
**CAMPUS-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS:
A CASE STUDY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
AND AN OVERVIEW OF TOWN-GOWN
ALTERNATIVES**

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Note from the Author

As an Urban and Environmental Policy Major, I was originally required to do a semester-long internship with a non-profit organization that would give me experience in organizing. I chose Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, better known as SAJE, an economic justice center in South Los Angeles near the University of Southern California. I learned first hand how a progressive non-profit organization operates, fundraises, organizes its constituents, and plans and executes strategic campaigns. It was through my work at SAJE that I became interested in the dynamics of town-gown relations because in talking to SAJE's members, the mostly Latino, immigrant, working-class residents near USC, I noticed the huge impact, both directly and indirectly, that the University had on the residents.

I began working on the research team for the Coalition for a Responsible USC, headed by SAJE's Campaign Coordinator Sandra McNeill and SAJE's Executive Director Gilda Haas. I also extended my internship for another semester in order to continue to contribute to the USC campaign. This paper details only a small aspect of a much larger campaign. I must thank the rest of the research team for all of its help. Jessica Hoelle, a graduate of USC, Benjamin Beach, a fellow at the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Kim Rodgers and Leon Somplinsky, researchers at the Oakland based Datacenter, Jordan Love, a USC undergraduate student, and Sandra McNeill. Our endless research update meetings and strategy retreats resulted in an informed plan of action that could not have resulted any other way.

Section I

Introduction

“Residents of college towns, especially people who live near a campus, view higher-education institutions as 800-pound gorillas. Love-hate relationships are typical. On one hand, a campus can provide business and jobs for the community and be a source of hometown athletic and intellectual pride. On the other hand, citizens always complain about adverse off-campus effects: disruptive student behavior, the sometimes seedy quality of student-oriented retail and entertainment destinations, higher residential rental rates because of student demand, student competition for on-street parking, and traffic congestion. Accordingly, colleges must look beyond their borders and coordinate their planning with municipal officials and neighbors.”

- *Bricks, Mortar, and Vision: a Guide for Campus Planning, By Robert K. Lewis*

Institutions of higher education in the United States have an important history and role in communities at the national, state, and local levels. Colleges and universities are pillars of society, providing young minds with the tools and knowledge necessary to make a difference in the world. The names of some of these places, like Harvard, Columbia, and Princeton, are globally recognized. The prestige and power of colleges and universities is undeniably present within American society. Those who have access to higher education, especially from esteemed institutions, are the people who themselves will rise up to influential positions of power some day as well.

The United States government has recognized that colleges and universities, with the positive contributions they bestow upon society, should receive special treatment in terms of the laws regarding taxes and land use. Educational institutions are thus classified as non-profit organizations and are therefore exempted from paying property taxes (in some cases on a very large scale). As all charities are classified under federal tax code 501(c)(3) as property tax exempt, there has been little exploration of the

relations between different types of non-profit organizations and the surrounding communities.

One relationship that is often overlooked but remains extremely relevant and important is that between a university or college and the community in which it is located. In recent years, the debate over what role universities currently play in their local communities juxtaposed with the role that communities want the universities to take on has become increasingly heated. This potential conflict between town and gown has, in some cities and towns, given way to a rise in proactive steps on the part of both universities and communities to create the largest net benefit for both parties.

Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, Columbia University in Morningside Heights, New York, and Princeton University in Princeton, New Jersey, are just a few of the institutions that have begun efforts at improving both the campus-community relationship and investing resources in the form of time, money, land, and services in their local communities. While ideal campus-community relationship hardly occurs, institutions that make concerted efforts to help improve their surrounding neighborhoods do exist. Those efforts are particularly significant given the tax-exempt status of colleges and universities, as they are seen as voluntary.

Communities rely on property taxes to provide funding for important neighborhood needs. Property taxes provide the financial base for infrastructure improvements, affordable housing units, fire departments, police departments, public education, creation and maintenance of parks and recreational centers, etc. For those communities that are home to colleges and universities, especially institutions that are

relatively large in student population, that institution significantly impacts the property tax base. Despite the fact that universities utilize local fire and police services, they are not required by law to pay the very taxes that fund these services. This fact, compounded by the physical, social, and economic impacts related to a college's location in a community, is the motivation behind some institutions going above and beyond their legal requirements in contributing to their communities.

The complexity of each campus-community (or town-gown) relationship is dependent on a broad variety of factors. Different factors include the size of the school relative to the size of the community (both spatially and in population), the financial situation of the school, the economic status of the community, and the needs identified by the community as vital for its well-being. Due to the complexity of each situation, it is best to take an in-depth look at a particular case and then evaluate other cases to develop a comparative analysis.

This is a case study of the South Los Angeles community and the University of Southern California (USC), with a focus on the Galen Center, a proposed campus special events center. The USC case study, including the Galen Center initiative, points to the importance of the university developing a comprehensive set of policies that ensure its consideration of community needs. The case of USC, contrasted with cases of other colleges and universities also indicates that institutions of higher education that implement policies regarding community benefits, payments in lieu of taxes, and/or services in lieu of taxes improve town-gown relationships and positively impact the community as a whole. An analysis of models implemented by other institutions will

result in recommendations for the administration of USC with regards to policies that involve campus-community relations.

Chapter 1

The Importance of Campus-Community Relationships

Colleges and universities, though often appearing as though they are insulated bodies observing and analyzing the outside world, do not exist in a vacuum. Their academic role also needs to be viewed in the context of how they become integral parts of a neighborhood and community. Campus-community relationships are complex and historically have been filled with mistrust. Universities can and often have functioned as self-serving organizations whose goal is to further their academic mission without regard to the needs of the community. Conversely, communities have high expectations of such institutions and place the blame on them for various neighborhood problems.

Universities and colleges are powerful organizations. Their power and prestige is correlated with the numbers of admission applications, growth of the student body, greater endowment funds, expansion of campus facilities, and the attraction of esteemed faculty, among others. Until recently, the majority of college administrators viewed their responsibilities as important only within the institution. For example, talks of student body growth may only be contained within the context of the institution itself, for example in terms of the need for more classrooms or a larger faculty, rather than in the context of the greater community. On the one hand, the institution is the primary party affected by a growth in student population, yet the impact on the surrounding neighborhood cannot be ignored. As long as institutions have withheld issues circulating throughout campus discussions from the neighborhood and a lack of communication has prevailed, mistrust has grown. Typically, this uneasy tension has persisted in college

towns across the nation, with few alternatives available and limited discourse on the concept of a cohesive relationship between campuses and their hometowns.

This is a tradition undergoing change. Colleges and universities have been, for the past two decades, exploring a new way of viewing community relations in the context of the surrounding neighborhoods. Negative campus-community relationships have been detrimental to the college environment and have led to challenges by neighborhood and community groups, lawsuits, and the intervention of local governing bodies. Despite this long history of strained town-gown relations nationwide, there has been relatively little work done on possible strategies for improvement.

One of the major initiatives in this area has been associated with the United States Housing and Urban Development Department's Office of University Outreach, which cites university-community partnerships as "a powerful force for community revitalization"; a force that has been gaining momentum for the past decade.¹ HUD's OUP recognizes and emphasizes the fact that colleges and universities can have a major positive impact on their host communities, and that the traditional roles in town-gown relations that pit campus against community can be reconstructed.

OUP's three underlying goals showcase its commitment to this concept. The first goal is "to recognize, reward, and build upon successful examples of universities' activities in local revitalization projects." This goal lays the foundation for constructing the new approach which rewards proactive institutions for their social responsibility. The office's second goal is "to create the next generation of urban scholars and encourage them to focus their work on housing and community development policy." As stated, the second goal addresses the need for developing and maintaining a thoughtful scholarly

¹ "About OUP." HUD OUP. 25 Apr. 2003. 12. Dec. 2003. <http://www.oup.org/about/about/html>.

working group which tracks and addresses the changes in town-gown relations in the context of community and housing development. This goal is one for both the town and gown to investigate broader housing and community dynamics. The third goal relates more specifically to the OUP than to the campus-community relationship namely: “to create partnerships with other Federal Agencies to support innovate teaching, research, and service partnerships.”²

HUD’s OUP focuses specifically on the research and service-learning solutions that can emerge from positive town-gown relations. It provides funding for university programs which address community issues that are not necessarily caused by the universities themselves (though often connections are in fact made). Most institutions of higher education have some component of service-learning incorporated into their academic structure, which gives students the chance to contribute to the surrounding community through volunteer opportunities and thus learn from the neighborhood and provide a service.

A problematic aspect of using this type of program to address town-gown relations is that the service-learning programs are decided at the sole discretion of university staff and administrators. The decision for which specific programs merit the involvement of a university is often an uninformed one made without the input of community members who can suggest which areas need the most attention. This problem, among others, has spurred a growth in the scholarly research on the important aspects of positive town-gown partnerships. The main difference between a service-learning approach and a community-based learning approach is the type of work done. Service-learning programs have the universal goal of students giving back to the

² Ibid.

community by volunteering time and energy to a project. The subject matter seems to be less important than the simple act of volunteering. The individual, by providing some kind of service, therefore learns about a group of people, an industry, and the way the world works. On the other hand, community-based learning is far more connected to specific community subjects. An example of this is becoming involved and researching viable methods of providing a specific neighborhood with increased access to fresh food by learning about the local political and economic obstacles and creating a solution. Community-based learning places more emphasis on grasping a clear picture of the challenges and possible solutions for a particular set of neighborhoods.

The most important step to achieving positive town-gown relationships is laying the primary foundation for achieving a partnership. A concrete partnership that can prevail even in the absence of a pressing issue is likely to alleviate the most tension in town-gown relations. In recognition of the increased potential for rebuilding communities, a number of scholars have worked on creating a model for forming campus-community partnerships.

A recent publication that outlined specific characteristics of positive relationships between universities and communities grew out of a national symposium called Community-University Partnerships: Translating Evidence into Action. Co-sponsored by Community-Campus Partnerships for Health and HUD's OUP, the symposium's purpose was to facilitate continuous quality improvement and knowledge advancement by disseminating the findings of evaluations of various town-gown partnerships and drawing from them multiple sets of principles and best practices, among others.³

³ "Community-University Partnerships: Translating Evidence into Action". 26, April, 2003. 3 Nov. 2003. <http://www.oup.org/pubs/cchp-proceedings2.pdf>

Three typical challenges in the town-gown relationship can be summarized as: lack of structure, competing agendas, and a dynamic nature.⁴ As in many relationships, especially between groups, there is often a lack of structure that helps facilitate a positive relationship that benefits both parties of the relationship. In terms of a university and its surrounding neighborhood, this challenge is very real and complex. For the purpose of this study, a structured relationship is defined as a set of rules and procedures that guide how the parties interact in terms of sharing information, approaching and addressing problems, and coming up with solutions. This challenge is complex for the town-gown relationship because while the university's structure may be more clearly defined, the community side is more ambiguous. In a campus-community relationship, the community could be anything from a neighborhood church, a community organization that works on specific issues, the city council, a neighborhood council, or a number of other issue-related groups and/or geographic-based entities. Thus, addressing the lack of structure in a town-gown relationship or partnership must be contained in the context of the active parties involved. Despite the clearly defined nature of the university, specifically who speaks for the university may not be completely clear. The general term campus can refer to a number of different bodies: the students, staff, faculty, administrators, or trustees. It is important to keep in mind that this paper, references to campus, gown, or universities specifically refers to the administration as the main institutional body that oversees the direction of the relationship with the community.

