



Lessons Learned from Year One: Implementation of the Community Development Quarterback Model

Findings from BRIDGE Housing Corporation's work at Potrero Hill Terrace and Annex
and Jordan Downs

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Background and Introduction

In 2013, the Citi Foundation and the Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF) launched the *Partners in Progress* (PIP) initiative to provide financial support to organizations implementing a community “quarterback” model that was first introduced in *Investing In What Works for America’s Communities* (2012)¹. This model suggests that community development efforts are most effective when there is a key stakeholder (the “quarterback”) who coordinates and guides activities, rallies stakeholders, and focuses attention on collective community impact (Erickson, Galloway, & Cryton, 2012)². A key goal of the PIP initiative is to help move this approach to community development from theory to practice. Grants were awarded to thirteen organizations who share a single focus: to **increase economic progress in low income communities**. These initial grants provide an opportunity to better understand how organizations implement the quarterback role in complex community development projects and to identify the key factors that influence and impact how the quarterback role is realized.

BRIDGE Housing Corporation (BRIDGE) was awarded a PIP grant to support their role as quarterback in two California public housing developments, Potrero Hill Terrace and Annex (San Francisco) and Jordan Downs (Los Angeles). In these communities, BRIDGE seeks to assemble a range of stakeholders around a vision and plan for community change that integrates housing, neighborhood and people strategies. As a quarterback, BRIDGE’s role is that of keeper of the vision, capacity builder and organizer who is focused on bringing together partners that care about community impact. At Potrero Hill Terrace and Annex (“Potrero”), BRIDGE is the sole developer working in partnership with the San Francisco Housing Authority and Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development. At Jordan Downs, BRIDGE is co-developer with Michaels Organization and partners with Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, SHIELDS for Families, and myriad service providers.

The PIP grant provides an opportunity for BRIDGE to reflect on efforts in San Francisco and Los Angeles so that the quarterback approach can be taken to scale across similar BRIDGE communities and can be used to inform community development efforts nationwide. To accomplish this, BRIDGE is using a portion of the PIP grant funds to partner with Harder+Company Community Research to understand and evaluate BRIDGE’s quarterbacking efforts. Two learning briefs have previously been developed as part of this grant. The first documents what BRIDGE and its partner organizations have learned about the quarterback role as they work to revitalize the community within and surrounding the Jordan Downs development in Watts (available at www.hardercocom). The second learning brief is focused on the importance of using a trauma-informed perspective to guide the quarterback’s decision-making and planning around a transition in leadership in a trauma-impacted neighborhood like Potrero (available at www.hardercocom). This final report intends to explore the factors that influence the role and approach of the quarterback, to summarize implementation activities, and to explore lessons learned within the redevelopment work at Potrero and Jordan Downs.

Snapshot of Jordan Downs

Jordan Downs is a public housing development in Watts, a neighborhood of Los Angeles, that is currently owned and managed by the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA). Jordan Downs was built

¹ Andrews, N.O., Erickson, D.J., Galloway, I.J., & Seidman, E.S. (Eds.), *Investing in what works for America’s communities: Essays on people, place & purpose*. San Francisco: Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco & Low Income Investment Fund.

² Erickson, D., Galloway, I., & Cytron, N. (2012). Routinizing the extraordinary. In Andrews, N.O., Erickson, D.J., Galloway, I.J., & Seidman, E.S. (Eds.), *Investing in what works for America’s communities: Essays on people, place, & purpose* (pp. 377-406). San Francisco: Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco & Low Income Investment Fund.

by the Federal Government in the mid-1940s as the first Veterans Housing Project in the country and was converted into public housing in the 1950s by HACLA. BRIDGE, in partnership with Michaels Organization, was selected by HACLA in 2012 to undertake the redevelopment of Jordan Downs. The multi-phase redevelopment calls for building up to 1,400 mixed income homes, including a one-for-one replacement of the existing 700 units of public housing. The plans also include new retail outlets, community centers, parks, and a comprehensive Human Capital Plan to provide a continuum of family support, job training, and community programs for residents. Phase 1 is expected to start in early 2015, and it is anticipated that it will take 7-10 years to complete all planned phases of the project. As part of the redevelopment effort, SHIELDS for Families for hired by HACLA in 2011 to provide comprehensive services to residents of Jordan Downs, including creating engagement around redevelopment efforts and having a strong on-the-ground presence among the community both in Jordan Downs and South Los Angeles.

