

THE PROMISE OF MIXED-INCOME HOUSING FOR POVERTY AMELIORATION

Since the 1990s, public policymakers have renewed support for mixed-income housing development in low-income neighborhoods as a means toward neighborhood revitalization and poverty amelioration. Research to date finds that, while mixed-income developments in lower-income neighborhoods have promoted area revitalization, they have accomplished less for people in these areas who live in poverty. This policy brief focuses on mixed-income projects that seek to de-concentrate poverty in impoverished, urban neighborhoods. It finds that, since these efforts are largely market-based approaches, they have paid less direct attention to lower-income residents and the community-based organizations that represent them. While these shortcomings may be attributed to structural barriers that prevent developers, housing authorities and service providers from implementing effective practices, competency, and resource limitations can be offset by strong community-based advocates working with public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Drawing on this conclusion, it is suggested that community empowerment strategies be implemented in tandem with mixed-income approaches in order to achieve positive outcomes for lower-income residents.

INTRODUCTION

Access to quality, affordable housing in cities has been an ongoing challenge for those living in poverty, and a persistent and contentious public policy issue that centers on the extent to which having a “decent home” is a basic right for all Americans. Far from being solely an issue for the individual, providing housing for America’s poor has been articulated as a social problem for cities as well as the nation. In both the Wagner-Steagell Housing Act of 1937, which established the U.S. Housing Authority (predecessor to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), and the Housing Act of 1949 which authorized urban renewal projects, Congress linked general welfare and security, health, living standards, and morals of the nation to the provision of “a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American

family.” Yet in many cities, housing for the poor has been characterized by hyper-segregation and the extreme concentration of poverty. While the reasons for this spatial concentration of poverty are debated, there is ample evidence which points toward decreased life opportunities for those who live in these conditions (Wilson, 1987). Minorities are disproportionately represented in neighborhoods that have over a 40 percent poverty rate. In 2000, 5.8 percent of whites lived in such high-poverty neighborhoods, versus 18.6 percent of African Americans and 13.8 percent of Hispanics (Drier, Mollenkopf and Swanstrom, 2004). Recognizing that access to a safe and affordable home is intimately tied to the characteristics of the neighborhood in which it is embedded, scholars and policymakers have looked to mixed-income housing development as one solution to neighborhood-, household-, and individual-level poverty in distressed urban neighborhoods.

Proponents of mixed-income housing as a means to ameliorate the negative effects of concentrated poverty originally posited that economic diversity within a neighborhood would enhance community interaction and social control and improve neighborhood characteristics (Joseph, forthcoming). Early studies on mixed-income housing initiatives also were guided by the general hypothesis that enhanced neighborhood conditions--physical, political, and socio-economic--translated into public goods that were broadly distributed across all households. Since then, empirical studies demonstrate that mixed-income housing does not automatically produce these hypothesized neighborhood- and household-level outcomes (Collins *et al.*, 2005; Kleit, 2001; Popkin *et al.*, 2004; Salama, 1999; Smith 2004; U.S. General Accounting Office, 2003; Varady *et al.*, 2005). The empirical research on mixed-income redevelopment of distressed urban neighborhoods to date suggests that the overwhelming majority of benefits have been realized by private-sector developers, local government, and other stakeholders who are in the position to

benefit from place-based revitalization, while many low-income households—possibly in many ways that policy research has not revealed—have, at the very least, been underserved. The failure to attain greater benefits for poor residents has raised questions about how benefits are derived from a variety of factors that are part of mixed-income housing and how these factors might work in tandem to achieve desired outcomes (Brophy and Smith, 1997; Popkin *et al.*, 2000; A. Smith, 2002; Wilkens, 2002).

A core point of debate in the literature is why income-mixing initiatives might not achieve both neighborhood revitalization and poverty amelioration for low-income households. Some scholars have suggested that it may be due to the limited capacity of stakeholders to provide social and community services in a timely and efficient manner as part of mixed-income housing projects (Popkin *et al.*, 2004). Other studies have argued that such disappointing outcomes may be more likely when urban redevelopment initiatives only seek to create “neighborhoods of choice” to spur private-sector investment without commensurate attention to the economic needs of people in poverty (Fraser, 2004). While policymakers, academics, and practitioners may agree that it is optimal when mixed-income housing initiatives produce both neighborhood revitalization and poverty amelioration, it cannot be assumed that all parties involved in these efforts place equal value on these goals. Even when stakeholders claim to support both people- and place-based outcomes, either can become neglected when one of these goals outpaces the other (Weber, 2002).

There are two sections in this policy brief. The first section examines existing studies on mixed-income housing that seeks to de-concentrate poverty in low-income neighborhoods typically found in inner cities areas. In light of current findings that this form of mixed-income housing frequently fails to achieve desired outcomes with respect to poverty amelioration goals,

the second section of the policy brief suggests and illustrates why comprehensive community-based approaches to neighborhood redevelopment, which would operate in tandem with mixed-income approaches, are needed. Drawing on the community development literature on comprehensive community initiatives, this policy brief provides an outline of the benefits of enhancing place-based sense of community as a mechanism to support the sustainability of mixed-income housing developments and to attain real benefits for socially vulnerable populations of low-income residents. This requires community involvement during planning and implementation of mixed-income development initiatives, but also ongoing participation in the management of neighborhood/development affairs.