The second challenge to a town-gown partnership is the presence of competing agendas. Again, this is a complex issue that must keep the relevant parties in consideration. The university will come to the table often with just one unified voice and

⁴ Ibid.

related agenda based on administrative goals. The community, on the other hand, may not have a clear agenda nor a single person or group to represent it. Communities often articulate multiple rather than single-minded agendas. Due to the plethora of individuals that may seek to or actually represent a community, community groups often need to build coalitions or umbrella organizations that can represent such multiple interests. An illustration of such an approach given at the HUD symposium was the creation of Community-Based Organization Partners (CBOP), an organization of scholars which served as a steering committee for different community groups that wanted representation.⁵

Lastly, a major challenge to solidifying a positive partnership is its dynamic nature. Partnerships exist to accomplish goals and address issues that affect either or both parties. Over time, the universities and communities in partnership can achieve important goals and solve different problems, but the nature of the relationship is always changing. The challenge in maintaining the partnership is to address this dynamic nature in opening the lines of communication. Both the university and the community must be willing to recognize and address the different feelings among groups, for example a lack of trust with certain member groups or individuals. This lack of trust can exist both towards the university and between competing groups. Overcoming this type of challenge requires commitment and open lines of communication.

Thus, drawing from this information, a few important steps to establishing a campus-community partnership can be identified. First, for everyone involved, the community must be defined. It must be clear who is representing whom in the relationship and the parties cannot lose sight of the actual interests present within the

⁵ Ibid.

partnership. Second, there must be a clear structured relationship in the form of rules or formalities, agreed upon by both sides, that is acknowledged and accepted in order to maintain clear lines of communication and a solid base upon which to build a meaningful approach. Third, both parties must bring concrete agendas to the table. This is more important for the community side because of the broader range of parties and interests that are bound to come into play. However, if students or faculty took positions around a set of issues, they might vary with an administrative approach. Lastly, there must be recognition and commitment to working with through the dynamic nature of the relationship in order to ensure that the partnership can continue regardless of how strong or weak the various challenges may be.

The importance of a positive town-gown relationship is transparent. The resources present on either side can greatly improve and benefit the other. Colleges and universities serve as some of the greatest sources of intellectual and academic information and perspective, have a young and eager constituency, and many have great physical and financial capital in the form of facilities and endowments that can greatly benefit the community when shared. The community, on the other hand, beyond supplying the campus with its basic needs for a safe neighborhood and protection, provides the space in which to explore and apply new ideas to a real world setting. In examining different campus—community relationships, it seems obvious that taking advantage of all that both parties have to offer proves much more favorable than to withhold possible shared resources from each other.

Section II: The Case of the University of Southern California in the South Los Angeles Neighborhood

Chapter 2

The University of Southern California: The Student Housing Market

Since its founding in 1880, the University of Southern California, located in South Central Los Angeles, has played a significant role in its neighboring community, the city, and the region at large. In 2003, with a total of 30,000 students (16,000 undergraduate and 14,000 graduate), 4,200 faculty members⁶, and a main campus that covers 155 acres in the heart of Los Angeles⁷, USC is undeniably one of the most recognized universities in the United States. For many people, especially USC alumni and long-time Southern California residents, its name is synonymous with prestige, success, pride, and community. Often times, the prestige and deeply felt history of the institution overshadow some of the less positive views of the university, but this does not mean that they do not exist and are not meaningful and important concerns. Many of these concerns stem from the university's land use and development of land related to the expansion of the main University Park Campus, including displacement, gentrification, draining of property taxes, expansion into the community, and a lack of concern for community residents. Though in recent years, efforts to improve the campus-community relations have been made, most problems persist or have worsened.

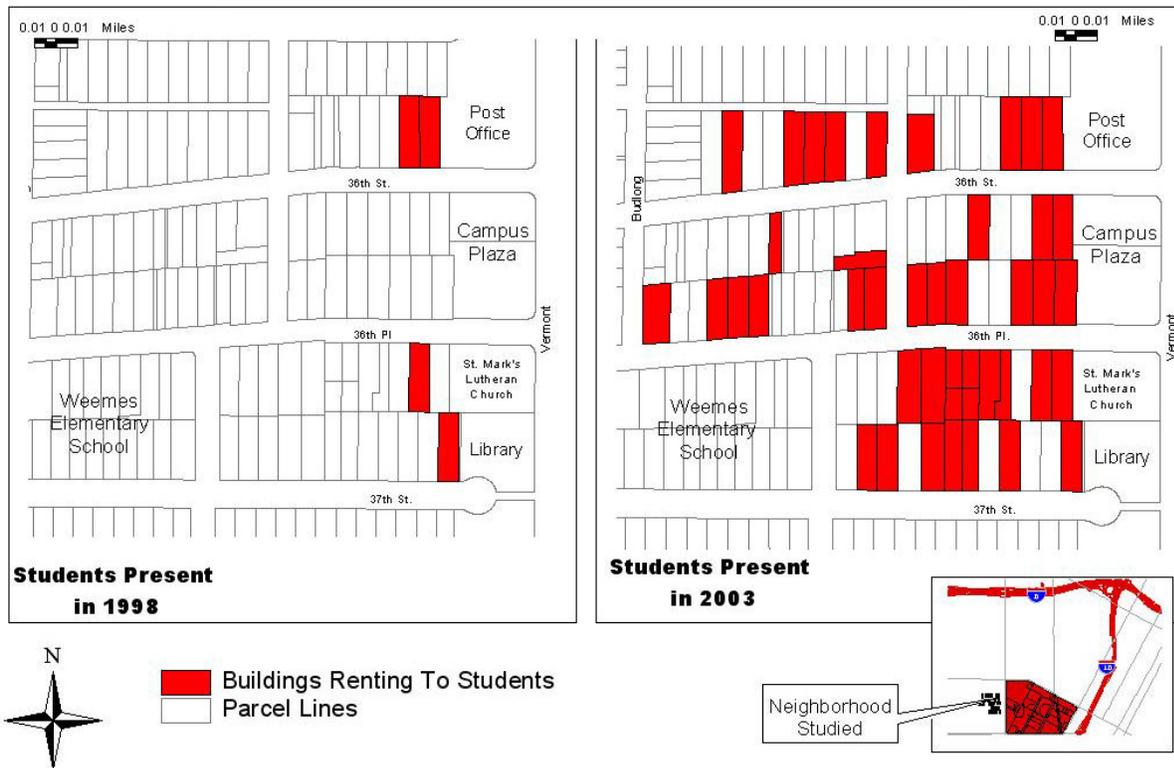
One of the most prevalent concerns is USC's student housing policy. The university is not primarily a residential campus, with less than 21% of its students

⁶ <http://www.usc.edu/about/factbook/>

⁷ <http://www.usc.edu/about/campuses/>

residing on campus in residence halls. Given the total number of students, the limited amount of student housing has a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. The housing issue directly impacts community residents: it indirectly forces the remaining student population, over 23,000 students, to find housing off campus.

Comparison of Student-Occupied Properties, 1998 and 2003



In addition to increasing the number of students residing off campus, the lack of student housing has helped drive up rents by 55% since 1995 alone⁸, to levels that do not in any way reflect the quality of the housing, the value of the property, the quality of the schools, the safety levels in the community, or the resources of the community. It has contributed to tensions between the community and the institution because of the

⁸ "USC Parking Lot – Highest and Best Use Analysis." Prepared for USC by Sedway Group, August 2002. p. 53.

dynamics of sharing a residential neighborhood with students who, on average only attend school for four years.

The USC housing policy only guarantees on campus housing for freshmen undergraduates, roughly 2,600 students. Interestingly, in the past seven years, the housing available has not even met the university's needs in order to hold the institution to that policy. In 1996, the Daily Trojan, one of USC's student newspapers, chronicled the housing crunch and its consequences from the student perspective. Staff writer Susan McAllister cited an increase in enrollment of freshmen as the primary cause for the strain on the university's housing resources.⁹ The response to this initial housing crunch was to house the new students in off-campus university owned housing (traditionally reserved for upperclassmen), convert a former Greek society house into student housing¹⁰, and temporarily place the remaining students into ten residence hall lounges until other rooms on campus were made available.¹¹

Freshmen who were placed in the housing not traditionally falling into the freshman housing category gave negative feedback when asked about their living situations. Bernardo Iniguez, a freshman in the 1996-1997 academic year, was placed in Cardinal Gardens, an off-campus apartment complex which had until then only housed upperclassmen. Iniguez said in an interview with the Daily Trojan that he found the housing "less than hospitable," stating that "'It's filled with cockroaches, basically. It's dirty and the sink gets clogged up about every other week . . . Sometimes you can't get

⁹ McAllister, Susan. "Housing can't fit all freshmen into residence halls." Daily Trojan. April 18, 1996: Vol. 127, No. 62. 1-2

¹⁰ Lau, Evelyn. "Housing problem prompts improvisations." Daily Trojan. October 1, 1996: Vol. 129, No. 23. 1

¹¹ Ung, Elisa. "Students to live in lounges due to lack of housing." Daily Trojan. August 21, 1997: Vol. 132, No. 00. 26

into the building because the card doesn't access. . . so you have to hop the gate to get into your own house.”¹² Though these living conditions sound unacceptable for anyone, it is particularly disturbing that USC would house its freshmen in such facilities. Many private colleges and universities require their students to live on-campus for their freshmen year, a practice that is widely embraced because of the community building needs and opportunities for engagement in the campus. USC's housing policy may in part result from the recognition of the benefits to students and to the University of having a 100% residential freshman class. However, the university's facilities do not allow for the institution to hold itself to that policy.

The housing crunch that became so painfully apparent in 1996 has persisted, with the university doing very little to help ease the burden this places on both the students and on the surrounding community. This is evidenced in the fact that, according to Director of Housing Services Jeff Urdahl, the University does not plan to increase on-campus student housing in the near future. In fact, there are currently no plans in the works to create new student housing on campus.¹³ Though freshman housing seems to be less of a problem, returning students who seek on-campus accommodations find little help from the university's Housing Services department, which places students in campus owned student housing and provides aide to students seeking off-campus housing. Students themselves recognize the fact that “housing is a tight market at USC.”¹⁴ Taking into consideration that beyond the low percentage of undergraduates housed in campus housing, the university only offers its 14,000 graduate students 613 spaces in campus

¹² McAllister, Susan. 1

¹³ Testimony at CRA Housing and Economic Development meeting.