Snapshot of Potrero

Potrero Hill Terrace and Annex were built in 1941 and 1955, respectively, and are two of the oldest public housing developments in San Francisco. BRIDGE was selected in 2008 to lead the redevelopment effort at Potrero (called “Rebuild Potrero”; <http://www.rebuildpotrero.com>) as part of the HOPE SF program (<http://hope-sf.org/>), a partnership between the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development and the San Francisco Housing Authority to redevelop the most distressed public housing in the city. Rebuild Potrero is working to rebuild 606 public housing units and create 1,000 new mixed-income homes, open spaces, community facilities, and supportive services to improve the lives of residents. Phase 1 is expected to start in 2015, and it is anticipated that it will take 10 years to complete all planned phases of the project. Currently, the redevelopment team and its partners are emphasizing community building activities, including healthy living activities (e.g., Zumba, community garden, a walking club) and bi-monthly (every other month) community meetings. Healthy Generations was launched in 2012 as a peer leadership program to support to the developmental health of children ages 0-5.

Goals of the evaluation

This evaluation is designed to document implementation, provide real-time feedback about progress towards goals and capture and communicate lessons learned within each community and within BRIDGE. It explores factors that influence the role and approach of the quarterback as well as strategies for implementing the quarterback model in the real world. It also provides recommendations for how BRIDGE can apply lessons learned and develop “best practices” in future community development work.

The findings for this evaluation are based on semi-structured interviews with 4 BRIDGE staff and 5 staff from partner organizations, in addition to focus groups at Potrero and Jordan Downs with a total of 20 residents. The evaluation team also observed regular meetings of collaborative partners at Jordan Downs and reviewed project documents, including needs assessments, meeting agenda and minutes, presentations, and master plans for both properties.

Factors that influence the role and approach of the quarterback at Potrero

Several factors, such as neighborhoods, community, and relationships with Development partners are important considerations to take into account when understanding the role and approach of the community development quarterback at Potrero. As the strengths and needs within each community are unique, it is important to have a clear view of its history and the current environment in which an organization is assuming the role of community quarterback. By having an understanding of these factors, it helps the quarterback to recognize and plan for challenges and employ strategies for success.

Neighborhood

Potrero Hill Terrace and Annex has been identified as one of the most distressed public housing sites in San Francisco. Like many families living in urban poverty³, residents may struggle with the stress of chronic poverty, crime, untreated physical and mental health issues, and a lack of social and concrete supports. Potrero Hill Terrace and Annex residents have an annual median income of \$14,000 and violent crime at the property is five times the citywide average. Exhibit 1 provides additional demographic information about the residents living at the Potrero property.

Exhibit 1. Demographics for Potrero Hill Terrace and Annex (PTA) Residents.

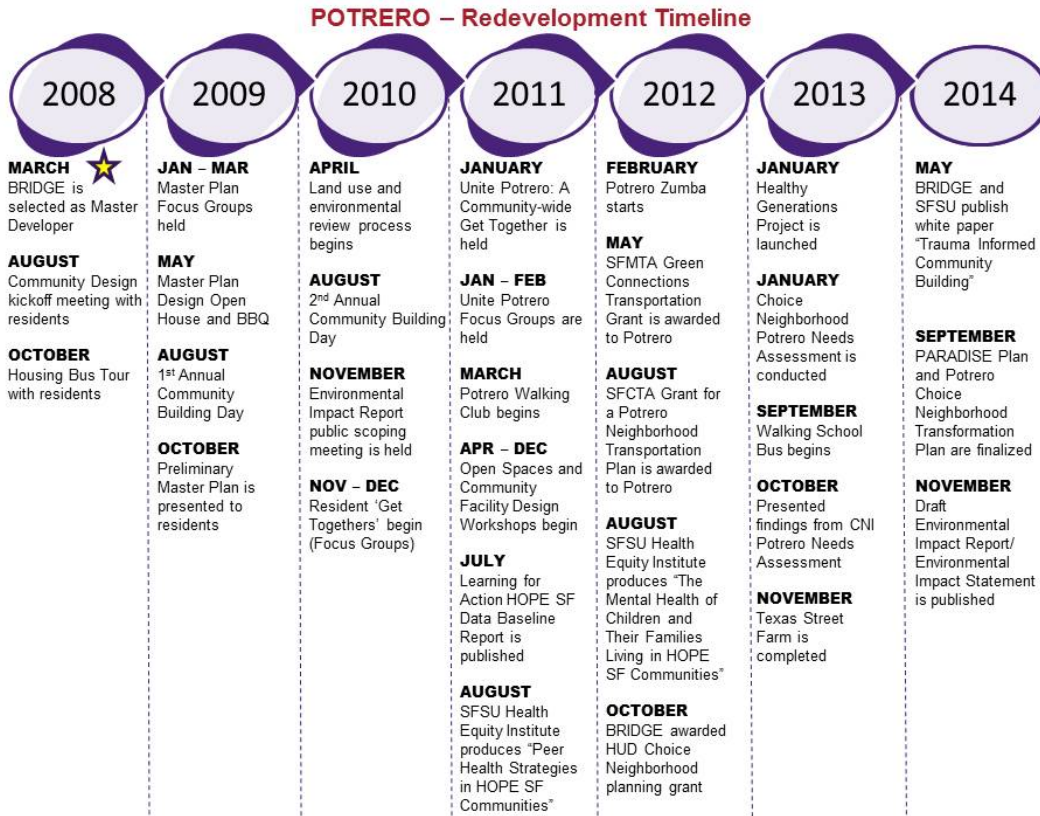
Demographics	PTA Residents
Age Distribution	
0-5 years	15%
6-15 years	26%
16-24 years	17%
25-64 years	38%
65+ years	4%
Top 4 Racial Groups	
African-American/Black	58%
Latino/a, Hispanic	21%
Asian	6%
Mixed race	6%
Highest level of Education	
Elementary	9%
Some high school	23%
High School/GED	37%
Some College	23%
AA, BA, Graduate	7%
Never Attended	1%
Other	1%