MIXED-INCOME HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Since the 1990s public policymakers have renewed efforts to de-concentrate poverty in urban neighborhoods based on a model that claims neighborhood-level characteristics including social infrastructure shape opportunities for the households within them. Jobless neighborhoods, isolated from wealth, mainstream institutions, and lacking in internal and external social networks that often are referred to as “social capital,” are viewed as offering limited residential mobility and status attainment opportunities (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Wilson, 1987, 1996; Sampson, 2005). Research shows that isolation and poverty combine to produce other disadvantages for neighborhood residents leading to a host of negative outcomes (Coulton *et al.*, 1996; Ellen and Turner, 1997; Jencks and Mayer, 1990; Land *et al.*, 1991; Taylor and Covington, 1993; Sampson, 2005). Policies aimed at assisting people in poverty often rely on this “neighborhood effects” approach arguing that the environment of neighborhoods must be revitalized to promote positive outcomes for low-income populations (Fraser *et al.*, 2003).

Place-based, mixed-income housing development has been embraced as one mechanism to improve the life conditions of lower-income households by altering the neighborhoods in which they live, creating opportunities for poorer households to network or bond with higher-income households in the same neighborhood. In addition, these efforts have assisted lower-income residents to move into better neighborhood environments, which itself is a benefit. These efforts have included enabling the poor to move to more affluent neighborhoods by promoting “scattered-site housing” low-income housing sites, “Fair Share” housing, and tenant-based housing subsidy programs. Other state and municipal efforts have included variations of the Montgomery County Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit ordinance (inclusionary zoning) in Maryland, and state override statutes such as the Massachusetts’ Comprehensive Permit Law. At the federal level, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and the 1970s initiated Section 8 program have become substantial components of the recent federal programs promoting the dispersal of low-income households from areas of concentrated poverty, including the Moving To Opportunity demonstration program and the development of mixed-income housing communities in inner-city neighborhoods under HOPE VI. These dispersal programs are qualitatively different than attempts to revitalize low-income neighborhoods and improve neighborhood characteristics that have been found to be associated with positive outcomes for lower-income residents. HOPE VI is different from these others, as it tries to take the neighborhood effects impact of a dispersal strategy and apply it to a greater number of households in an effort to de-concentrate in place. The dispersal strategy puts a small number of low-income households in a higher income environment, while the de-concentration strategy brings a small number of higher-income households into a low-income environment. If the

neighborhood effects strategy works, it has the potential to impact a much larger number of low-income households.

There are four primary reasons that place-based, mixed-income housing initiatives, and in particular HUD's HOPE VI program, have gained public policy support. First, mixed-income developments can reduce the incidence of social problems related to concentrated poverty while providing opportunities for low-income households to gain access to better neighborhoods. Second, it has been used as one mechanism to address 86,000 of the nation's 1.2 million public housing units that were identified as "severely distressed" by the National Commission on Severely Distressed Housing in 1989. Third, it can actually have the effect of building new affordable housing units that are integrated into a diverse neighborhood. Fourth, cities benefit from neighborhood revitalization and economic development outcomes associated with mixed-income housing development. One additional reason for continued support of place-based, mixed-income housing initiatives is that they can play a role in creating a foundational environment in which other poverty amelioration strategies can be more successful.

Knowing the general characteristics of mixed-income housing is helpful in understanding the diversity of scenarios in which these projects take place. Below is a chart based upon Smith's (2002:16) identification of five categories of mixed-income housing. His analysis shows that mixed-income developments may serve different percentages of low, moderate, and market-rate units, depending on the purpose of the development and the context in which it occurs. Contextual factors at local, state, and federal levels all impact mixed-income housing development as these projects typically involve coordination. For example, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit and Section 8 programs which originate at the federal level, are channeled

through state and municipal government agencies in support of the building of mixed-income housing as well as occupancy by low-income families (Brophy and Smith, 1997).

Chart 1: Categories of Mixed-Income Developments and Incomes Served (Smith, 2002:16)

Type	Description	Target Income-mix	
		% of units	% of AAMI
Targeting Moderate-income	Large majority of market rate units with some units for moderate-income	80 20	Market 80-110
Targeting Low-income	Large majority of market rate units with some units for low-income	80 20	Market 50-80
Modest Income Mixing	Majority of market rate units with broader range of income-mixing	70 15 15	Market 80-110 50-80
Strong Income Mixing	Serves broad range of incomes with no one range dominant	30 30 30 10	Market 80-110 50-80 30-50
Low-income with Market	Majority low-income with some market rate units	20 80	Market 50-80
Fully Affordable	All units serving low- or very-low income households	50 50	50-80 30-50

While research has not been conclusive on the specific challenges that each income mix faces, there are general categories of challenges that place-based, mixed-income initiatives experience. Coordinating resources at different levels of government is only one issue that mixed-income housing projects need to address. Prior research finds that there are four areas of challenges for mixed-income housing initiatives: conceptual, operational, political, and economic.

