on particular problems, and they have access to information (such as crime statistics, complaints, and activity logs) that can help them to monitor

whether and how the officers followed through. However, though a CDC may raise a safety problem in its neighborhood, it cannot assign this job to the officers who patrol there. Equally important, the CDC usually does not have a clear way of knowing what, if anything, the officers did in response to its request, since partners typically lack information systems designed to tell them about each other. This is a generic problem that confronts all interorganizational collaborations, since management information and control systems are invariably much less developed *across* organizations than they are *within* them.

This problem is labeled “accountability” because the term captures the difficulty that partnerships have assigning responsibility for tasks and monitoring how well people follow through on them. The problem arises both at the broadest level of the partnership as a whole (the question of who has responsibility for keeping the partnership moving and how to know whether they are fulfilling it) and at the narrowest level of individual tasks (the question of who has responsibility for specific initiatives that the partners have agreed are important).

The Coordinator Role. This problem arose less than might have been expected because one important feature of the CSI seems to have done a good job in forestalling it. That feature was the existence of a coordinator, someone explicitly charged with responsibility for maintaining the partnership and ensuring that it moved forward. In this way, the CSI’s design helped to mitigate the problem of accountability at the broad level of the project as a whole. When participants got the sense that things were going nowhere, and that people’s interests and commitments were drifting, they had somewhere specific to turn.

The clearest example came early in the Seattle CAP when Max Chan acted as coordinator. Many participants had become frustrated with the project’s pace, believing that it took too long for the group to take preliminary steps, such as writing a mission statement. More to the point, they thought those concrete results that the CAP *had* produced were simply not worth the effort—grant applications that had

produced nothing, a steering committee that had little resident commitment, a community fair that seemed more show than substance, and so on. Buntin describes the sentiment that emerged:

By the fall of '96, it was impossible to deny that the CAP was suffering from serious problems. Chan and CAP members had discussed many projects; however, following through with these projects was often harder than proposing them. Chan often felt that she was overwhelmed with work and unable to follow through as fully as she, or other steering committee members, would have desired. Under Chan's leadership, CAP had simply not done very much toward achieving its ultimate goals.

"She didn't prove to be all that effective an organizer, at least not on the issues that were part of the project," says Geller. "There just was not enough grassroots involvement by the residents or entrepreneurs in Chinatown, of actually getting involved, in harness with the police, and working on public safety problems, and those were the ostensible benefits that Max was supposed to bring—that she knew people, was credible, could motivate them to be involved. Not enough of that stuff was happening so that it felt for a long time like the police were having to do more than they should have to make this stuff fly." Minutes from steering committee meetings were spotty, and Chan often failed to follow through on commitments. To some steering committee members, Chan simply seemed burned out. One thing was clear: CAP had bogged down, badly.

Sgt. Meehan worried that one year into the project, CAP was looking like a big waste of money. "You look back and you say, you've got 10, 12, 15 people meeting every other week for 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 months, plus you have one person who is working full-time, which is 1,000 hours or more," says Meehan. "Okay, show me what you've accomplished with that time and effort and money, and it wasn't enough to justify our existence quite frankly." Meehan and the other officers involved in the CAP felt like the CAP still had great potential but that unless it started making visible progress solving problems, its future would be in jeopardy.

In a strange way, this episode is a story of success rather than failure. Though it centers on the fact that the partnership was *not* moving forward, that is occasionally to be expected. It may even be constructive. Partnerships may positively *need* a slow and cautious period like this one when they can "germinate," as one CSI participant put it.³⁹ That is all the more reason why every partnership needs to be prepared for these occasions. How the partnership *responds* to them—not whether it avoids them—is what is crucial, and in this case the Seattle project was exemplary.

³⁹ Lisa Belsky and Bill Geller made this case in comments on an earlier draft of this report. They explain: "Shaky starts are part of many things of value. They are the grist for eventual gratitude and pride in accomplishment. We're planting sequoias in attempting to forge enduring relationships between police and CDCs and enduring synergy between the powerful strategies of community problem-solving policing and multi-faceted community development. One should consider the possibility that success too soon, too easily, is dangerous. It sets you up for arrogance and ignorance of the pitfalls and leaves you unschooled in how to navigate the shoal waters that almost surely lie ahead someplace in the future for most people and programs." (Memorandum, January 3, 2000.) That, Belsky explains, is one reason why she and others did not necessarily take Meehan's frustration as a bad sign, adding: "We only *want* to work with people who feel frustrated when things aren't happening."