Note: Adapted from the *Rebuild Potrero Community Assessment* report (2013)

One of the first activities BRIDGE undertook in the quarterback role was to gain a deeper understanding of the background, characteristics, and needs of the residents and the neighborhood through a variety of community engagement activities. The timeline outlined in Exhibit 2 demonstrates how specific Rebuild Potrero activities have engaged residents and the community and identifies other key milestones in the process thus far.

³ Family-Informed Trauma Treatment Center (2010). *Understanding the Impact of Trauma and Urban Poverty on Family Systems: Risks Resilience and Interventions*. Family-Informed Trauma Treatment Center. Accessed at http://www.quantumunitsed.com/materials/1431_0221_Trauma-Urban_Poverty.pdf.

Exhibit 2. Redevelopment Project Timeline for Potrero



Community

Community outreach groups were developed at Potrero to foster increased resident and community involvement in the redevelopment process. At the time that BRIDGE came on the scene, there were two existing tenant councils (one for Potrero Hill Terrace and one for Potrero Hill Annex), but the team wanted broader involvement from the residents, surrounding neighbors (including residents of the more affluent parts of Potrero Hill), and other key stakeholders. Several design charrettes⁴ were conducted to solicit feedback about the project goals and principles from the community. BRIDGE’s first forays into the quarterback role were organized around existing community groups and focused on the design of the community. It was important to ensure that this first engagement was inclusive and directed at something specific that residents were invested in—the future of their home— since it was the basis for building other resident and community engagement efforts. Other early engagement efforts included home-based “listening sessions” with Potrero residents that were focused on identifying community strengths. According to staff that participated in these sessions, while the information garnered did not vary greatly from group to group, the value of this approach was that it helped to build relationships with residents and engaged them in conversations about their vision for the community. These conversations set the foundation for later, more difficult conversations about community challenges, the process of construction, and resident relocation.

Another key to building trust with the Potrero community is resident involvement in decision-making and leadership. The Community Builder position had been in existence since 2010 and is held by a resident who

⁴ A charrette is a highly collaborative process for engaging a broad array of stakeholders, including the community, in the design of a building process. See <http://www.charretteinstitute.org/charrette.html> for a more detailed description of the charrette process.

was also a paid BRIDGE employee. The Community Builder leads outreach efforts, and coordinates resident activities such as mediation, Zumba, sober living, and healthy living cooking classes. The Community Builder serves as a liaison between the development team and the community, and this position has been occupied by the same resident for the past four years, offering continuity in the community building role as the project has evolved through different phases and staff transitions. The team quickly recognized the value of an on-site resident staff person.. In addition, the team launched other programs and opportunities for paid resident involvement. For example, the Healthy Generations program hired resident Community Health Leaders to develop and deliver activities that support children’s developmental health and build positive parent-child relationships. Since the program launched in 2013, Community Health Leaders have become widely recognized as knowledgeable and accessible resources to parents and families of young children. These investments in resident employment and leadership reflected the recognition that fostering the development of people living at Potrero is as important as the development of the physical environment.