Conceptual issues revolve around clearly defining goals and strategies that will lead to their realization. Mixed-income housing has not always been successful in producing desired outcomes due, in part, to a lack of clarity during the planning process. A key issue in this clarity of goals question is the philosophical difference between those who want to implement mixed-

income housing, which is more expensive but is believed to have ancillary benefits along the lines of neighborhood effects, and those seeking to maximize housing options and affordability, which sometimes leads to smaller, cheaper units that spread the housing dollar further. The success of the strategy may turn on how coherent and consistent the strategy is.

Operational issues include everything from designing a development that fits into the surrounding neighborhood to attracting the desired occupants and using appropriate management strategies to sustain the development.

Political issues include community concerns that either a higher-income neighborhood may lose its value or that a low-income neighborhood may fully gentrify causing resident displacement. Additional concerns exist around assuring land-use zoning requirements are compatible for mixed-income housing development (Smith, 2002).

Finally, *economic* issues exist for mixed-income housing development. Financing mixed-income projects tends to require specialized knowledge about how to utilize different packages of subsidies because development expenditures must be offset by revenue in order to maintain a sustainable development (Smith, 2002). In addition, the risk profile for the developer is very different in different contexts, yet the programs for mixed-income housing, and the governmental and neighborhood actors, often fail to distinguish among risk levels. For example, a local government may not realize the risk issues, believing their targeted neighborhood to be comparable to other targeted neighborhoods in other cities. The risk issues generally play out with private, for-profit developers getting involved in the less risky environments, while non-profits are more willing to participate in the riskier engagements. Notwithstanding the risk levels, the return is often not commensurate with the risk and so financial capacity to fully

implement some of the poverty amelioration goals may be constrained. Together, these issues described above require ongoing monitoring for mixed-income housing to succeed.

THE PROMISE OF HOPE VI

The empirical literature on place-based, mixed-income redevelopment of distressed urban neighborhoods has primarily focused on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) HOPE VI program. The HOPE VI legislation was passed in 1992 and encouraged local housing authorities to transform low-income public housing developments into mixed-income communities. From 1993 to 2002 HUD funded a total of 165 HOPE VI developments at a cost of over \$4.5 billion as well as an additional \$293 million for demolition activities associated with the program (Popkin *et al.*, 2002:ii). In total, as of 2001, these efforts resulted in the demolition of 78,000 distressed public housing units; the development of 56,000 newly-constructed rental units; 12,000 renovated rental units; and 21,000 homeownership units (*HOPE VI Quarterly Progress Report*, 2001 as cited in Popkin *et al.*, 2002). The goals of the program are to decrease the concentration of poor families and provide services in support of family self-sufficiency efforts (Wexler, 2001; Finkel *et al.*, 2000). In place-based, mixed-income housing initiatives this involves bringing the middle-class back to the city in order to realign neighborhood demographics.

Policy research has begun to shed light on the factors that are associated with mixed-income housing success in the urban context (Bernstein, 2004; Brophy and Smith, 1997; Finkel, Lennon and Eisenstadt, 2000; Myerson 2001; Parks and Wood, 2001; Popkin, Katz, Cunningham, Brown, Gustafson and Turner, 2004; Quercia and Galster, 1997; Smith, 2002; Wexler, 2001). *Location* of the mixed-income project has been found to be of central importance for economic viability. Finkel *et al.* (2000) state that "if a site is convenient and attractive,

higher-income residents will be drawn to the newly built residences and, where available, the homeownership opportunities” (p.113-114). *Good management* has also been identified as an important characteristic due to the different needs of the diverse populations who will live in the development (Varady, Raffel, Sweeney and Denson, 2005), and also because effective coordination between public and private sectors is usually a necessary component of mixed-income projects. Wexler (2001) finds that this often requires that public housing authorities involved in this type of development build the capacity to “use private market forces to achieve public ends” (p.211). A *critical mass* of higher-income residents is also characteristic of mixed-income development sustainability. This is perhaps where the philosophical difference over how to spend the housing dollar hits the hardest. While having a strong and active housing market has been found to be one of the most important factors associated with attracting higher-income residents to mixed-income developments many projects also have to generate demand for market-rate units.

Chart 2: Achievements of a Mixed-Income Approach (Smith, 2002:36)

Goal	Effective in Achieving Goal	Necessary to Achieve Goal
Manage Negative Behavior	Crime and vandalism appear to be minimal in mixed-income developments.	Strict screening and management are more responsible for reducing negative behavior than a mix of incomes.
Improve Life Chances	There is little evidence so far that low-income tenants improve their life chances in mixed-income developments.	Social services and location are more important in promoting upward mobility of low-income tenants.
Rebuild Healthy Communities	Mixed-income developments, particularly large scale HOPE VI projects, have a positive impact in revitalizing distressed neighborhoods.	Including a mix of incomes is more important in large-scale developments to rebuild communities.
High-Quality Units	Mixed-income developments generally have high-quality units.	Community pressure appears to be equally important to ensuring high quality.
High-Quality Maintenance	Mixed-income developments generally have high-quality maintenance.	Community pressure appears to be equally important to ensuring high quality.
Develop Units With Less Subsidy	Cross-subsidization is generally possible only in tight housing markets, and for nonprofit developers. Mixed-income developments can also lead to higher costs.	While cross-subsidization is limited, a mix of incomes is necessary to achieve this goal.
Assuage Community Concerns	Including a mix of incomes is often effective in overcoming community objections.	A mix of incomes may be necessary to overcome objections in many communities.
Build Political Constituency	Serving a range of incomes may be necessary to build a constituency, but mixed-income's role in building a political constituency is unclear.	The necessity of mixed-income developments to building political support is also unclear.