¹⁴ Portales, Lidiana. “Housing search continues.” Daily Trojan. August 27, 2003: Vol. 150, No. 03. 1-3

housing, it seems that identifying the housing market at USC ‘tight’ is an understatement.¹⁵

Urdahl advises students to be flexible and have multiple options in mind.¹⁶ He explains that “most schools in Los Angeles face a housing crunch. Real estate is tight throughout Southern California, and universities reflect that.”¹⁷ And this is certainly true, but it means that schools must find ways to grow proportionally in terms of student population and facilities. If University planners do not take the student body growth into consideration when allocating funds for student housing developments, the already recognized problem (shortage of housing) will only continue. Unless the university is willing to recognize that the problems associated with that the lack of housing are acceptable, it is imperative that it take action to increase on campus housing. In one of the first issues of the Daily Trojan in the 2003-2004 school year, the housing problem was again brought up. “Every year, a line of homeless students wraps outside of Parking Structure X the first day of classes, patiently waiting for their chance at university housing. This is the line for the desperate students who still have not found a place to live.”¹⁸

Companies not affiliated with USC have recognized the great business opportunity in helping students find off-campus housing. The university even uses these businesses as a resource to refer their ‘homeless’ students to. The most recognized and utilized service is Housing4Students.com, an online directory of off-campus housing

¹⁵ Portales, Lidiana. “USC tries to ease housing crunch.” Daily Trojan. September 23, 2003: Vol. 150, No. 22. 17

¹⁶ Portales, Lidiana. “Housing search continues.”

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Portales, Lidiana. “Housing search continues.” Daily Trojan. August 27, 2003: Vol. 150, No. 03. 1-3

listings available to students for rent.¹⁹ Property Management Associates, another company that has made its fair share of profits off of USC students has bought numerous buildings in the area, completed the necessary renovations, and now rent the units to students and others, though it identifies itself as more exclusively a provider of student housing. In fact, PMA-managed apartments do rent to community members, but the large signs and banners hanging from the buildings advertise it as ‘USC Student Housing’, indicating an intent to exclusively rent to students. PMA has partnered with Housing4Students.com and all of the PMA units are listed on the Housing4Students.com website.²⁰ Thus, though these companies provide an important service to students – access to housing – the fees they charge and the relatively high rents as compared to other community residences not in any way related to the university allows them to exploit the students’ dilemma. In fact, when housing prices on campus increase, it causes a domino effect for off-campus housing whereby housing prices in units that rent to students also increase.²¹

The community dynamics that have resulted from USC’s lack of adequate student housing are, in many ways, troubling. In 1999, when Housing Services broke the news to students who live in campus housing that rent in some units would increase by \$70 per person, students instinctively knew that this would affect not only those who live in campus-housing, but also those who reside in off-campus non-university apartments and houses. An editorial in the Daily Trojan linked the increase in the cost of housing on campus to the raising of rents by non-university landlords²², since those prices are

¹⁹ <http://www.housing4students.com/colleges/usc/index.html>

²⁰ notes from internship at SAJE

²¹ “Housing price increases pose dangers.” Daily Trojan. February 10, 1999: Vol. 136, No. 18. 4

²² *ibid*

dictated by the cost of on-campus housing. For example, a one-bedroom apartment in USC's Cardinal Gardens rents for a monthly fee of \$1,240, and the University squeezes two people into each of these apartments, resulting in about \$620 per person for a shared bedroom. By contrast, a two-bedroom apartment intended for two persons only in the City Park building, which is not affiliated with the University, costs \$1,200, or \$600 per person for a single, just \$20 less than campus-owned and operated housing.²³ While a two-bedroom apartment may in fact be preferable, the qualitative costs (including being further away from campus and added cost of utilities, while in addition university housing includes internet connections, heightened security, and regular maintenance and housekeeping of the common areas) significantly raise the price. It seems that the university's mere presence (and the fact that over 23,000 of its students need a place to live every academic year) has the unintended affect of causing the cost of renting an apartment or house off campus to increase disproportionately to the quality of the housing. This is evidenced by the fact that between 1998 and 2002, the Los Angeles Housing Department received code violation complaints for more than 18% of the total properties in the 90007 zip code (the primary residential zip code around USC), which is two and a half times the average number of complaints city-wide.²⁴

Beyond that, there is also the issue of students who live off-campus and attend school for five years at most (as in the case of undergraduates). Since most students do not live on campus after their first year, they spend the remainder of their years as a Trojan living near campus. As with college students in nearly any residential area, community complaints are endless and usually warranted to some degree. Residents who

²³ *ibid*

²⁴ "Neighborhood Knowledge Los Angeles." 15 Oct. 2003. <http://www.nkla.spsr.ucla.edu>.

live around the University Park Campus find their neighbors disrespectful in a number of ways, including the most commonly cited: “excessive late-night noise, improper trash disposal, and parking violations . . .”²⁵ Residents believe that because students are in the community for only a short period of time, they have little reason to care about the condition of the neighborhoods and therefore their actions show little regard for the welfare of their neighbors. Through their thoughtless actions, the students are lowering the standard of living in the community not only for themselves, but also for the long-term residents.

Fortunately, in 2003, USC publicized plans to diffuse some of the housing crisis. According to Urdahl, two apartment complexes will be built by an independent developer and a third building, built by the university, would complete the second phase of the International Residential College at Parkside. In all, the three developments will house 4,270 students when completed, but as of now, the plans have not been finalized or approved.²⁶ Though an additional 4,270 units would indirectly bring a great deal of relief to the community, the intended effect may not be widely felt. Besides the fact that the first of the three developments will not be finished until 2005 (to be built by the Capstone Development Corporation), that building will be relatively expensive (at least \$1000 per room)²⁷ and targeted towards graduate students, which may not be the best relief for the community overall. This is simply due to the fact that USC graduate students are more likely to commute anyway, so they contribute less to the problems associated with

²⁵ Hennon, Blake. “Community at odds.” Daily Trojan. September 11, 2003: Vol. 150, No. 12. 1, 18

²⁶ Portales, Lidiana. “USC tries to ease housing crunch.”

²⁷ Downtown Student Housing, Los Angeles, CA. Capstone Development. <http://www.capstonecompanies.com/pdf/DSH.pdf>

displacement of residents than do undergraduates.²⁸ Though on the one hand, any new housing is good housing, what the university really needs is to increase its on-campus housing for undergraduates.

²⁸ Portales, Lidiana. "USC tries to ease housing crunch."

Chapter 3

A Focus on the Galen Center and its Impacts

The University of Southern California never seems to leave the news headlines whether it is in sports, business, education, or on the front page. On August 28, 2003, USC again made the news when USC President Steven Sample announced Louis and Helene Galen's \$25 million contribution to the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, which made it possible to begin the construction of the long anticipated "campus events" (athletics) center at the southeast corner of Figueroa Boulevard and Jefferson Street.²⁹ The Galens' contribution, added to their previous contribution to the campus events center of \$10 million, secured their name to the project. The Galen Center will consist of 10,258 seats in a 255,000 square-foot arena intended to support the USC men's and women's basketball and volleyball teams, a 45,000 square-foot pavilion with three practice courts, and departmental offices for coaches and staff. The center is projected for completion in 2006.³⁰

The Galen Center provides clear benefits to USC; a beautiful new campus events center for sports, cultural and local events that will add to the grandeur of the University and add life to the community. It will help them to recruit athletes of higher caliber, thereby improving performance in competition and easing the solicitation of donations from alumni. But below the surface there is a more complicated picture - one that robs the Center of its charm and captivating power. The history of this piece of land, the

²⁹ Sutliff, Usha. "Coming Attractions." USC News. 28 Aug. 2003. 12 Oct. 2003.
<http://www.usc.edu/usnews/story.php?id=9210>.

³⁰ "The Galen Center at USC." Galen Center. 12 Oct. 2003.
<http://www.usc.edu/neighborhoods/galencenter/index.html>

Community Redevelopment Agency's involvement, and USC's lack of transparency in developing actual plans for the site underlines the more problematic nature of the project.

The CRA, in 1966, designated the area in which the Galen Center is to be located (and more generally the area includes USC and the Memorial Coliseum, among others), as the Hoover Redevelopment Project, also known as a redevelopment district.³¹ With this designation, the tax increment (or increase in taxes collected) from all redevelopment projects within the district go into the CRA fund, which is then applied to new projects within the district. The goal of the CRA is to act as a catalyst for new development and redevelopment to occur in the Hoover area. Specifically, the goals for the Hoover Redevelopment Project aim to “encourage the retention and development of affordable housing, improve neglected community facilities and promote the economic development opportunities.”³² The plan adopted by City Council in 1966 called for the expansion of USC, development of commercial retail facilities, commercial office space, residential housing developments, and hotel facilities.

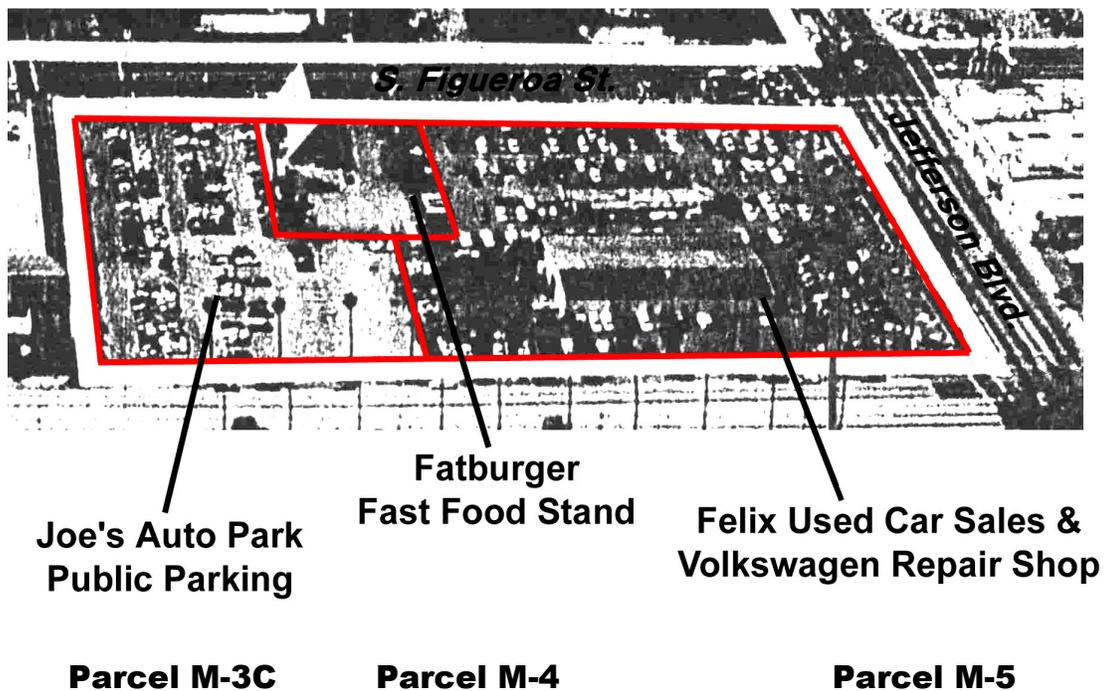
While the majority of these goals and the specific plans aimed at accomplishing these goals are logical and rational, the part of the plan that aims to help USC expand is self-defeating. USC's status as a non-profit organization allows it to keep its properties off the tax rolls. Thus, any property that the CRA helps USC develop does not serve the purpose of contributing to the tax increment and thereby facilitating additional development projects. In the case of the Galen Center, the CRA went to great lengths to assemble the large piece of property upon which the center will be built. Correspondence between members of the CRA indicates that USC's original bid for the site was approved

³¹ “Hoover Redevelopment Project.” Community Redevelopment Agency. 12 Oct. 2003.
<http://www.ci.la.ca.us/CRA/hohome.htm>

³² Ibid.

because the university stated that it intended to build a commercial complex with office and retail space, which would have contributed to the mission of economic redevelopment to spur economic growth in the Hoover Area. The school even included talk of the development of faculty housing on the site. According to activists that have long served the community surrounding the campus, such as Pastor Brian Ecklund of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, the original plan for the site was relatively well-received by residents.