Residents have also played a strong leadership role in the creation of the PARADISE Plan (see <http://www.rebuildpotrero.com>) at Potrero. The PARADISE Plan was developed by a group of residents, community members, and community based organizations (referred to as the Advisory Committee) to guide the development of a program and service strategy.. The group was highly involved in key tasks such as developing a survey instrument, providing feedback on and interpretation of the data, and shaping the final plan. The first step in the creation of the PARADISE Plan was a household assessment to gather information on the current conditions, assets, and needs of Potrero Terrace and Annex families. Residents were hired and trained to serve as door-to-door survey administrators in partnership with San Francisco State University (SFSU) graduate students. This strategy served two purposes. First, it provided temporary jobs to residents who desired work experience. Second, it ensured active and consistent resident voice in the survey process. For the community, the visible involvement of residents was motivating; as one Potrero resident commented, “[I] got involved with the PARADISE Plan because it was all about the community needs assessment and programs that could be used to improve the quality of life for residents, but also bringing the community together.”

Community engagement: Ongoing strategies and challenges

Current strategies for engagement at Potrero include holding regular community meetings (every 2 months), social events, community building activities, marketing for upcoming activities and community opportunities, sharing renderings, and door-to-door visits to encourage involvement. As with most community development work, engaging a wide range of residents and community members is essential, but it can be challenging. As part of this research, residents at Potrero were asked about their experience, involvement, and perception of the redevelopment process. As one focus group participant said, “*For us going to the meetings, it is the same people in there all the time...How can we get more people involved?*” Specific groups such as young mothers, youth, Latinas, newer residents, businesses, and the surrounding community members were identified by the focus group as needing to be more engaged in the process than they have been to date. For example, one Potrero focus group participant said:

“I think BRIDGE still needs to do more work when it comes to getting the youth involved, especially the ages between 15 and 24. There needs to be more involvement from them because they're going to be the ones who are going to be having to deal with this whole entire process when it's done and it's going to affect them the most.”

Focus group participants noted that the lack of engagement in the redevelopment process by some residents may be due to distrust and disillusionment. One participant explained, “*There’s been that lack of trust, that they don’t trust that changes are actually going to happen after decades of broken promises.*” Residents’ suggestions for increasing community engagement include hosting a variety of activities (not just meetings) and holding meetings and activities at times that are accessible to the majority of residents, such as on the weekends or later in the evenings. One participant suggested that engagement could be increased for the entire community if local businesses could engage residents in job training or internships now in advance of the physical redevelopment.

Focus group participants also suggested that resident engagement will increase when there are tangible, physical changes and/or programmatic shifts that are visible to residents. One participant suggested that BRIDGE should “*go rent a bulldozer and park it down there for a while*” to signal the redevelopment is actually going to happen. In terms of programmatic changes, a Potrero participant said:

“It would be good if we could roll out some of the committee programs that are in the PARADISE Plan. I know that’s the objective, but let’s get those going now. We have a few things, like the community leadership program...that’s going great, but we need more, faster... We want local residents to be involved in the building, the construction jobs of the housing, so why can’t we now, two years before the construction starts, be training people in the construction trades and especially women.”

It is challenging to engage communities continuously over the lifespan of a long-term and complex redevelopment effort. Changes to the physical environment come slowly and residents are not always aware of the roadblocks and small victories along the way. The challenge for BRIDGE as a quarterback is to sustain community engagement and trust throughout the challenges and triumphs of the redevelopment process. To do this, BRIDGE will need to strike a balance between hosting consistent ongoing activities and refreshing and reintroducing activities to the community.

Accountability to the community is integral to the quarterback’s role. A participant from Potrero suggested that a resident and community-led board is created to ensure BRIDGE is held accountable for following through with promises made regarding redevelopment. Themes of distrust in the process and the organization emerged in focus group discussions, which is not unusual for historically trauma-impacted communities such as Potrero⁵. BRIDGE works to build more trust through maintaining visibility, holding regular community meetings, encouraging the community to assume leadership roles on committees, communicating clearly and frequently about changes, recruiting support from resident champions to help with outreach and needs assessment, and garnering excitement and involvement by hosting social events and sharing renderings.

What we learned about community:

- ✦ Resident leadership is key to long-term community engagement. Meaningful leadership opportunities create buy-in, commitment, and a sense of ownership among community members who will ultimately affect, and be affected by, redevelopment. Paid opportunities are especially valued by residents as both a real economic opportunity and as a symbolic gesture of investment by BRIDGE.

⁵ Weinstein, E., Wolin, J., and Rose, S. (2014). *Trauma Informed Community Building: A Model for Strengthening Community in Trauma Affected Neighborhoods*. BRIDGE Housing and Health Equity Institute.

- ✦ Accountability to the community is critical to mitigating what is often a long history of disappointment. Residents do not intuitively know the challenges of implementing either the physical or programmatic redevelopment process; it is the quarterback's job to ensure clear, timely and relevant communication with the community.