Brophy and Smith (1997) find that some strategies to do this include marketing that does not emphasize the “mix” of incomes in the development, but rather emphasizes that all of the units are similar and of high quality. In addition, they find that the provision of attractive, on-site amenities and services will assist in drawing a critical mass of upper-income residents. One amenity that researchers find as a pre-requisite for drawing upper-income residents with children to mixed-income developments is access to safe and high-quality schools (Varady *et al.*, 2005).

Research has focused on the dominant model of mixed-income housing characterized by:

- 1) development in existing low-income neighborhoods;
- 2) the aim to move higher-income households into these areas;
- 3) attracting private-sector investment, including retail services into

underserved neighborhoods; and 4) the emphasis to increase general revenue for municipalities from property tax, sales tax, and employment (Quercia and Galster, 1997; Wilkins, 2002). These studies suggest that the ability of mixed-income housing to provide economic and life opportunities for low-income residents has yet to be realized (Smith, 2002).

Smith (2002) provides an overview of the findings on promise of this type of mixed-income housing redevelopment for a variety of people- and place-based goals. Overall, mixed-income approaches have been shown to produce positive place-based outcomes including the lowering of criminal activity. More generally, one longitudinal study on the association between mixed-income development and economic change in high-poverty neighborhoods finds that mixed-income approaches, in tandem with other investments by the public and private sectors, have assisted in promoting revitalization (Zielenbach, 2003). A more recent study using (hedonic) estimations of the impact of HOPE VI mixed-income developments on nearby property values finds that “HOPE VI redevelopment should be encouraged by community members because it substantially increases surrounding property values” (Bair and Fitzgerald, 2005:783). They report that “HOPE VI had a statistically significant positive impact on surrounding property values on the order of 8-10% for every quarter-mile closer that a housing unit was located to the development” (*ibid*, p. 771). While there is still a paucity of research on the effects of mixed-income approaches on economic development and neighborhood revitalization, the evidence to date indicates that positive place-based change can and does occur.

Alternatively, with respect to the goal of poverty amelioration, research on the outcomes of mixed-income housing upon low-income residents through examinations of HOPE VI has challenged and modified the expectations of what can be accomplished through creating mixed-income housing communities. Previously, the conventional wisdom was that mixed-income

housing would provide opportunities to low-income households through multiple mechanisms associated with living in proximity to higher income households. It was hypothesized that households with different incomes would develop relationships, higher-income households would provide models of “constructive behavior” for lower-income households, and low-income families would create additional social networks or bonds through higher-income households, which would increase employment opportunities for the poor. Research, however, has not found evidence to support these latter assumptions (Brophy and Smith, 1997; Smith, 2002). Studies have also questioned the assumption that lower-income residents in a mixed-income development will adopt the social norms of the higher income residents implicitly suggesting that the norms of a mixed-income development or neighborhood are affected by factors nested in the larger community in which the mixed-income project resides (Galster, 1998; Brophy and Smith, 1997).

Joseph *et al.* (2006) provides a systematic review of empirical studies in order to examine four ways mixed-income housing can create favorable outcomes. These include: 1) creating and solidifying social networks (low-income households link with higher-income households promoting information exchanges that lead to opportunities); 2) behavioral modeling (higher-income households will model effectual behavior for low-income households); 3) social control (higher-income households will uphold norms); and 4) enhanced political economy (higher-income households will attract resources to a neighborhood and promote development). He concludes that available evidence suggests that the first two ways, which depend on meaningful interaction and trust, may not occur in the short-term. The last two ways seem more likely to occur because higher-income households are more apt to be stringent about upholding beneficial social norms and they will have more political capital to bring resources to an area. One of the

implications from this conclusion is that mixed-income housing approaches tend to be more effective in improving the physical quality and atmosphere of the neighborhood than in creating social mobility opportunities for low-income households.

One challenge to the HOPE VI program is that “some housing authorities have failed to implement their HOPE VI redevelopment plans effectively” (Popkin *et al.*, 2004, p. 33). In some cases “failures in relocation and community-supportive service planning have led to inadequate support for residents and less than optimal outcomes for many families” (ibid, p. 33). It is contended that HOPE VI generally has not been able to resolve the dilemma of improving the quality of life for the “hard to house” populations, or those who are dealing with multiple barriers and obstacles to employment such as child care, health care, and transportation (Harris and Kaye, 2004; Popkin *et al.*, 2004; Bloom *et al.*, 1995; Levy and Kay, 1994).