Instead of bogging down amidst uncertainty about how to handle the slow progress, Seattle's CAP members knew where to turn. They had assigned responsibility for overall project coordination to Chan, and while no one expected her to do everything herself, it *was* her responsibility to organize and monitor the commitments made by others. If things were not moving forward—a vague sense that must count as one of the most common problems in projects like these—it was Chan who needed to be held accountable. At first, participants increased the pressure on her, expressing their concerns to her individually and in formal meetings and asking her for more regular progress reports (with Belsky and Geller helping to devise appropriate formats). When these steps failed, they asked Chan to resign. It turned out that replacing her did seem to help restart the project, for the CAP began showing progress shortly after her replacement took over.

Not all partnerships designate someone to assume the sort of oversight role that the coordinator represents (for example, none existed in these cities' police-CDC relationships *before* they joined up with the CSI). But by taking this step, the CSI provided some recourse for one of the most dangerous problems that these projects regularly face—the general failure to make progress towards even the aims that participants do share. In the Seattle case, having that recourse apparently helped CAP members to jumpstart their project.

Monitoring Commitments. Many problems of accountability are much more specific than the Seattle example. In both East New York and Seattle, participants repeatedly felt that particular tasks (rather than the project as a whole) were falling by the wayside. They did not always vocalize these concerns loudly, but one example of when they did comes from East New York, where several people in the CSI were sometimes unsure about what the police were doing about hotspots that the steering committee had identified. Of course, the loudest voice was Martin Dunn's, and most participants felt that his position was extreme. But in the end, more moderate people in the CSI agreed with his basic point—

that the project should assign specific tasks clearly and follow up on them. Rubio, for example, eventually did carry out the core of Dunn’s proposal in this area, as Buntin explains:

While Rubio wouldn’t assume the outright adversarial posture that she believed Dunn was urging on her, she did listen to his suggestions. At a meeting in early October, Dunn proposed a dual system for keeping records at steering committee meetings—a standard minutes and a spreadsheet-style document with categories like “problem” and “commitment.” Rubio adopted a slightly watered-down version. Though it was weaker than what Dunn had proposed, the introduction of such a document was a significant step in the direction Dunn wanted the CSI to go.

As a result, the steering committee meetings themselves served as a forum where tasks could be assigned. By maintaining a public record of who promised to take each of them on, the coordinator and other participants could monitor follow-through. These arrangements did not solve the problem of accountability entirely. For example, although Rubio used her new tools to call attention to the UYC’s failure to do anything about safety problems in one of its own buildings, the Youth Corps still never took action. But participants themselves believe that the system did some good by helping to keep them focused on specific tasks.

Though one way of maintaining focus and encouraging follow-through on specific tasks involved outlining specific commitments in steering committee meetings and providing some way to monitor progress on them, others in the CSI did not always pursue this strategy in exactly the same way that Rubio did. For example, another coordinator explains that he simply wrote up more *ad hoc* memos to key managers in each agency, detailing specific commitments that they had made. Yet another explains that she has preferred to review commitments one-on-one with project members as they stop by the CSI office. Finally, some New York participants explain that they used their quarterly meetings to strengthen accountability. Regardless of the variations, the key elements involve simple managerial principles: outlining specific commitments, monitoring whether anyone has followed through on them, and, of course, charging someone like the coordinator to do the monitoring. Although they are simple, these steps are often missing in partnerships. Lacking in much formal structure, partnerships tend to assign and monitor

tasks less explicitly than individual organizations do. In this area, the CSI can probably serve as a model for other cities.

Lessons Learned

Return now to the more general question underlying this section: What has the CSI taught us about *how* to make a partnership work? The overarching lessons can be summarized in three levels, each more detailed but less certain than the previous one.

The most general lesson is the most certain: Working in partnership is difficult, for stumbling blocks are everywhere. However, it is important not to over-emphasize this point. The focus of this section—understanding the key problems and dilemmas involved in partnerships and articulating possible strategies for dealing with them—by its nature puts too much emphasis on conflict and drama. In contrast, it should be noted that these projects had many placid moments and were often enormously productive even in times of crisis, as already explained in the first section of this report. Nevertheless, it is the moments of difficulty that raise the most urgent demands for understanding, and future efforts should positively expect them to arise.

One bit of evidence that these obstacles cannot be completely avoided is the fact that there were so many in both sites, even in moments of triumph. Another is that the solution to one challenge often exacerbates another. For example, because guerillas in the bureaucracy experience so much stress, their roles will probably be short-lived; but making this concession increases turnover, together with all of the problems *that* creates. As a result, those who would build partnerships must be prepared to face many difficult moments, and they will have to be relentless if they intend to give the effort a fair chance. Those who intend to quit at the first sign of trouble are probably better off avoiding the effort altogether. Those who fund these projects will need patience and long-term commitment—traditional one- or two-year funding cycles are probably inappropriate. The vicarious experience that these two projects offer should make it easier for future partnerships to persevere. They will at least know a little about what to expect—

that they are not alone in their troubles and that they are not necessarily dysfunctional if they run into them—and will be able to plan for them in advance.