Partnerships

There are a few organizations that have served Potrero residents since before the redevelopment process began. These services pre-date the HOPE SF effort and are provided by independent organizations with their own unique set of purposes, focus areas, and missions. One challenge of redevelopment has been to determine how current service providers and efforts can be integrated into the redevelopment plan in a way that honors the integrity of each organization and advances the “people” aspect of the PARADISE Plan. This effort requires coordination and clear leadership – a role that others must buy into and support.

Strong relationships with partners are fundamental to a quarterback's effectiveness. But these relationships often take a great deal of time and effort to build. There are many partners and stakeholders involved in the redevelopment efforts at Potrero, which can add a layer of complexity as the quarterback navigates these new relationships and works to establish the project's vision. For example, Rebuild Potrero is part of the HOPE SF initiative, which initially created some ambiguity about BRIDGE's role relative to the HOPE SF leadership's role:

“The concept of HOPE SF was really led by the Mayor's Office of Housing but, at least in the early days, it really didn't build further than just concept. BRIDGE knew what the city was hoping to accomplish with the initiative, but [BRIDGE] really didn't have a lot of direction in terms of how to do the work.”

BRIDGE's work at Potrero is now in its fifth year since concept “*but the first years were really focused more on the housing side of things, planning for the housing...what we're running into [in] Potrero now is a reshuffling and renegotiation of who's got what role and how do we partner with each other.*” For example, one partner has a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to be a service connector “*but it's never been clear if that responsibility or that funding is part of their work with HOPE SF. From where we sit, we're going, 'Okay, you get city money to serve residents of Potrero, you should coordinate with us.' But they're going, 'No, we're serving residents of Potrero and our understanding is that it's separate from your work.' There's just been a lot of confusion and I think that's where the staff coming on board at HOPE SF is really going to make a huge positive difference.*”

In addition, since the redevelopment work at Potrero began, there has been a shift in leadership at the City level in San Francisco. As the parties involved are getting acclimated, some issues have to be ironed out. In one meeting with the city, a BRIDGE staffer recounted saying to the city staff:

“There's been some tension and we don't have to talk about it right now, but I want to acknowledge that there has been tension and I'm sure you felt it, we have felt it, and at some point it would be good to really talk through where that tension comes from and how we can get back on track with each other.’ It was really interesting because just naming it is like everyone relaxed.”

What we learned about partners:

- + Partnership building requires time and effort. Figuring out how to incorporate existing stakeholders and to bring new stakeholders to the table must be intentional and focused to be successful.
- + Partnership roles and vision change over the course of redevelopment and require constant renegotiation. Strong relationships among partners helps ensure that the team can adapt over time and continue to work collaboratively and efficiently together. At the same time, periodic “check ins” with partners can help diffuse and address tension, confusion, and other potential barriers to effective partnership.

Assuming the role as quarterback at Potrero

Based on interviews with key informants and residents, there is consensus that BRIDGE has been seen as the “quarterback” since the Rebuild Potrero redevelopment project started in 2008. One interviewee explained:

“[I]t’s easy because BRIDGE is the only developer and BRIDGE owns that seat and BRIDGE has owned it for more than five years...BRIDGE calls the meeting, the people show up, and we push the agenda.”

However, that dynamic has changed as HOPE SF has increased their staff capacity. BRIDGE staff views their role in this project as a master developer with shifting responsibility as the “quarterback,” “community builder,” and lead “strategist around the integrated people, housing, and neighborhood plan.” BRIDGE views its purpose is to improve both the physical and social environment of Potrero. As one interviewee explained, while it is clear that BRIDGE is “not actually going to do all of the implementation of every single thing that we think needs to happen, BRIDGE is involved in creating the structure so that it can happen.”

Factors that influence the role and approach of the quarterback at Jordan Downs Neighborhood

Jordan Downs is a demographically-unique community. It has a larger population of young children (0-14 years old) compared to the surrounding area and LA County. It is racially and linguistically diverse, and its residents have extremely low annual incomes. Exhibit 3 provides demographic points of comparison among Jordan Downs, the surrounding Watts area, Los Angeles City, and Los Angeles County.