Many residents in HOPE VI relocation programs obtain housing vouchers to relocate to “better” neighborhoods whereas some face the challenge of moving into other public housing developments that are already stressed themselves. A growing number of empirical studies lend support to the finding that those residents who relocated from public housing using Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers experienced the greatest benefits associated with the HOPE VI program (Boston, 2005; Brooks, Zugazaga, Wolk and Adams, 2005; Buron 2004; Popkin, Eiseman and Cove, 2004; Popkin *et al.*, 2004). Using administrative data to examine the long-term, socioeconomic status of households relocated from public housing Boston (2005) finds that over a seven-year period residents who moved using Section 8 Vouchers or who moved into revitalized HOPE VI sites experienced significant socioeconomic improvements as well as being able to live in a higher quality neighborhood. Brooks *et al.* (2005) also find that HOPE VI participants who use Section 8 fare better in their new neighborhoods than those who move back

into non-revitalized public housing developments, and they conclude that HOPE VI would be weakened if the Section 8 component decreased in funding. Studies conducted by the Urban Institute also find that HOPE VI participants who moved into private housing lived in neighborhoods with less criminal activity than their prior public housing residence (Buron, 2004; Popkin *et al.*, 2004). These same studies report that a significant population of HOPE VI participants face multiple barriers to employment as well as securing safe and affordable housing, which highlights the need for case management and effective community and social service programs (Levy and Kaye, 2004). As Wexler (2001) states, “HUD itself considers the family self-sufficiency programs one of the most problematic pieces of HOPE VI” (p. 210). Findings such as these have motivated closer examinations of the processes that might be triggered by mixed-income housing development.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IN MIXED-INCOME HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Mixed-income housing redevelopment in the HOPE VI model is “fundamentally a market-based strategy for addressing urban poverty” (*ibid*, p. 2). Since it is geared toward attracting private-sector investment and higher income populations, the role of government shifts from solely focusing on the social welfare needs of low-income households to primarily preparing impoverished neighborhoods for capital investment, which in turn is proposed to benefit people in poverty. While conceptually the mixed-income housing redevelopment is purported to promote both positive neighborhood change and opportunities for low-income households, thus serving both people and place-based objectives, some urban scholars have noted that the “benefits of HOPE VI [mixed-income] have chiefly been place-based: reclaiming particular neighborhoods, reducing criminal activity in those areas, and significantly upgrading

the physical environment. In many cases, HOPE VI-style redevelopment has spawned or facilitated gentrification....” (Goetz, 2005:409).

While there is evidence that some populations of HOPE VI participants benefit from leaving concentrated poverty neighborhoods and that some redeveloped HOPE VI areas show improvement in economic and environmental indicators (i.e. crime), studies also find that many residents are displaced into other public housing or impoverished neighborhoods. In many cases, public housing residents have not been adequately tracked (i.e. “lost”) and the community and social services provided to public housing residents have not produced the desired outcomes of economic self-sufficiency or increased life opportunities. This failure creates another related problem for those residents who want to move back into the revitalized neighborhood because they may not meet the criteria for return. Since there are few longitudinal studies that examine processes and outcomes for low-income residents in revitalizing HOPE VI sites (for exception, see Boston, 2005), little is known about the benefits they receive from living in a revitalized, mixed-income neighborhood other than that some characteristics of the place have improved.

Public policy must identify ways to build and mobilize neighborhood-based community capacity in support of people if such projects are to achieve the goal of poverty amelioration. The literature on comprehensive community initiatives finds that a community-centered approach toward neighborhood revitalization has the potential to help low-income households even in the face of strengthening housing markets that threaten to displace residents (Fraser and Kick, 2005). In addition, comprehensive community initiatives (CCIs) themselves can be a catalyst for improving neighborhood-level characteristics, promoting the development and sustainability of housing markets that the literature on mixed-income approaches has identified as so important for successful projects (Schubert, 2001).

The belief that engaging current community members and organizations will facilitate mixed-income approaches is not new. The issue here is that engagement facilitates mixed-income approaches and that engagement may modify the mixed-income approaches to make them more acceptable to the current neighborhood residents. That said, there have been concerns that the current neighborhood's goals may not be the ones that should be implemented. Wexler (2001) notes that since 1996 HUD expanded its emphasis on having "meaningful resident involvement" in HOPE VI projects by mandating that local authorities reach out to "adjacent community in the development of community service and family support plans" (p. 208). He continues that community engagement has run smoothly in some locales, but that there is an underlying issue around control of decision-making from social services to actual management of development.

The success of community engagement may also turn on the sophistication of the community with respect to the real estate risks in the project and the philosophical alignment between the community and the proponents of the mixed-income revitalization. On the risk issue, does the community have the training to push for economically viable modifications or does this set up a conflict between what a developer is able to do and what the community wants the developer to do? An engaged community can ensure that all prior residents are re-housed in the area, which in most cases would preclude much income mixing. In this kind of situation, there is not a philosophical alignment between the community that seeks to maintain the existing social dynamic within new physical structures and the proponent of mixed-income revitalization who seeks to change the dynamics of the community. There are benefits to empowering the community, but in some cases the results may be different.