One level down, these cases illuminate some of the most prominent stumbling blocks. The four described in this analysis—turnover, conflict, accountability, and “guerillas in the bureaucracy”—showed up repeatedly in both cases, often in strikingly similar ways. That itself is evidence that they will likely arise elsewhere. Therefore, future projects should have a strategy for coping with each of them and a design that can withstand the turbulence they cause. Of course, new projects may be lucky enough to avoid some of the problems that East New York and Seattle grappled with; they may also be unlucky enough to be derailed by something entirely different. If so, their experiences can help to expand our knowledge of what working in partnership involves.

The most detailed lessons of these cases are the accounts of the strategies the CSI used to cope with its challenges: using redundancy to soften the impact of turnover; designating a broker to manage the inevitable conflicts; building outside networks to support the isolated guerillas; and so on. These strategies and the way they were implemented in the CSI offer useful models for other cities that might want to emulate them. In the CSI, the technical assistance providers often played crucial roles in combating the challenges that arose. Other cities will need to find a way to duplicate that work—either by finding funding and expertise to engage their own technical assistance team, or by internalizing the many roles that the outside technical assistance providers played in the CSI.

Of course, these lessons about ways of overcoming the challenges involved in partnerships are also the most uncertain. It is often hard to tell whether particular strategies “worked.” They should be seen as hypotheses rather than conclusions—hypotheses to be tested, refined, and built on in future projects like the CSI. Nevertheless, they offer a menu of strategies that future partnerships can draw on as they tackle a difficult but worthwhile job.

Conclusion

The CSI offers important lessons about the potential for police-CDC cooperation. The area of overlap between the missions of these two institutions is rocky terrain—no one intending to embark on a project like those in East New York and Seattle should expect it will be easy. However, these cities developed ways of coping with the challenges they faced, and cities that build on this experience will have an advantage that their predecessors did not.

Most important, there are good reasons to believe that the results will be worth the effort. CAP members in Seattle insist that their project has made a difference in the neighborhood. In particular, they see clearing out the transient camp and replacing it with a positive land use as a major, concrete victory in their project. They also offer examples of many smaller, day-by-day accomplishments that successfully advanced both public safety and sustainable community development. As further evidence of the project's impact, they point to police data that show that safety has improved dramatically in the area since the CSI began—much more dramatically than it has in the rest of the city. Most important, they point to new ways of working and thinking—as well as the strong relationship that has developed between the PDA and key members of the Seattle Police Department—as evidence that they have developed a capacity to sustain and build on these gains in the future.

In New York, participants admit that their project faced its share of organizational difficulties, which may have limited its impact. Many of its relationships were beset with tension. Although residents who participated directly in the partnership came to trust police more than they had, it seems unlikely that their good will “spilled over” to the neighborhood as a whole. Moreover, although everyone admits that safety improved in the neighborhood, they concede that efforts other than the CSI (such as the long-planned NYPD crackdowns on drug markets) probably had a lot to do with that.

Nevertheless, the overall perspective among participants in East New York is hopeful. For example, former CSI coordinator Manny Burgos insists that the CSI and the community established “a real relationship with law enforcement on several levels” and that “the development of real leadership in the community and an active steering committee was the greatest accomplishment.” He and others suggest that these relationships have laid the foundation for future success in East New York. They argue persuasively that those relationships should be seen as an important milestone on the way to sustainable gains in public safety and community development. Police Sergeant Bill Goodbody echoes these sentiments and goes on to point out some of the tangible public safety and community revitalization benefits he has already seen. “A lot of new businesses [have moved in] since we’ve reduced the crime rate and helped the physical appearance of the area It’s not the same neighborhood as when we came in. We have new businesses; we have new homes; we have new buildings that are being rehabilitated.”

It is, of course, difficult to know whether the projects themselves were responsible for all of these welcome developments (though in some cases, it is clear that the CSI was the engine driving neighborhood revitalization—as when the Seattle project played a direct role in replacing a criminogenic restaurant with a safe and more productive community institution). Moreover, it is downright impossible to know whether another city—one facing entirely different neighborhood problems and organizational dynamics—would realize the same benefits. That uncertainty is in the nature of this type of analysis. However, it is clear that the Seattle and New York partnerships made it possible to pursue many innovative strategies for rebuilding communities, and some of them had direct and obvious benefits in the neighborhoods where they were used. In the process, these projects have revealed novel ways in which police and CDCs can try to improve public safety, strengthen police-community relations, and ultimately revitalize troubled communities. As long as they are prepared for the organizational challenges, other cities can find many reasons to try to emulate Seattle and East New York.

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