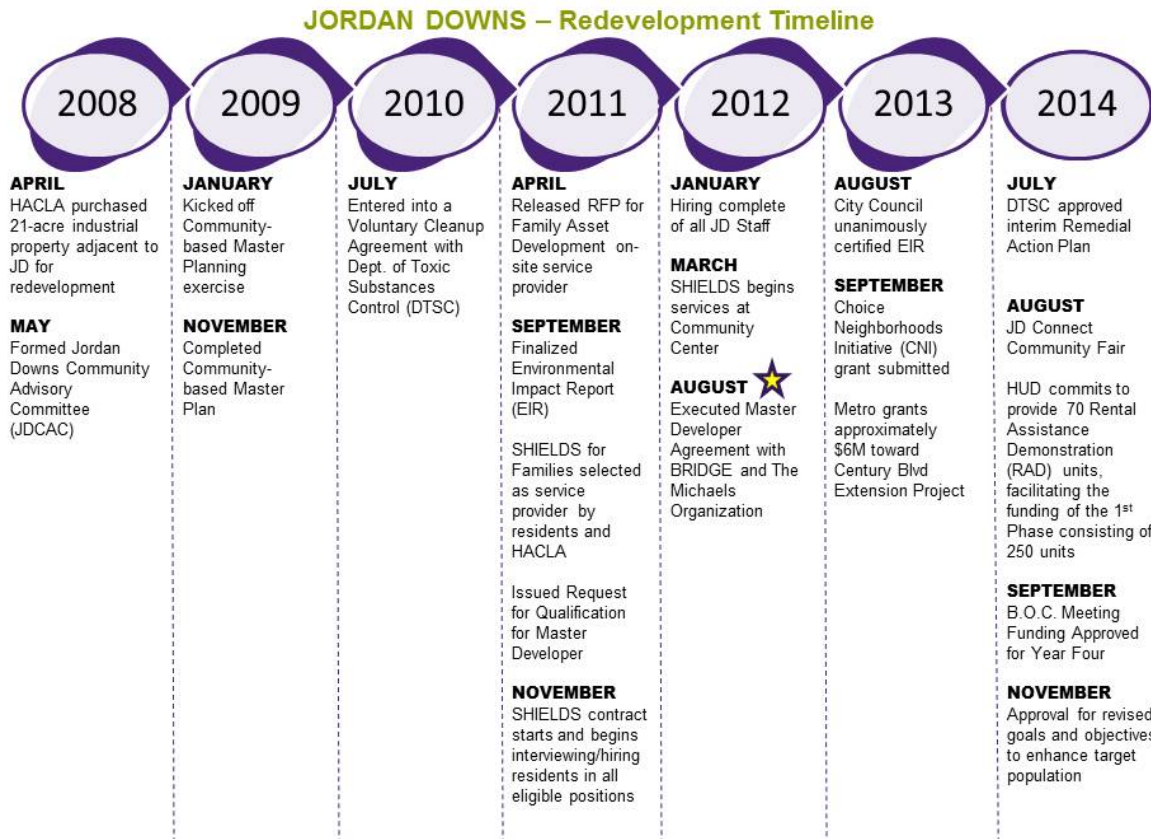
Exhibit 3: Demographics for Jordan Downs, Watts, the City of LA, and LA County. ⁶

Resident Characteristics	Jordan Downs		Watts	LA City	LA County
Age Distribution	n	%	%	%	%
Under 5 years	249	9.8	9	6.8	6.7
5-14 years	834	32.9	24	12.6	13.5
15-19 years	310	12.2	11	7.2	7.7
20-64 years	1,064	42	51	63.1	61.5
65+ years	81	3.2	5	10.3	10.6
Top 3 Racial Groups	n	%	%	%	%
Hispanic	1,822	71.6	61.6	46.5	48.2
African-American/Black	697	27.4	37.1	10.9	9.3
Caucasian	21	.8	.5	29.7	27.3
Average Annual Income	\$14,945		-	-	-

⁶ Sources: Data for Watts and Los Angeles City and County were generated from US Census Bureau, 2012. Jordan Downs data was generated from Yardi.

These demographics support the need for a strategy to address the social and community needs as well as the physical needs of Jordan Downs. It is also interesting to note that the characteristics of residents of Jordan Downs and Potrero are nearly identical with the exception of race/ethnic distribution. Potrero residents are more likely to be African American than residents of Jordan Downs, who are more likely to be Hispanic.

Exhibit 4. Redevelopment Project Timeline for Jordan Downs



Community

Predevelopment activities and conversations about redevelopment began at Jordan Downs well in advance of BRIDGE and Michaels’ selection as the master developers. The timeline in Exhibit 4 provides an overview of activities at Jordan Downs since 2008.

Prior to 2011, HACLA worked with consultants to provide modest community building and resident services to the Jordan Downs community. In 2011, these efforts were increased and explicitly linked to the redevelopment of Jordan Downs when HACLA awarded a contract with SHIELDS for Families (SHIELDS) to deliver case management, mental health, and other social services at Jordan Downs. To date, SHIELDS’ approach has been to engage residents in leadership, advisory, and paid staff positions at Jordan Downs. This approach has helped SHIELDS reach, assess, and establish trusting relationships with an unusually high percent of residents at Jordan Downs in the span of three years. In fact, during Year one, 442 families received an intake and were enrolled in services. Since then, close to 100% of new resident families have received intake and enrollment services – a high reach by any standard.