HUD's position has been to allow resident involvement in every phase of HOPE VI short of actual decision-making authority (*ibid*). A slightly different approach to community involvement goes beyond decision making for HOPE VI developments to broadening the agenda for engaging place-based community in whether the mixed-income approach mandates it or not. Community engagement, in the form of comprehensive community initiatives, is a mechanism to improve all domains of neighborhood life because the long-term sustainability of a place requires that the people who live and work there can play a role in managing everyday issues that neighborhoods face.

CCIs began during the 1990s as a model for organizing neighborhood residents, building community capacity, and linkages to external stakeholders for the purpose of positive neighborhood change (Aspen, 2002). These initiatives are people- and place-based as the goals typically include change in multiple domains that affect neighborhood life, including education, employment, physical infrastructure, housing and crime, as well as family and individual goals such as educational achievement, economic and employment opportunities, and health (Kubisch, 1996). In particular, this can translate into asset accumulation for low-income families whether that is access to affordable and decent housing or other forms of socioeconomic benefit. The CCI approach is guided by holistic themes (Fulbright-Anderson, Kubisch, and Connell, 1998), as well as widespread public participation and resident decision making (Kreutzman and McKnight, 1993; Chaskin et al., 2001; Green and Haines, 2002). Underlying CCIs is a belief that community empowerment must be present in order to promote positive neighborhood effects (Fraser and Kick, 2005).

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The community building literature, which draws heavily on sociological theory as a foundation, argues that community initiatives can increase neighborhood social infrastructure leading to positive individual- and neighborhood-level outcomes for existing residents, the kinds of outcomes that HOPE VI is supposed to promote (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, and Vidal 2001). In particular, community building can provide one important mechanism to develop effective neighborhood (redevelopment) governance coalitions alongside site management entities, establish and reinforce the common interests that exist between different income households, and ensure that the needs of community members are met. It is important to note that this recommendation to focus on developing and mobilizing resident-based community groups includes a similar recommendation that public- and private-sector organizations provide the political and economic support necessary to sustain strong community-based governance entities. While each mixed-income initiative may be unique, local support from government entities, nonprofits, and private-sector employers and foundations will be needed to be stewards of large investments being made across the country in lower-income neighborhoods.

Neighborhood-based community building, organizing, and mobilization has had a long history in the United States for providing for the needs of low-income residents. This has occurred in a variety of ways from direct provision of social services, to the protection of neighborhoods from internal and external threats, to political advocacy at multiple scales for institutional change that is believed to have positive neighborhood and individual outcomes for socially vulnerable populations (Fraser and Kick, 2005). These approaches have co-existed, and it is generally recognized that effective community initiatives are characterized by groups of residents who are adept at working from multiple orientations.

CCIs' primary emphasis is placed on building community capacity and social capital via citizen participation in order to create effective neighborhood resources that all residents can access. The question remains, are the programmatic resources available to allow the engaged community to get job training, healthcare, day care (or whatever other services they determine are important) to the families in need? The social capital and community capacity focus in community-building initiatives is defined in a variety of ways, but usually includes the following dimensions: sense of community; level of commitment among community members; ability to solve problems; and access to resources. This capacity is engaged at the individual level (i.e., skill, knowledge, participation); organizational level (i.e., community-based institutions that provide goods and services); and network level (i.e., social capital or patterns of individual and organizational relations inside and outside the neighborhood). It is hypothesized that when community capacity increases and is mobilized then positive neighborhood outcomes may be achieved (Chaskin *et al.*, 2001; Vidal, 1997).

The general activities that constitute a comprehensive community initiative vary depending on the strengths and challenges that a neighborhood faces, but “common elements include relationship building, leadership development, increasing relational and organizational skills of residents and organizations, sustaining stakeholder engagement, developing a sense of common purpose and an action agenda, and increased local institutional capacity” (Saegert, 2006:275-276). By definition comprehensive community initiatives involve a process whereby residents and other stakeholders come together in a series of meetings to identify sets of tangible goals that are related to some aspect of resident and neighborhood everyday life. This goal setting is driven by local knowledge that residents have of their neighborhood as well as specialized knowledge that other participants bring to the process. As long-term goals are set for

neighborhood change the process moves towards identifying mid-term and short-term milestones that can be used to gauge how much progress is being made toward the larger outcome. Once these indicators of progress have been established then specific work can be done to identify actual activities and initiatives to work towards the stated ends. In the CCI literature this process of setting long-, mid-, and short-term goals with specific activities that are believed to be able to move a neighborhood toward achieving them, has been referred to as developing a “theory of change” (Kubisch *et al.*, 2002), and it provides a roadmap for comprehensive community initiative action and evaluation. There is a short-term versus long-term decision to be made here. From the developer point of view, a key question is how the neighborhood capacity is built so that they can engage productively in decision making. Absent the ability to engage productively (even housing authorities hire consultants to help them engage productively), the discourse with the developer is likely to possibly be either one-sided, superficial or antagonistic. This is a reality of capitalism that needs to be evaluated critically and acted upon in the best interests of the lower-income residents who are supposed to benefit from this urban transformation.