In 1987, the CRA began to acquire two of the three parcels that now compose the site for the future Galen Center.



Parcel M-3C, which was previously owned by the Hoover Community Hotel Development Corporation, had been vacant due to depressed market conditions that made

the planned multi-story office building unfeasible.³³ After the CRA granted a two-year extension for HCHDC to develop a new plan for the site, CRA staff rejected the plan for a single story convenience center³⁴ and acquired the land through eminent domain in 1987 after an unsuccessful lawsuit filed by the HCHDC against the CRA.³⁵ Soon after, the CRA received and accepted a development proposal from the Figueroa Corridor Associates (FCA), a for-profit developer, to flesh out the block and call it the USC Plaza, which already contained the Radisson Hotel and Sizzler Restaurant with a commercial complex. However, the proposal from FCA involved developing the entire portion of the block, meaning the CRA had to help them acquire parcels M-4 and M-5 as well.³⁶ This is because FCA's numerous attempts at acquiring the properties were unsuccessful. Thus, in the fall of 1989, the CRA considered the possible use of condemnation in order to obtain the site.³⁷ In the case of parcel M-4, the site of a Fatburger fast-food restaurant, the CRA made a written offer to purchase the property in a letter that included the threat of condemnation.³⁸ The owner of the Fatburger restaurant ultimately sold the property to the CRA in lieu of eminent domain.³⁹

The acquisition of parcel M-4, a crucial piece of property for the purpose of fulfilling the proposal for USC Plaza, through the use of eminent domain and threats of

³³ Tuite, John. "Report to Agency Commissionrs on the Issuance and Distribution of a Request for Proposals for Development of a Commercial Project on Parcel M-3C, Hoover Redevelopment Project." 23 Dec. 1987.

³⁴ Ovrom, Robert. Memorandum from CRA Chief Executive Office to Agency Commissioners. 9 Oct. 2003.

³⁵ Tuite, John. "Report to Agency Commissionrs on the Issuance and Distribution of a Request for Proposals for Development of a Commercial Project on Parcel M-3C, Hoover Redevelopment Project." 23 Dec. 1987.

³⁶ Tuite, John. Memorandum to Agency Commissioners. 4 Dec. 1989.

³⁷ Jareguim, Oscar. Memorandum from Project Manufer to Development Review Committee. 13 Sept. 1989.

³⁸ Hemer, John. Correspondence from Hemer, CRA Director of Real Estate, to Michale D. Thomson and Wayne L. Gertmentian. 27 July 1990.

³⁹ Trimble, Gerald. Memorandum to FCA Project Manager Oscar Jaregui. 3 May 1990.

condemnation, served as a significant turn of events. The CRA recognized the value of FCA's plan in working towards its economic development goal of "contributing to neighborhood improvement and enterprise"⁴⁰ because it used such tactics as condemnation and eminent domain. And the projected benefits of the FCA's project were indeed considered substantial. The commercial, hotel, and retail complex would ultimately provide the local community with 2700 permanent jobs⁴¹, over \$1.6 million in annual tax increment revenue, just over an acre of park space⁴², and millions of dollars in additional tax revenue for the City and County of Los Angeles.⁴³ The plan for USC Plaza would have undoubtedly brought economic growth to the immediate neighborhood, most significantly and directly through providing so many needed jobs and indirectly by increasing the redevelopment area with tax increment revenue that could spur even more redevelopment.

In retrospect, the acknowledgement on the part of the CRA that the properties were to be developed for commercial purposes is very important to understanding the problematic nature of USC's subsequent acquisition of the property for its campus events center (the Galen Center). The site was never intended to become a tax-exempt project, which it became when USC identified it as the location for the Galen Center. The change from for-profit development to a non-profit one was very subtle.

Towards the end of 1990, persistent unfavorable market conditions caused FCA to delay the development of USC Plaza. In order to reduce operating costs until the

⁴⁰ Willis, Leroy. Memorandum from Willis to John Tuite and Robert Tague. 5 May 1988.

⁴¹ Final Environmental Impact Report. USC Plaza Development. June 1990. Page 30.

⁴² Amis, James (VP of USC Real Estate Development Corporation). Memorandum to Andy Altman (Research Associate for Mayors Office). 16 Oct. 1990.

⁴³ Tuite, John (CRA Administrator). Memorandum to Agency Commissioners. 17 July 1990. Attachment A, pages 4-5.

development could begin, FCA proposed leasing portions of the site to USC for use as a parking lot in 1991⁴⁴. USC's lease specified the use of the lot for academic purposes, thereby qualifying it for tax exemption due to its relation to serving the University's mission, resulting in a 100 percent tax exemption for fiscal years 1992 through 1995.⁴⁵ The CRA reported a loss of an estimated \$390,000 in tax increment for 1992 and 1993 alone (only half of the initial period of exemption).⁴⁶ Following the four-year lease, when market conditions had still not improved enough to commence development, FCA proposed the sale of parcels M-4 and M-5 to USC and additionally suggested that the CRA sell parcel M-3C to the university as well. The CRA agreed under the condition that they implement a "tax increment replacement plan" which required FCA to pay back "an amount equal to the portion of the real property tax from the Fee Property [M-4 and M-5] which would have been allocated to the Agency as its increment had Participant not sold the Fee Property to USC," plus five percent interest, upon complete, sale, or refinancing of the development.⁴⁷ This condition grew out of the fact that FCA had been leasing the land to USC and thereby eliminating that land as a source for property tax revenue.

For parcel M-3C, the CRA calculated that it would lose \$250,000 in tax increment revenue annually with the transfer of ownership from a for-profit developer to a non-profit entity. In order to mitigate this anticipated loss, the CRA proposed to finance the purchase of parcel M-3C at an adjustable interest rate over a 20-year period, thus

⁴⁴ Trimble, Gerald (President USC-REDC). Letter to Oscar Jaregui (CRA Project Manager). 30 July, 1991.

⁴⁵ Official Statement, The Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles, California, Hoover Redevelopment Project Tax Allocation Bonds, Series D (Federally Taxable). 15 April, 1996. Appendix E, page H-3.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Second Implementation Agreement to Owner Participation Agreement, FCA USC Plaza Parcels M-3C, M-4, and M-5 Hoover Redevelopment Project. 31 May 1994. page 7.

recapturing the lost tax increment revenue through the interest of the loan. USC agreed, but in 1996, the university paid off the principal on the \$2,136,578 loan, thus eliminating the tax increment revenue to the CRA.⁴⁸ The CRA's decisions were consistent over the course of the two decades when the parcels seemed in limbo and it remains clear whether those decisions were purposeful or not.

Beyond the unclear nature of the actions taken over time by the CRA to allow parcels intended for for-profit development to be acquired by USC, it seems that the CRA held FCA to standards that were not of the same caliber that other developers have been held. The HCHDC had completed two thirds of its development (the Radisson Hotel, at the time called the Crowne Plaza Hotel, and the University Gardens office building) and only asked for an extension when unfavorable market forces halted the development of the final phase. The CRA granted a two-year extension in order to research and determine the best and highest use of parcel M-3C. When HCHDC submitted a new proposal to build a commercial mall on the remaining undeveloped property⁴⁹, the CRA concluded that this would not be the best and highest use for the property and terminated HCHDC's Owner Participant Agreement soon after.⁵⁰ A lawsuit on behalf of the HCHDC was filed against the CRA for wrongful termination of the OPA in 1985, but the CRA repossessed the land through eminent domain in 1987.⁵¹

Interestingly, FCA had a far less successful track record relative to the HCHDC in terms of fulfilling development plans with OPAs, yet FCA received far more lenient

⁴⁸ Lorenger, Pierre (CRA Deputy Administration, Finance, Audit, and Accounting). Memorandum to Glen Cavagnaro (Associate Treasurer, USC) Re: USC Plaza Agency Loan 3872110. 2 Oct. 1996.

⁴⁹ Memorandum from the Hoover Community Hotel Redevelopment Corporation to the Community Redevelopment Agency. 24 Feb. 1984

⁵⁰ Tuite, John (CRA Administrator). Report to Agency Commissioners on the Issuance and Distribution of a Request for Proposals for Development of a Commercial Project on a Parcel M-3C, Hoover Redevelopment Project. 23 Dec. 1987.

⁵¹ Ovrom, Robert (CRA CEO). Memorandum to Agency Commissioners. 9 Oct. 2003.

treatment from the CRA. Within only one year of signing the OPA, FCA halted development for the same reasons the HCHDC had cited years earlier.⁵² Rather than terminating the OPA, however, the CRA granted three extensions (two two-year extensions and a final five year extension).⁵³ When the final five-year extension expired in 2001, the CRA and FCA had no formal arrangements for further extensions or development. The implications of the CRA's discrepancy of actions in regards to FCA and HCHDC remain unclear. One conclusion that long-time organizers and residents have drawn from the history of the CRA and USC is that the CRA had planned on turning the land over to USC during this period and therefore used the FCA to buy time until USC could accumulate enough donations to make the campus events center possible.

Whatever the intent of the CRA, however, USC could not have privately assembled the property needed to build the Galen Center without the involvement of the CRA. Through the threats of eminent domain and condemnation, two of the three parcels needed to complete the property for the development were acquired by the CRA. The involvement of city officials was key to the change of ownership and therefore the CRA actually assisted in the removal of parcels M-3C, M-4, and M-5 from the tax rolls. This was not the original intention in the agreement between the CRA and FCA, since the properties were at first only temporarily turned over to USC to decrease the holding costs for the developer. In 1996, however, the steps taken to ensure that tax increment revenue lost would be recovered were terminated.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

The questionable acquisition of the property for the Galen Center is illustrative of USC's lack of community accountability in regards to development. This has been a continuous issue since USC's founding and has repeatedly presented problems in the relationship between the surrounding community and the institution. Colleges and universities located in urban areas have a unique problem: they are severely limited in their ability to expand their physical borders. The lack of undeveloped space upon which to extend the campus causes a two-sided tension. On the one hand, it is difficult for the university to pick up its entire campus and move to a location that is more conducive to development, and therefore the university must constantly explore all options allowing it to expand. On the other hand, the host community must struggle with its desire for the resources and economic activity brought in by the university and its distaste for feeling imposed or infringed upon.

In the case of the USC, in the 1960s, there was talk of moving the campus out of South Central Los Angeles. This threat was not an empty one; Pepperdine University was in the process of relocating to a new campus in Malibu, California after spending thirty years in South Central⁵⁴. In response to the threat of losing another academic institution, the CRA established the Hoover Redevelopment Project in 1966. The initial Hoover Plan facilitated USC in expanding its campus from the bounds of McClintock Avenue, 34th Street, Exposition Boulevard and Figueroa Street to Vermont Avenue, Jefferson Boulevard, Exposition Boulevard, and Figueroa Street by calling for the demolition of hundreds of housing units and private businesses in the area to the north and west of the original campus.