When BRIDGE and Michaels assumed the role of master developers for Jordan Downs, they benefitted from the strong relationships that SHIELDS and HACLA had already developed with the community. The development team's association with these organizations allowed them to quickly establish a positive presence in the community. At the same time, the strength of this relationship has presented challenges, particularly around creating direct communication between the developers and the community. Given their history of work in Jordan Downs and the deep connection with the community, SHIELDS' staff often ends up serving as a "go between" for Jordan Down residents and the developers, which, at times, creates some complications. For example, SHIELDS has an extensive job training program that is, in part, designed to prepare residents to apply for, obtain, and succeed in jobs associated with the redevelopment, including soil remediation, truck driving, and retail positions. An early source of tension among the developers, the service provider, and the community centered around construction start dates. Development staff communicated anticipated timelines to SHIELDS which were in turn communicated to community members. When timelines shifted due to project delays (such as environmental approvals) and the new timeline was communicated back to the community, these changes were met with disappointment and distrust of both SHIELDS for Families and the Master Development Team. While timeline shifts are commonplace in these types of projects for developers, the service providers and residents had built an expectation of a firm start date. This experience illustrates the tenuous balance between commitment and flexibility in long-term projects that can have many delays and false starts. It also illustrates the importance of the developer having "first person" communications with the community in order to protect the service partner from unfair community pushback when disappointments happen.

What we learned about community:

- + Strong local partners with deep ties to the community were key to creating *entrée* and *rapprochement* for BRIDGE. Partnerships with HACLA and SHIELDS, both deeply trusted entities in Jordan Downs, play a key role in helping BRIDGE gain acceptance and recognition by residents in the development process.
- + Communication must be intentional and carefully managed. Striking a balance between the needs of the community to have access to reliable information and the uncertainty of development process is an ongoing challenge for quarterbacks.

Partnerships

HACLA originally led the effort at Jordan Downs by prioritizing the redevelopment, putting out a call for proposals for the Master Developer Team, and contracting with SHIELDS for Families to begin preparing residents for redevelopment. When BRIDGE and Michaels came on board in 2013, there were already leaders and partners in place at Jordan Downs. Therefore, BRIDGE deliberately eased into the quarterback role slowly and cautiously. The city's decision to pursue a Choice Neighborhoods Initiative implantation grant in late 2013 created a need to formalize the nature of the relationship among the key redevelopment players. As one interviewee described:

"I think that really having a discussion about who owns the quarterback seat didn't really happen until we applied for Choice Neighborhoods. And that grant proposal really forced us to have a lot of conversations that we hadn't had yet. I think the Housing Authority owned the space, I think SHIELDS owned a portion of the space, I think BRIDGE and Michaels were always in the deal as the Co-Master Developers. But I think it was very, sort of, nebulous and vague until we started having to put pen to paper and really communicate the structure of this project."

Despite some of the challenges that the project and the players experienced, building trust and connection among partners and local government were cited as key successes of the past year at Jordan Downs by those we interviewed. One of the interviewees summed it up this way:

“We need everyone around the table to make this a success....[I]t is not about one person or one group having dominance....[I]t is so big, you have to have political, social, financial will of big institutions and big people that can push that agenda forward.”

Roles and expectations have begun to shift and will continue to pose a challenge for BRIDGE. For example, some of HACLA’s board members expect to see BRIDGE as financially accountable for service provision at Jordan Downs as the project becomes more real.

What we learned about partnerships:

- + Strong existing partnerships between the service provider and the community, as well as between the city and the service provider, made BRIDGE’s transition onto the team happen more quickly and perhaps more easily than it otherwise might have been given that BRIDGE was largely viewed as an “outsider” in this region.

- + As the project continues to progress, the roles and responsibilities of each partner will change. This will require strong relationships and renegotiation.

Assuming the role as quarterback at Jordan Downs

BRIDGE came into Jordan Downs as an “outsider” to the South Los Angeles and Watts communities; in contrast, San Francisco (where Potrero Hill Terrace and Annex is located) is home to BRIDGE’s headquarters. In addition, the partnership between HACLA and SHIELDS (along with a consortium of other services providers) was well-established and trusted by the community. As a result, there was a bit of “*jockeying for territory initially...while [BRIDGE] was trying to define [their] territory and probably was pushing up against other people’s responsibilities.*” This shuffling continues and will continue throughout the project as roles, circumstances, and expectations change. Over the long term, BRIDGE staff sees their role as quarterback as being a commitment to an ongoing conversation, rather than a commitment of a static role or set of responsibilities. This will be especially true as funding of services transitions from HACLA to the master developers and the partnership.