It is important to note that while the CCI process is said to be resident-driven, most community practitioners working in low-income neighborhoods recognize that resident organizing is as much about relationship building with public and private sectors as anything else. In the context of mixed-income housing development this means coordinating different sets of stakeholders to achieve multiple, overlapping goals of neighborhood revitalization and poverty amelioration. Joseph (forthcoming), noting that in many instances mixed-income approaches are carried out without attention to who the beneficiaries will be suggests that “policymakers and developers should be urged to be more clear about their expectations and priorities for the mixed-income development they undertake” (p.15). Fraser *et al.* (2003) also

find that if the same degree of focus was given to community empowerment and capacity building as is given to the physical “bricks and mortar” construction of housing and marketing towards upper-income residents, then the results for lower-income residents would likely improve. Without a focus on mechanisms to ameliorate poverty mixed-income approaches to neighborhood revitalization lead to undesirable outcomes for low-income residents ranging from a lack of appropriate case management and social service provision to physical displacement and unstable housing situations. It can be concluded that additional resources from public and private initiatives needs to support these efforts.

Mixed-income development approaches cannot be the sole strategies for assisting low-income residents and the places they live. Joseph *et al.* (2006) notes:

“Existing research suggests that simply sharing space will not build the level of interaction necessary to promote the meaningful exchange of information and support. Property managers and others responsible for the ongoing oversight of [mixed-income] developments must decide how much to invest in the active facilitation of interpersonal connections to help residents identify areas of common interest. Events such as cookouts, potlucks, community meetings, and celebration—may be important venues for bringing residents into the same space and providing an opportunity for repeated interaction and relationship-building. The formation of resident organizations such as block clubs and civic associations is another important means of building meaningful bonds among residents” (p.17).

This is especially important for assisting low-income residents who live below the poverty line to obtain services they need and to have neighborhood supports in place in order to work towards greater economic self-sufficiency. The hyper-segregation that has characterized many low-

income, minority urban neighborhoods will only be reproduced if socially vulnerable populations are unable to make meaningful connections with mainstream institutions. While mixed-income redevelopment alone has not been able to automatically create the enabling conditions to make this a reality, comprehensive community initiatives can partially fill this gap.

This is especially the case in cities where strong public sector support exists for neighborhoods. It is not realistic to expect lower-income residents living in newly redeveloped HOPE VI (or non-HOPE VI) projects to sustain a positive neighborhood trajectory without consistent investments by the cities in which they reside. These already occur through the provision of public goods—social services, Community Development Block Grant funds, economic development programs, and employer incentives, as well as a myriad of public-private initiatives. What is needed are comprehensive sustainability plans that identify community needs in an ongoing manner in order to develop “real-time” solutions to ever changing threats neighborhoods face. This will require an investment in community self-assessment and the mobilization of public, private, nonprofit, and resident resources.

There are several reasons for suggesting that mixed-income redevelopment be viewed as part of broader comprehensive community revitalization projects. These are briefly bulleted below:

- *Increasing the potential that mixed-income approaches will work in weak or moderate housing markets*—Housing markets are one of the most important contextual factors that determine the ability of mixed-income housing to attract upper-income residents (Brophy and Smith, 1997; Varady *et al.*, 2005). One approach, “Neighborhoods of Choice,” focuses on engaging residents and community-based organizations (CBOs) in weak housing markets to create places “where it makes sense for people to invest time, energy

and money in the upkeep of the neighborhood and where neighbors have the capacity to manage day-to-day activities” (Schubert, 2001:37; Brophy and Burnett, 2003). One of the central strategies of this approach is to have local government and neighborhood residents act as “marketers of their community....” (Turnham and Bonjorni, 2004, p. 24). Indicators of success include assessments of physical improvements in a neighborhood, investment in residential mortgages, rates of property vacancy, and tax delinquency.

- *Creating a neighborhood environment where mixed-income development will be sustainable* – Similar to the role that residents and CBOs can play in assisting to establish a housing market where middle- and upper-income households will relocate, community organizing and mobilization play an important role in ongoing neighborhood governance which is associated with maintaining a positive neighborhood trajectory. Social organization at the neighborhood level has been found to decrease crime and increase residents’ sense of safety--both important drivers of neighborhood revitalization. This is significant for mixed-income housing projects because these developments typically exist within a broader neighborhood which can have a direct impact on the trajectory of mixed-income developments both in terms of maintenance of property as well as for retaining middle- and upper-income residents and families that have a choice to live in other neighborhoods if their current one is perceived to be in decline. To date, there is little research on the long-term trajectory of redeveloped mixed-income neighborhoods, but prior research has been done on the significance of revitalizing entire areas of cities to decrease the possibility that a mixed-income development will become unsustainable (Wyly and Hammel, 1999).