⁵⁴ "About Pepperdine." 24 Mar 2004. <http://www.pepperdine.edu/main/content/aboutPepperdine.htm>

As in all cases of displacement and gentrification, the emotions are often dramatic and deeply felt, causing a lasting negative dynamic for the relationship. In the situation of USC and the Hoover Plan, thousands of individuals, primarily African American families, were forced to relocate. The stress and mistrust this places on the families residing close to the campus compounds the already existing town-gown tensions. In addition, the Hoover Plan included the construction of University Village, a commercial center meant for the relocation of businesses in the community. However, the development was delayed for four years and many of those companies went out of business. Since the initial expansion of the campus, the conflict over displacement of community members, especially local businesses, continues. The university has purchased numerous other properties in the area immediately surrounding the campus, including the University Village, which eliminated it as a possible site for local commercial growth.⁵⁵ To date, the university owns at least 100 properties outside of the campus borders, a number that continues to grow.⁵⁶

A main problem behind tensions created by USC development and expansion is the lack of a master plan available to the public. Community organizations and residents have repeatedly asked USC to make their master plan for off-campus development and expansion public. Every time they receive the same response: that USC has no such plan.⁵⁷ In fact, USC does not even make its on-campus master plan available for the public, although it does from time to time release information on scheduled developments

⁵⁵ DataQuick PropertyFinder. <http://ww3.dataquick.com/>

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Remark by Thomas Moran at meeting with Coalition for a Responsible USC. 29 Jan. 1999.

(but this is neither on a regular basis nor for every property.)⁵⁸ As Robert K. Lewis points out in the Chronicle of Higher Education, “many college campuses [are] run like medieval fiefdoms when it [comes] to planning and project design. A small number of senior officials, working with physical-plant managers and consultants, [direct] the process. Meaningful input from the people who [are] directly affected [is] often minimal.”⁵⁹ Lewis sees campus planning as often occurring behind closed doors, which is detrimental to the campus-community relationship because development on either side affects both. Whereas other colleges and universities are required to submit their campus master plans on a regular basis to the city council or zoning boards, USC remains completely unaccountable, and, as illustrated above, it has the added advantage of a close relationship with key city officials.

Without an official plan released by the university, community organizations must look to any source that can provide insight into development plans in order to fully



Three dimensional projection of the University Park Campus showing long range building development possibilities.

understand the community’s future. Research has shown that USC has in fact contracted out the work of creating a master plan, but this does not indicate that the University has adopted the plan. An architectural firm in Boston, Michael Dennis and Associates (MDA), developed the “University Park Master Plan” for

⁵⁸ Payton, Melissa. “Bold New construction Plan is Launched; the Face of USC Campus will Change.” USC Chronicle. 21 Feb. 2000.

⁵⁹ Lewis, Robert. “Bricks, Mortar, and Vision: A Guide for Campus Planning.” The Chronicle of Higher Education: Campus Architecture. 26 Mar. 2004.

USC. As stated on the MDA website, “The secondary goal is to extend the study area to the perimeter of the USC to identify campus edge opportunities including parking, and to assess physical growth strategies outside of the USC boundary.”⁶⁰ The existence of a study authorized by the university is a clear indication of the university’s intentions to continue to develop and expand into the surrounding neighborhood. Unfortunately, if the University continues its developments in the same nature as that of the Galen Center, the community will remain on the defensive. Only when families and businesses receive eviction notices and offers for their property will they have any idea that their property may be next.

The Galen Center illustrates the effect that development and expansion on the part of the University can have when clear lines of communication do not exist between the campus and the community. Residents of South Central have been waiting in vain for the parking lot at the corner of Figueroa Street and Jefferson Boulevard to be transformed into USC Plaza, an opportunity for jobs and an injection of economic activity into the area. Although residents were not displaced for the Galen Center, since the parcels had been used for commercial purposes prior to the new development, the long history of actions on the part of USC that have not kept the community’s needs in mind greatly influenced the feelings evoked by the announcement of the Galen Center. Part of this is probably due to the contrast between the promise of a commercial center and the Galen Center. USC Plaza was projected to bring in 2700 permanent jobs⁶¹ to the area with a specific local hiring policy that would ensure that the majority of those jobs would go to neighborhood residents. According to Carolyn Webb de Macias, USC Vice President of

⁶⁰ “The University of Southern California.”
<http://www.michaeldennis.com/pages/3rd%20level/projects/usc.html>.

⁶¹ Final Environmental Impact Report. USC Plaza Development. June 1990. Page 30.

External Relations, the Galen Center would provide 174 full-time union jobs once the center is complete, resulting in only 6% of the number of jobs identified by the USC Plaza Development. The difference between the numbers of jobs is substantial enough to outrage almost anyone struggling through the current employment slump.

In addition to the major decrease in employment opportunity due to the change in development itself, there is also the question of the effect it will have on the Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, located in Exposition Park, which neighbors the campus and where the USC Trojan basketball teams currently play their home games. While the USC lawyers from Latham and Watkins argue “The Galen Center will be entirely privately financed . . . to create a potent economic engine that generate new revenue for both City and Agency coffers,”⁶² it is also the case that the games and events that formerly took place at the LA Memorial Sports Arena were simply moving to a new site less than a mile away. Sports arenas in general are seldom viewed as a strong economic investment for a community.⁶³ They cost a lot to construct and maintain and bring in a relatively small income. This is a general argument for arenas and stadiums built by cities, though, because a city dedicating a large portion of its budget to a sports arena is spending taxpayer money, while the Galen Center is privately funded. The argument, however, is not that the center would negatively impact USC (which will in fact profit from the center), rather the Galen Center will significantly decrease the revenue brought in from games and events held at the LA Memorial Sports Arena. Thus, it is the City of L.A. that will suffer from the transfer of economic activity from a city-owned site to one privately owned. Besides the LA Memorial Sports Arena, the newly constructed Staples Center,

⁶² Starett, Lucinda (Latham and Watkins). Letter to CRA from Latham and Watkins re: USC Galen Center: Additional Response. 10 Nov. 2003.

⁶³ Noll, Roger. “Wild Pitch.” The New York Times. 11 Apr. 1996.

another special events arena, is also within one mile of the USC campus, making the Galen Center rather superfluous.

It seems that the university, rather than build a new sports and special events arena, could have focused on development projects that could truly benefit a greater portion of the student body and the community as a whole. The fact is that the University had been planning and fundraising for the campus special events center since Steven Sample became President.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, USC administrators tend to overlook the tensions between the campus and the community as they continually disregard neighborhood pleas. As illustrated earlier, the campus is in great need of additional student housing, especially for undergraduates in their third and fourth years.

Administrators, however, have focused instead on raising money for big-name projects like sports arenas, which will have the effect of attracting more attention to the successful fund-raising arenas such as sports, than on projects that can improve the lives of students and neighborhood residents. USC administrators are simply too wrapped up in their own world on campus to see the bigger picture. For example, Webb de Macias, when asked how she viewed the town-gown relationship, stated that “we are not separate from the community; we are the community.”⁶⁵ This extremely narrow vision of the community and rather elitist stance is symbolic of USC actions in regards to real community needs.

USC administrators will argue that the university does in fact have a wide array of service-learning programs and investments in the community. The USC website boasts over three hundred of programs that place university students into volunteer positions around the community, partner USC academic departments with community groups to

⁶⁴ <http://usctrojans.ocsn.com/support-groups/gift-opps.html>

⁶⁵ Phone interview with Carolyn Webb de Macias, March 17, 2004

provide tutors and mentors in different disciplines, and support programs to increase safety in the community for both students and neighborhood residents. The community programs, directed through the Civic and Community Relations (CCR) office, include the Educational Opportunity Programs Center, Family of Schools, Joint Educational Project, Kid Watch, Local Vendor Program, National Youth Sports Program, Neighborhood Academic Initiative, neighborhood Watch, School for Early Childhood Education, and Troy Camp.⁶⁶ However, the majority of these programs are educational outreach programs. Only one significantly contributes to the economic well being of the community, the Local Vendors Program, through which the university officially agrees to support an identified local vendor with business. CCR also operates the West Los Angeles County Minority Business Development Center, a program that offers access to capitol resources, consulting services, market access, and business training for minority businesses. Overall, the none of the programs can compare to those created and administered at other schools in light of the interest nationwide in improving town-gown relations through community engagement and investment in planning and resource sharing.

The University of Southern California is undeniably a strong institution in the region. There is certainly no question about that. The plea from a neighborhood perspective, however, is that the campus gives some focus to those most affected by the university's presence – the residents of South Los Angeles. Instead of attracting prospective students with numbers and examples for opportunity that place USC in the

⁶⁶ “Highlighted Community Programs.” USC Neighborhoods – Community Building. 4 Nov. 2003. <http://www.usc.edu/neighborhoods/community/highlighted/>

context of the City of Los Angeles as a whole, the university could benefit from investing more in the local neighborhoods and acknowledging South Los Angeles as its home.

Chapter 4

Neighborhood Response

In response to the announcement of USC's intention to build the Galen Center, the Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice (FCCEJ) formed a special group to focus on the campus-community issues involving USC. Groups outside of FCCEJ, including activist students from USC, joined the focus group, named the Coalition for a Responsible USC. The Coalition represents various local churches, the Neighborhood Council, Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, SEIU Local 1877, HERE, and others. As an umbrella group representing the various specific and general collective concerns held by neighborhood residents, it is no wonder that the official unveiling of plans for the Galen Center spurred immediate response. On February 17, 2000, just months after the Los Angeles Times and the Daily News published reports on USC's plans, the Coalition officially petitioned the CRA to hold USC accountable for the proposed use of the site.⁶⁷ Because of the tumultuous short-term history of the site- originating with the plans for USC Plaza followed by a series of development extensions- the Coalition decided that it was time to formally file an objection to USC's plan.

Part of the source of the strong reaction was the fact that USC had never officially informed the CRA of its intentions to build a special events arena despite repeated announcements appearing in USC press and news sources on the progress and development of plans. The Coalition stated that this, in conjunction with the significant reduction or elimination of community benefit from the project, caused them to publicly

⁶⁷ Srinivas, Shefali. "CRA Says 'Not so Fast' to USC's Arena Plans." Daily Trojan. April 2000.

announce their objection to the new plan.⁶⁸ It seems that the source of the objection stemmed more from USC's general attitude toward its role in the campus-community relationship rather than to the specifics of the Galen Center development.

Though the visibility of the Coalition increased in 2000 due to its efforts specifically in relation to the Galen Center, it had been actively working towards making USC more accountable to the community in other areas as well. For example, the Coalition spent years supporting over 350 food and service employees of USC during their contract negotiations with the University. In 1999, the contracts (which ensured medical and dental coverage for employees and their families) were finally signed. The various points of tension between local community members and the University – expansion that encroaches on neighborhoods, disregard for the unintended effect on the housing market, unfair treatment of employees – have raised questions about USC's involvement in the community. Long-time residents such as Pastor Brian Ecklund and Paulina Gonzalez believe that the University is preoccupied with image and operates without regard to the reality. "I appreciate USC's community outreach programs like Kid Watch and Joint Educational Project. USC also gets a lot of mileage from these programs and they are duly publicized. But, I still get the sense that the University is doing things for and to the community and not with the community. USC was even recognized for its community work," stated Ecklund.