When we discussed the concept of the quarterback role and to what extent other players in the partnership see BRIDGE as a quarterback one interviewee asserted that BRIDGE’s role appeared to be more of a coach than a quarterback given the context:

“The coach technically calls the shots. The quarterback carries it through, but the whole team has to be on board for the call to work....[T]he quarterback’s job is to have a view of the field and the view of the game and to know what quivers the team has in its basket, but everyone has to agree that we’re going in that direction. Everyone has to see what their part is, and everyone has to have full ownership of their role for it to really work.”

Quarterbacks are meant to touch the ball on almost every play and to see how things are changing and adapt accordingly. In order to do this, a community development quarterback should be in touch with what is happening on the ground and cognizant of who needs to be involved, at what time, and in what capacity. A detailed list of characteristics of an effective quarterback was compiled from data collected for this research and can be found in the learning brief entitled, *What does it mean to be a community development quarterback?* (available at www.harderc.com).

In this context, it was likely the best choice for BRIDGE to assume leadership at a slower pace and in stronger partnership with the existing community development team in contrast to Potrero, where there was strong city leadership in the planning of the project but less so on the ground with the community.

Lessons learned and future directions

There are many commonalities between the communities of Potrero and Jordan Downs in terms of resident income, educational attainment, poverty, and service needs. Despite very different development contexts, including different relationships with city agencies, strength and reach of existing service providers, and project timeline, the key lesson at Potrero and Jordan Downs is the same; the quarterback role is developmental and must be adapted to meet the pre-existing conditions and emerging needs of the project, the community, and the people.

Accordingly, BRIDGE's role as quarterback looks quite different at each project at this moment in time. For example, at Potrero BRIDGE has a well-known and well-established presence among the community and service providers. The community worked with BRIDGE to develop the PARADISE Plan and sees their role as integral to both the physical redevelopment and the people plan. BRIDGE is clearly understood as the lead developer and quarterback for the people transformation plan at Potrero. Yet, as HOPE SF continues to define its vision and plans for impacting multiple public housing developments in San Francisco, it is likely that BRIDGE's role will pivot.

In contrast, BRIDGE has strong and defined relationships with Housing Authority of Los Angeles, SHIELDS for Families, and other partners at Jordan Downs, and it has the leverage of a strong service consortium with deep community roots. BRIDGE's weakness is that the Jordan Downs community does not widely understand its role as part of the Master Development Team and quarterback for a people, housing, and neighborhood strategy. Consequently, BRIDGE currently has minimal direct conversations or relationships with community members and residents.

In this vein, while both Potrero and Jordan Downs have community engagement groups to foster increased resident and community involvement in the redevelopment, how they are designed and led differs greatly. At Potrero, BRIDGE organizes, schedules, and leads community meetings with participation from resident leadership. At Jordan Downs, community meetings are largely organized and led by HACLA and SHIELDS for Families. Consequently, BRIDGE has a different relationship and identity in both developments – a reflection of the history of both projects, each project's current developmental stage, and existing staff capacity and leadership.

Despite these two very different community contexts, there are some common lessons learned and key strategies that can be employed to help BRIDGE and other organizations focused on community development to be effective quarterbacks, including:

- + Take the time to build relationships with existing community development stakeholders and partners and understand their system of working before implementing any changes. Understand the history and scope of partner organizations.
 - Who do organizations serve, what is their history, who is their target community? What do organizations see as their primary mission? While some organizations may exist to serve the primary community, others may have other callings – something that can cause mission conflict at times. It's important to know, understand, and respect each partner.

- + Build trust and visibility among partners, the community, residents, and local government by engaging them in the process and communicating clearly and frequently about delays, changes to the plan, and transition in leadership
 - What is the perceived history of the project? (e.g., disappointment? failed promises?) History will impact residents' willingness to trust and engage in the redevelopment process. Communities that have experienced failed redevelopment attempt will require different engagement approaches than communities that have not experienced the process in the past.

- + Be clear on governance, decision-making process, raising money, accountability, and measurement from the start of partnerships designed to bring services to residents.
 - How does each organization see its involvement in the project? Do they desire partnership, and are they well-suited to participate in partnership at this time? Who do residents trust and perceive as leaders in their community?

- + Engage residents to signal a change through needs assessments, social events, development of advisory committees, and sharing of information.
 - What activities will be most effective at engaging residents in the redevelopment process? What strategies will keep them engaged over the long term? Variety in the type of activity offered and the time the activity is offered generally results in wider engagement of residents.

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