- *Providing a broader support structure for low-income residents and families* – Literature on HOPE VI developments indicates that the community and social services component is critical for low-income families who face multiple barriers to employment (Popkin *et al.*, 2004). It is also widely acknowledged in the HOPE VI literature that case management and the provision of services to low-income populations has not been as successful as the “bricks and mortar” redevelopment of public housing. Resources and institutional capacities must be aligned for this to occur. While housing authorities and private-sector counterparts typically enlist nonprofits as well as community-based organization leaders to support HOPE VI applications, community outreach needs to be more comprehensive after HOPE VI awards are made. More generally, mixed-income approaches need to address the challenges that low-income residents face when entering the labor market. Prior demonstration projects that have focused on moving public housing residents from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to self-sufficiency have found that having strong linkages between community-based organizations, nonprofits, and employers provides an important support structure to support long-term employment for low-income populations (Riccio, 2006). Building a community-centered infrastructure to support low-income residents requires purposive action and the development of community capacities. Additionally, organizing and mobilizing CBOs and residents to manage neighborhood affairs also requires the building of social capital both between residents (bonding) and with external institutions that can provide economic, political, and infrastructure resources (bridging) (Fraser *et al.*, 2003; Fraser and Kick, 2005).

- *Managing co-existence in shared space* -- By definition mixed-income approaches to neighborhood development aspire to bring together economically diverse populations of residents as a mechanism to improve neighborhood characteristics and sustain positive growth. Studies of networking between low-income and higher-income populations in mixed-income housing find that structured opportunities for different subpopulations to interact increase the likelihood that commonalities will be discovered (Clampet-Lunquist, 2004). More generally, some scholars note that building community between diverse populations may be one of the most important issues planners face (Sandercock, 2000). When new populations of residents (i.e., middle-income residents moving into a low-income neighborhood) migrate to a disadvantaged neighborhood that has been targeted for revitalization, the structure, culture, and demography of the area changes. Studies have found that when newcomers and existing residents govern neighborhood space separately, feelings of distrust can emerge undermining any shared sense of place (Fraser, 2004). Managing these issues through community organizing provides a mechanism to voice concerns and work toward solutions to neighborhood challenges in an inclusive manner. Comprehensive community initiatives, in particular, provide multiple platforms for residents to come together around including education, employment, neighborhood infrastructure, crime and safety, infrastructure and beautification projects, as well as economic development (Kubisch *et al.*, 2002).

Comprehensive community initiatives can support mixed-income approaches to neighborhood revitalization and poverty amelioration at the same time. In the next section the CCI approach toward community organizing is briefly reviewed to provide an overview of the framework that is employed in these efforts.

CONCLUSION

Mixed-income redevelopment as an approach toward de-concentrating poverty, improving neighborhood characteristics, and providing opportunities for people living in poverty have been an important component in re-making U.S. cities. Since 1992 the federal HOPE VI program, focused on place-based poverty de-concentration in lower-income areas, has been the primary driver of mixed-income housing development in urban neighborhoods characterized by concentrated poverty. There have also been city-led revitalization initiatives in urban neighborhoods that have employed mixed-income approaches to achieve positive place-based and people-based outcomes. In addition, programs such as Moving to Opportunity and inclusionary zoning have also operated with the goal of creating urban environments that are economically integrated.

Because economic opportunity and race have been so intertwined in the history of the U.S. many urban centers are marked by spatial segregation of low-income, minority populations from more affluent neighborhoods. This has created a dual society of those who have access to opportunity and those who do not (Jargowsky and Bane, 1990; Wilson, 1987, 1996). Mixed-income approaches have been effective interventions in transforming impoverished neighborhoods. In particular, studies have found that mixed-income initiatives are successful at lowering crime, improving economic indicators, and producing quality housing for market-rate and subsidized tenants. This is an important step in assisting some low-income residents because concentrated poverty and poor neighborhood conditions shape the opportunities for households.

Still, investigations of mixed-income housing also suggest that very low-income residents face multiple barriers to economic self-sufficiency, health, and general well being. The community and social services that have been provided as part of the HOPE VI program have

been uneven and researchers have made policy suggestions around creating more effective case management and social service delivery mechanisms. One vehicle for providing the support and opportunity structures necessary to assist those in poverty are through the development of meaningful social networks and neighborhood-based institutions. Building community to provide for the welfare of a diverse group of residents takes focused and committed effort. Studies find that mixed-income approaches do not automatically create social networks between diverse populations of residents.

A community initiative approach provides a framework for state-market-civil society stakeholders to come together to plan and implement a community-driven, mixed-income approach toward revitalization and poverty amelioration that leverages the assets and latent strengths of the institutions and people who reside in a neighborhood. Prior work in the community development field has demonstrated the positive outcomes that are associated with the development of community capacity, social capital, and collective efficacy. These include asset building for low-income residents, as well as the benefits for improving access to quality institutions such as health centers, schools, and nonprofit service providers. Beyond the direct benefits to low-income residents, comprehensive community initiatives improve more general neighborhood conditions that will sustain mixed-income development investments by attracting middle-income residents to the neighborhood.

In addition to the aforementioned benefits of combining mixed-income and comprehensive community initiative approaches, there are societal benefits from building civic capacity and democratic public participation in urban governance. When people come together to make claims on neighborhood space, that social organization creates the conditions of inclusion and hope. The promise of mixed-income approaches toward neighborhood

revitalization and poverty amelioration may best be realized through a greater investment in the commonweal.

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