He refers to the fact that USC appears to operate in a bubble in which the community's actual needs do not matter. Gonzalez, a Coalition member who represents the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union Local 11 echoes Ecklund's sentiments. She points out that a main factor to the disenfranchised University is its way

⁶⁸ Ibid.

of evaluating community concerns. The University's main method of identifying community concerns is through the Community Advisory Committee. According to Gonzalez, "USC undermines genuine community groups by only recognizing the Community Advisory Council, whose members are hand-picked by the USC President."

The objection from the Coalition prompted USC to invite local residents onto the Community Advisory Council, but Ecklund and Gonzalez both feel that this was just another attempt by USC to "do some public community outreach".⁶⁹ After the Coalition made its initial objection to the Galen Center in 2000, it made a concerted effort to stall the progress of the development by raising important questions with the CRA, City Council, and USC administrators. One of the main ways the Coalition attempted to halt USC's acquisition of the site was to call for a Community Impact Report. This would include concrete data on wages, working conditions, housing, immigration, privatization and urban pollution specifically in the context of the local neighborhoods. While some of this information is already contained in the Environmental Impact Report already required of the developers, a CIR gives more specific information on how the development will change the lives of residents from its economic and social aspects. An editorial in the Los Angeles Times slammed the attempt at asking for a CIR and asserted, "The idea of a community impact report is a bad one. Politically savvy builders already work with local residents to build support."⁷⁰ The reality of the opinions expressed at least by members of the Coalition and their representatives, however, does not support the latter assertion.

⁶⁹ Paulina Gonzalez interview Feb. 2004

⁷⁰ "How to Scare Off Builders." Los Angeles Times. October 27, 2003

In a lecture given by Madeline Janis-Aparicio, who serves as executive director and organizer of the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy and who was recently chosen to join the Community Redevelopment Agency Board, Janis-Aparicio outlined the different aspects of grassroots campaigns that make them successful. This type of campaign is called a comprehensive campaign and incorporates seven key components: coalition building, worker committee, research, media plan, legal strategy, advocacy strategy, and money. Briefly applying this structure to the approach taken by the Coalition in regards to the Galen Center allows for the evaluation of the effectiveness of that approach and a deeper understanding of the outcome as it stands today.

The first component, to build a coalition, was the first step taken by community leaders. The Coalition for a Responsible USC was already in existence and represented people from four key areas: the labor movement, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, and academics (students). The only area not represented was that of forward-looking business people. With a relatively strong, broad coalition in place, the next step was to form a worker committee, which in the case of the Galen Center was called the USC Working Group. As Janis-Aparicio described this component, she emphasized the importance of the committee consisting of the low-income people affected by the problem. The USC Working Group tended to be more representative of the leaders of different organization who may or may not fall into that category.

The third component of research was very dominant for the Coalition. A large, diverse group including students from USC and elsewhere, researchers from the non-profit Bay Area Data Center, and lawyers from the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA) conducted in-depth research on everything from USC's tax and fee payments

to property holdings to alternative campus-community examples. Through this effort, the Coalition was armed with a plethora of information that allowed it to make well-informed, relevant arguments to the City Council and CRA.

The remaining four areas of the comprehensive campaign (media plan, legal strategy, advocacy strategy, money), however, were perhaps the components that lead to a less successful outcome in the campaign against the Galen Center than was originally hoped for by the Coalition. First, the media plan was not very well developed because the main local media source, the Los Angeles Times, has a close relationship with USC, according to Coalition organizers. In fact, the editorial published in the LA Times on October 27, 2003, “How to Scare Off Builders”, condemned the Coalitions efforts at preventing the approval of the change of ownership by the CRA. Coalition members Gilda Haas and Sandra McNeill reported that their attempts at contributing their own opinion piece, in conjunction with LA Times staff writers that have previously promoted printing progressive pieces, were unsuccessful. The media plan was severely under-developed because it only attempted to utilize the LA Times.

The legal strategy, though explored, proved not to be a viable component for causing significant change for the issue. Fellows from LAFLA researched property and tax laws and how they applied to USC in hopes of finding something that would show that USC had not been in compliance. According to Ben Beach, a LAFLA fellow, the only legal hook that might possibly exist was the fact that USC had no plans that indicated that the property held by the University for which no taxes had been paid were intended for use in meeting the University’s mission. Federal laws regarding property taxes for non-profits indicate that if a property is vacant, plans that indicate the intent of

use for the mission of that non-profit must exist. Because the University held nine properties at the time the research was conducted that were vacant, and corresponding plans could not be accessed, there was a small hope that this could be used against USC. Unfortunately, Beach's further inquiries on the matter through the tax assessor resulted in the abandonment of pursuit of this issue.

The advocacy strategy, which required a power analysis of the decision makers and development of strategies to influence them, in this case City Council and CRA members, was also relatively minimal. Connections to City Council members Ed Reyes, Bernard Parks, and Jan Perry were explored, but ultimately the Coalition decided that it was more effective to try to convince the decision makers to vote against the Galen Center by addressing them collectively and presenting all of the related information. Perhaps this decision came from negative encounters with council member Jan Perry, who told Coalition members outright that she was 100% supportive of the project and would not reconsider her position.

Lastly, the component of money was a topic that was never really raised in the Coalition. Each member organization committed some portion of resources to fighting for a more responsible USC, but there was no single budget for the Coalition to work with. Money often is the deciding factor in the success or failure of any type of campaign, which is perhaps also the case for this one. Janis-Aparicio, as arguably the only truly progressive member of the CRA Board, might say that the Coalition's comprehensive strategy was good overall but that the problem with the campaign in general was that the original goal of blocking the Galen Center development was an unrealistic, unattainable one. Whatever the assessment of the campaign may be, the

dialogue that has resulted from the campaign after the Coalition agreed to formally back down is a sign that although specific campaign losses are difficult and disheartening, they can in fact lead to greater things.

Section III: Examples of Contrasting Campus-Community Relationships

Introduction

Universities and colleges nationwide constantly look to each other for ideas on virtually any aspect of maintaining a positive learning environment. From models of student government to new academic initiatives, institutions of higher education regularly evaluate their current programs and look to what other campuses are doing in order to generate informed changes to the current programs. Because academia is an aspect of the world that is constantly in motion, it is no wonder that colleges and universities strive to keep up with the new concepts in higher education. It is with this same trend of comparison to other institutions that a brief overview of the programs instituted by various colleges and universities to ease campus-community tensions and serve to build stronger positive relations is necessary.

The following examples are given to provide some insight into what is going on elsewhere in the nation, but are not intended to be used as direct models for the case of USC. Instead, the *general* ideas highlighted by the programs will be extracted and analyzed for their possible application to the University of Southern California. Harvard University's efforts for affordable housing, Princeton University's payment in lieu of taxes, Columbia University's development of transparent planning, and Trinity College's community investments in an array of areas are each specific programs that in general help prioritize the campus-community relationships by addressing community-specific problems. The case of George Washington University, in contrast, offers different lessons, where the consequences of resisting engagement with the community lead to harsh mandates and heightened tension. Given these examples, it becomes apparent that there are creative, innovative ways of addressing sources of tension between universities and their communities.

Chapter 5

Harvard University: Affordable Housing Investment Due to Community Pressure in Cambridge, Massachusetts

Harvard University, one of the world's most prestigious private research universities, has been in the forefront in countless academic areas. The attitude of such a prestigious institution can be dangerous. Harvard certainly has not been an ideal cornerstone in the community since its founding, evidenced, for example, by labor disputes that led to a student take-over of the administration building.⁷¹ The past five years on Harvard's community front have seen dramatic changes that have permanently altered the relations of power in Cambridge, Massachusetts, home to the University. Thus, beyond its academic recognition, Harvard has also come to be recognized for its approach to town-gown relations

Specifically in response to a tight housing market in Boston and Cambridge, which was pricing the working class out of housing, Harvard instituted two programs: Harvard 20/20/2000 and a negotiation struck between Cambridge residents from the Riverside neighborhood and the University to settle a conflict over zoning regulations. Both programs have increased Harvard's contribution to its host-community and helped alleviate the issues surrounding affordable and student housing.

The 20/20/2000 initiative was established in November of 1999 in direct response to the scarcity of affordable housing in the area, specifically Cambridge and Boston.⁷² It consists of three distinct programs that attempt to alleviate the affordable housing issue in

⁷¹ Kelman, Steven. "Push comes to shove; the escalation of student protest." Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1970

⁷² "Harvard to Establish Affordable Housing Partnerships." *The Harvard University Gazette*. 11 Nov. 1999. 4 Sept. 2003. <http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/1999.11.11/press.html>

the form of fiscal resources and research support. The main focus of the initiative features a \$20 million low-interest capital loan fund for non-profit organizations in Boston and Cambridge (each of which received \$10 million for distribution through housing intermediaries). The funds are intended for use by the non-profits in their efforts to create and preserve housing for low- and middle-income residents of the area.⁷³

The second program of the initiative, called the Housing Innovation and Policy program (HIP), provides a \$1 million fund for one-time grant awards to non-profit organizations that have “a successful track record of developing new approaches and innovative solutions to the affordable housing crisis.”⁷⁴ The first two recipients of portions of this fund were the City Housing and Planning Associates and the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations.

The initiative’s research support program, called the Harvard Housing Advisory Committee (HHAC), brings together a diverse group of faculty and staff members from Harvard’s graduate schools and various administrative departments. The HHAC is tasked with commissioning research and policy analyses in order to provide valuable information to the non-profit recipients of awards from the two funds from the 20/20/2000 initiative.⁷⁵ The main goal of the advisory group is to gain an understanding of the key financial, political, policy, and community issues challenging the production of local affordable housing.

The 20/20/2000 initiative has received positive support from local community members, exemplified by a statement made by Eva Clark, president of the Boston Community Loan Fund. Clark asserted, “There is a challenge and a model for other

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

universities and institutions in the community . . . Today Harvard has set a new standard for community responsibility.”⁷⁶

The more recent event that has furthered shaped Harvard’s role in the community was the landmark agreement between Harvard and the Cambridge City Council concerning the University’s development and expansion into the Riverside neighborhood. The three-year conflict finally came to a close on October 27, 2003 when both parties agreed to specific terms.⁷⁷ In 2000, Harvard submitted plans to build a modern art museum on a piece of property it had acquired in the Riverside neighborhood, spurring residents to mobilize in protest that resulted in a building moratorium.⁷⁸ A drawn out battle over zoning regulations, involving two petitions and countless meetings among stakeholders, ended with an agreement that redefined Harvard’s responsibility to the community in a fundamental way.

The agreement instituted new zoning regulations that would allow Harvard to construct buildings tall enough to meet the University’s goals of increasing housing for its graduate students and faculty, among others. In exchange, the university came up with a neighborhood benefits package consisting of a 34,000 square-foot public park along the river, \$50,000 in donations to community organizations, and an affordable housing development boasting 30-34 units. The contribution to the affordable housing stock in Cambridge is possibly the most significant aspect of the benefits package, especially because it further highlights Harvard’s recognition of its effect on the housing

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Rubin-Wills, Jessica. “Harvard Strikes Historic Deal on Riverside.” The Harvard Crimson Online Edition. 28 Oct. 2003. 6 Nov. 2003. <http://www.thecrimson.com/printerfriendly.aspx?ref=349639>.

⁷⁸ Rubin-Wills, Jessica. “Neighbors Tired of Living in Harvard’s Shadow.” The Harvard Crimson Online Edition. 20 Oct. 2003. 6 Nov. 2003. <http://www.thecrimson.com/printerfriendly.aspx?ref=349465>

market in the area.⁷⁹ The Cambridge City Council, whose nine councilors were up for reelection shortly after the vote, unanimously voted in favor of the agreement.⁸⁰

Both the Harvard 20/20/2000 Initiative and the Riverside deal exemplify ways in which a private university can meaningfully contribute to its host community. Although not located in a mega-city that compares to USC in Los Angeles, the focus is on the local community, in this case Cambridge, Massachusetts, with a population of about 101,355. Of this population, 68% is white, 12% is African American, 12% is Asian, and 8% is Hispanic or Latino.⁸¹ The housing stock in Cambridge compares to that of South Los Angeles in that the majority of residents are renters, and the median cost per month of renting a unit is above the average metro area cost. Nearly 65% of Cambridge housing units are renter-occupied (the Hoover Redevelopment area residents are 83% renters) and the median cost is over 300 dollars higher than the state as a whole.⁸² Harvard representatives repeatedly acknowledge in press releases that the University's presence has had an effect on the state of the housing market in Cambridge and thus their community outreach programs speak to that accepted responsibility.

According to Bill Cavelini, a volunteer at the community organization Cambridge Eviction Free Zone, Harvard has certainly changed its position in the housing issues as compared to a decade ago. The University, prior to the elimination of rent control in Cambridge, took little responsibility to ease the housing crunch for both off-campus students and neighborhood residents. The political force behind the changes commenced

⁷⁹ Rubin-Wills, Jessica. "Harvard Strikes Historic Deal on Riverside." *The Harvard Crimson Online Edition*. 28 Oct. 2003. 6 Nov. 2003. <http://www.thecrimson.com/printerfriendly.aspx?ref=349639>.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ "Cambridge, Massachusetts." Population Overview. 19 Jan. 2004. <http://www.epodunk.com/cgi-bin/popInfo.php?locIndex=2894>

⁸² "Cambridge, Massachusetts." Housing. 19 Jan. 2004. <http://www.epodunk.com/cgi-bin/housOverview.php?locIndex=2894>

when community residents organized themselves and worked for a concise, strategic voicing of their needs. For activists working for an eviction free environment for long-time residents who rent, Harvard's contributions to affordable housing are very positive, and they feel that the University will be open to a continuing dialogue related to the diverse neighborhood's vital needs.

In the Riverside deal, the interference of the neighborhood council through two petitions and thereafter the City Council certainly influenced Harvard's decision to make concessions that benefited the neighborhood. The University could have simply complied with the amended zoning regulations as requested by the Riverside Neighborhood Council and changed its own plans for campus expansion in light of those regulations. The distinguishing factor in this case is that there was an open dialogue in the town-gown relationship.

The 20/20/2000 Initiative is an extremely important example of a proactive step taken by a university to address community needs in a concrete way. USC lawyers arguing against establishing an affordable housing fund cite Harvard's sizeable endowment⁸³; the largest of any non-profit organization in the world after the Vatican.⁸⁴ Rather than focusing on the amount of money, however, USC administrators are urged to focus on the concept of creating a fund that directly addresses a prevalent problem for the immediate community. A response to the housing crunch that is proportional in terms of endowment on the part of USC that directly address community housing needs would be more appropriate. If this were the case, USC might contribute over two million dollars to

⁸³ Starett, Lucinda (Latham and Watkins). Letter to CRA from Latham and Watkins re: USC Galen Center: Additional Response. 10 Nov. 2003.

⁸⁴ McCarthy, Timothy Patrick. "A Living Wage at Harvard." *Z Mag*. 19 Jan. 2004.
<http://www.zmag.org/CrisesCurEvts/Globalism/harvmcarthy.htm>

affordable housing development in South Los Angeles. USC lawyers and administrators constantly refer to the community in the context of campus-community relations as the city of Los Angeles; the challenge is to shift the context to the local neighborhoods the university directly impacts.

Chapter 6

Princeton University: Recognition of Financial Obligation to the Neighborhood

Princeton University, located in Princeton, New Jersey, is yet another prestigious Ivy League School which has helped to redefine the role of a private institution of higher education in a small, relatively affluent community. Part of the allure of the area surrounding the University is due to the contributions that the institution has made in the form of property taxes and other voluntary payments. Princeton administrators attribute the University's strong commitment to ensuring the economic well being of the area to the history of the town-gown relationship.

In the 18th century, when the University was founded, the town of Princeton made numerous financial and capital contributions to what was then called the College of New Jersey. In 1756, these contributions amounted to 1,000 pounds, 10 acres of land, and 2000 woodland acres for fuel.⁸⁵ These economic contributions established a pattern for an economic partnership between the University and its host-community. Once the University began to gain economic power and its endowment grew (now valued at \$8.2 billion), the relationship shifted and Princeton was able to make contributions to the community instead of vice versa.

The past decade has seen an enormous amount of growth in terms of voluntary payments, also known as Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) on the part of Princeton. The University's approximate 4000 acres in landholdings used for commercial and academic purposes are located in several central New Jersey municipalities. The

⁸⁵ Princeton University Office of Communications. "University Increases its Voluntary Annual Contribution to Princeton Borough." *Princeton News*. 4 Dec. 2002. 5 Feb. 2004. <http://www.princeton.edu/pr/news/02/q4/1204-borough.htm>.

majority of the property used for academic purposes (the University's main campus) are located in Princeton Borough and Princeton Township. In 2002, the University paid \$6.15 million of the \$7.1 million assessed in property and sewer taxes. \$4.66 million of the \$6.15 million were in property taxes alone.⁸⁶ The key point about these payments is the fact that they are entirely voluntary.

Federal and state laws exempt non-profit (501I(3)) organizations from paying property taxes and thus Princeton's payments are a major contribution to the surrounding neighborhood. Princeton's policy towards making payments in lieu of taxes stems from its decision to only remove buildings from the tax rolls when 100% of the building is used for academic purposes. The consequence of this policy is that the University continues to make full property tax payments on its housing facilities (for faculty, staff, and graduate students) and on certain athletic facilities, including Princeton Stadium.⁸⁷

In addition to its PILOTs policy, Princeton has also established a method that is beneficial to the community when it does remove a building from the tax rolls. Through this method, the University gradually phases out property tax payments over a 10-year payment rather than abruptly halting the payments from one year to the next. This method can help the municipalities affected by the decrease in tax revenue to prepare for the change in budget projections.

Princeton has long been a responsible member of its community in regards to voluntary payments in lieu of its tax-exempt status. The reasons behind this are twofold. On the one hand, Princeton's is not located in a large city; Princeton Borough only has a

⁸⁶ "Town/Gown Relations" Princeton – A Princeton Profile, 2003-04. 5 Feb. 2004.
<http://www.princeton.edu/pr/facts/profile/03/31.htm>.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

population of just less than 15,000 residents, the majority of whom are Caucasian.⁸⁸

Because the University makes up such a large percentage of the population, Princeton is modeled more after the “Olmsted-inspired, bucolic academic environments in rural settings, intentionally divorced from the distractions of urban life,”⁸⁹ than after the dense urban campuses that interface with the neighborhood in which they are located. Beyond the community demographics, Princeton also has a large endowment, which allows it to spend more of its money in areas where universities with tight budgets would have a hard time keeping up.

While Princeton may not compare in demographics, the key to this example is the University’s recognition of the important role it serves as a community resource, not only to the town of Princeton, but to all the towns in the County. Princeton’s annual PILOT ensures that services funded by property taxes in New Jersey (including the police department, fire department, street maintenance, sewer infrastructure and maintenance, and public schools) will continue to rely on those additional revenues. Princeton’s decision to pay property taxes on all properties not used solely for academic purposes should serve as a model for schools whose budgets could allow for that type of community reimbursement. According to a Princeton administrator involved with the decisions made in regards to keeping properties on the tax rolls, the PILOT policy illustrates the University’s recognition of the tax law as being beneficial to those who need the exemption but an unnecessary perk for those organizations whose financial situation is not as tight.

⁸⁸ “Princeton, New Jersey.” Population Overview. 19 Jan. 2004. <http://www.epodunk.com/cgi-bin/popInfo.php?locIndex=18361>

⁸⁹ Lewis, Robert. “Bricks, Mortar, and Vision: A Guide for Campus Planning.” The Chronicle of Higher Education: Campus Architecture. 26 Mar. 2004.

PILOTs are generally a recognized and accepted way throughout the nation to make up for the potentially negative impacts a college or university may have in its community. They often arise because of pleas from local governing bodies, such as the city council, zoning board, or even state governments. The benefit for both parties, the municipality and the university, brought about by PILOT programs, is great. In most cases, it is a formal, contractual agreement that ensures that the municipality can rely on a steady source of revenue while on the other hand, the university can be sure that it may continue to utilize public services and space. When there is a perceived imbalance in the amount of resources a university uses in relation to how much they contribute financially, “cities [become] increasingly aggressive about seeking tax dollars from university and college property that generates revenue for the institutions. A growing amount of tax-exempt property is eroding the tax base in many cities, officials say.”⁹⁰

Princeton exemplifies a case where the institution over-compensates for its tax-exemptions by making generous payments in lieu of taxes. USC, on the other hand, holds property assessed at just over one billion dollars, of which \$929 million worth of property is exempted. It is forced to pay roughly \$125,000 in taxes on its assessed property value due to properties owned by USC but deemed not essential to the educational mission of the University. In contrast, Princeton pays 87% of its assessed property taxes and fees. In order to compare to Princeton, USC should be paying at least \$1.5 million in property taxes, and still less than one percent of its endowment. The main point to take away from PILOTs for private colleges and universities is that just because

⁹⁰ “Cities Challenging University Tax Status.” CNN.com. 17 Mar. 2004. 04 Apr. 2004. <http://www.cnn.com/2004/EDUCATION/03/16/taxing.universities.ap/>

the tax code exempts an institution from paying property taxes does not mean that it erases the moral obligation to the community, which cannot be measured in dollars.

Chapter 7

Columbia University: The Value of Transparent Planning

In a town-gown situation similar to USC's is Columbia University, a large, private, research university whose main campus is located in the Morningside Heights Neighborhood in Manhattan in New York, New York. The similarities with the USC situation are noteworthy. Morningside Heights is located at the north end of Manhattan just below Harlem; a well-known, historically significant African American community that also has a growing Latino population to the east. Similar to the Hoover Redevelopment Project that seeks to renew South Los Angeles around USC, Morningside Heights was part of the federally funded Empowerment Zone in Harlem.⁹¹ The University also has a Health Sciences Campus, Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory, and the Nevis Laboratories, all located in various parts of the state of New York.

Total student enrollment at Columbia in the Fall of 2002 was 23, 422, and the university provides housing for 5,200 undergraduate students. Ninety percent of undergraduates and 99 percent of all first-year students live in residence halls. Columbia owns and directly manages approximately 5,700 residential units in 143 buildings in the immediate vicinity of the main campus. This housing is primarily used to house faculty, staff, and students and is managed by University Apartment Housing of the Columbia Office of Institutional Real Estate.⁹²

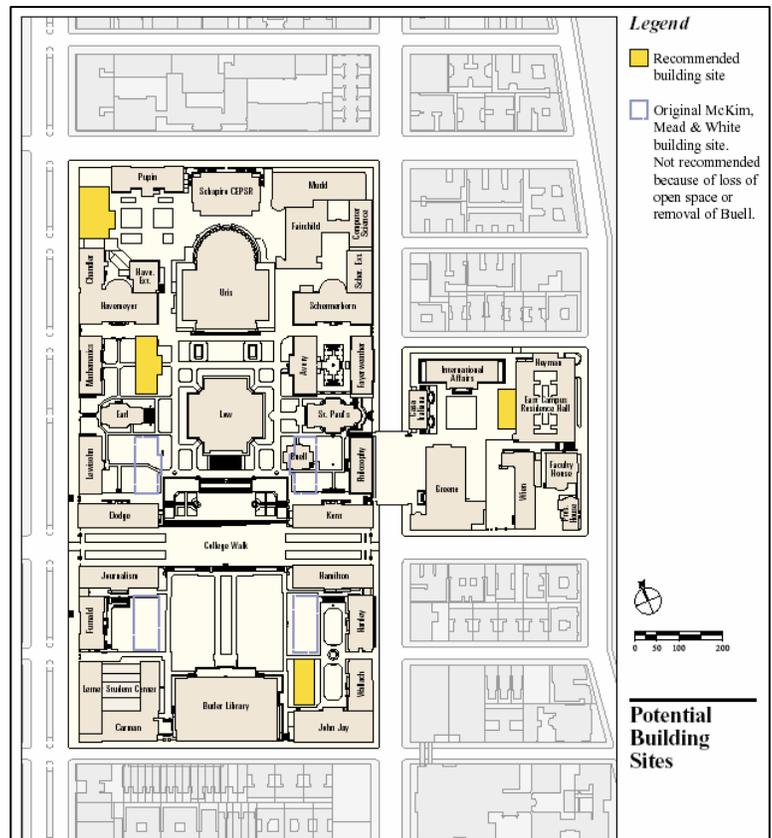
Columbia's website outlines a variety of Community Outreach Programs, many of which sound much like those listed on USC's website. Programs include Community

⁹¹ Yilma, Marda. "2003 Central Harlem/Morningside Heights HIV/AIDS Profile." Brooklyn AIDS Task Force. Dec. 2002. 21 Jan. 2004.
[http://www.taclearinghouse.org/clearinghouse/resource.nsf/0/1B9AED73192E585F87256BDF006895B5/\\$file/Central%20Harlem%202003.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.taclearinghouse.org/clearinghouse/resource.nsf/0/1B9AED73192E585F87256BDF006895B5/$file/Central%20Harlem%202003.pdf?OpenElement)

⁹² www.columbia.edu

Impact, a student volunteer program that places them in a variety of community organizations, especially those that address the need for food, clothing, shelter, and companionship. Most of the programs Columbia boasts in the community outreach area are service-learning projects. However, the University has created a significant community-based learning and service program specifically in response to concerns of its immediate neighborhood, the Columbia University-Goddard Riverside Tenant Assistance Project which “aims to protect the homes of long-term and low-income residents of Manhattan Valley.” Residents facing eviction in the immediate community surrounding Columbia may receive representation in court. The project employs Columbia Law students and graduates of the Law School through fellowships provided by Columbia’s resources.

The most important initiative associated with Columbia’s efforts to ease town-gown relations was the publication of *Columbia University in Morningside Heights: A Framework for Planning*, which was commissioned by the Office of the Executive Vice President for Administration. This 300-page conceptual guide provides direction for current and future projects and \$664 million, five-year capital construction plan and is intended to



open the lines of communication between the university and the community. The guide provides an examination of the University and Morningside Heights including Columbia's history, campus preservation, development, landscape and lighting, the history of Morningside Heights, an analysis of the neighborhood, a review of building types, recommendations for their preservation, and recommendations for potential neighborhood development.

Peter Marcuse, Professor of Urban Planning at Columbia, indicated that the plan was developed by a representative group of faculty and administrators from Columbia, architecture, preservation, planning, design, lighting, and gardening firms, as well as community leaders. The executive vice president for administration echoed this assertion: "Members of the consulting team and University administrators regularly convened with a specially-appointed Working Group, including members of the Morningside Heights community, to establish a foundation for intelligent, creative and sensitive decision-making regarding all aspects of the built and natural environments . . . *The Framework for Planning* serves as a link between the University and the community and will advise us on what we can do to preserve and enhance Morningside Heights unique character as the University develops in the years to come."⁹³ The Project Director Wendy Feuer, stated that there was an overwhelming response from the most active community members when their groups received invitations to voice their input and ideas in developing the program.⁹⁴

In addition to making expansion and development plans visible and accessible to the community, the University has also launched a website that makes current

⁹³ <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/news/00/10/futureFramework.html>

⁹⁴ Ibid.

information on Columbia construction projects and community services available to the community through “Information for Our Neighbors.”⁹⁵ A University press release states that the launch of the website is the latest in a series of efforts to foster better communication between the University and local residents and organizations. The chair of Community Board 9, George Goodwill, has found the website useful.

In terms of Columbia’s effect on the community housing market, the New York Times ran an article on November 21, 1999 which described similar problems to those in South Central. The article describes the swift rise in housing prices; some residents claim the housing prices had more than doubled in four years at that point. In 1999, the president of Community Board 9, Maritta Dunn, stated that “In the last two to three years, Columbia has been a lot more responsive to community’s needs. . . . The distrust between the community and Columbia still exists, but things are much much better.”⁹⁶

In applying this case to USC, the first point is a reiteration of the fact that USC has no public master plan. Any information pertaining to how the University makes decisions for planning is kept very private and secretive. In fact, the University’s planner Bingham Cherrie refused on numerous occasions to answer any questions related to USC’s planning process. It does not seem out of order to hold an institution with as much power to intentionally or unintentionally impact the local area accountable for its actions. Part of accountability is to make future plans transparent and accessible to anyone who wants to know what is going on, especially to those who will be directly impacted by the plans. Columbia’s planning transparency has increased the community’s access to plans.

⁹⁵ http://www.columbia.edu/cu/news/02/05/neighbors_website.html

⁹⁶ <http://www.morningside-heights.net/live.htm>

In addition, the Tenant Assistance Program exemplifies a solution to part of the town-gown tension that could be immediately instituted at USC, which includes a Law School of about 600 students. Providing a fellowship would enable a student from the law program to garner experience working within the legal system while at the same time providing an important service to the community. One of the major problems identified by community residents is that landlords are ruthless. Residents live in fear of being evicted at any given time. Free access to legal help that is designed to address commonly held concerns and questions for residents renting in the area would equal a sum far greater than the costs. The University might be even more inclined to institute this type of program because such a high percentage of its students are housed off campus and therefore also subject to being taken advantage of by landlords if they are not aware of their rights.

Chapter 8

George Washington University: Consequences of Unaccountable Growth

Located in the nation's capitol Washington D.C., George Washington University (GWU) has had an interesting and turbulent history of town-gown relations. The school is located in a dense urban setting and a population of over 23,000 enrolled students, over 10,000 of whom are undergraduates. While other college and university presidents (especially those at private institutions) have been faced with the challenge of facilitating positive campus-community relationships, GWU's Joel Trachtenberg, since his appointment to University President in 1988, has focused on campus expansion in the pursuit of attracting high caliber students.⁹⁷ The emphasis on expansion does not sit well with residents of the neighborhood home to GWU, Foggy Bottom. Their response to GWU's practice resembling eminent domain is to take the institution to court. The story of GWU and Foggy Bottom is a prime example of the negative consequences that can result from socially irresponsible colleges and universities.

The most significant court battle (out of four since 2001), is one filed by the University to overturn the city's Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) decision to place a building moratorium on GWU-owned properties until 70% of students were housed on campus.⁹⁸ The decision by the BZA stemmed from GWU's development of academic buildings on land that had been cited in the campus plan to be intended for student housing.⁹⁹ The University's lack of compliance with its own campus plan has, according to community resident and activist Elizabeth Elliott, "rendered the campus-planning

⁹⁷ Gomstyn, Alice. "Turf Wars: How Does a University Grow When its Neighbors Say 'No'?" The Chronicle of Higher Education. 21 Nov. 2003. Vol. 50, Issue 13. A23.

⁹⁸ Kingsbury, Alex. "University will not Comply with BZA Ruling." GWU Hatchet. 2 Feb. 2004.

⁹⁹ Gomstyn, Alice. "Turf Wars: How Does a University Grow When its Neighbors Say 'No'?" The Chronicle of Higher Education. 21 Nov. 2003. Vol. 50, Issue 13. A23.

process a mockery.” District zoning laws require that colleges and universities located within the District must file campus plans with the BZA and obtain its approval before they can proceed with planned developments.¹⁰⁰

In an economics primer discussing the expansion of private educational institutions in the District of Columbia, the author categorizes the two types of university expansion into surrounding neighborhoods: welcome and unwelcome. Those that fall into the former category are distinguished by the positive changes it brings to its neighborhood, which in most cases is hopelessly blighted. The expansion is often well received because of the substantial risk involved in property acquisition and rehabilitation. Author Sol Shalit cites the University of Chicago’s projects as examples of expansion falling into this category. Conversely, universities located in communities that are well functioning and stable are more likely to fall into the latter category. GWU tends to fall more into this category because of the nature of its host neighborhood. USC represents a third category, located in a poor neighborhood with unwelcoming neighbors.

The tenuous town-gown relationship that has in recent years exploded into an almost hostile one is a result of irresponsible community engagement and unaccountability on the part of the University. Michael Thomas, President of the Foggy Bottom Association, an organization of long-time residents of the area, described the history of relations between residents and GWU students, staff, faculty, and administrators as being very tumultuous in part because of the planning process imposed by the BZA which ultimately does not ensure the protection of neighborhoods near college campuses. He is concerned that the current lawsuits and GWU’s disregard of the

¹⁰⁰ Shalit, Sol. “Growth and Expansion of Private Universities in the District of Columbia: The Case of George Washington University.” June 2001. 3 Feb. 2004. <http://www.foxhall.org/campus/Primer.htm>.

requirement that it house 70% of students enrolled before continuing with other developments will unravel the planning process, flawed as it is.

The GWU relationship to the Foggy Bottom community indicates that colleges and universities, if they act as if they are isolated, separate entities from the surrounding neighborhood, will likely be challenged and forced to see the reality if neighborhood groups are able to mobilize effectively. Large institutions with non-profit status might be inclined to operate under the assumption that rules and regulations do not apply to them. Under the leadership of Trachtenberg, GWU has effectively built a wall between itself and the community by being so adamantly opposed to local laws and decisions.

Applying this situation to USC, one might compare Steven Sample's goals for fundraising and focus on community outreach projects that are no more than public relations stunts to Trachtenberg's disregard for community complaints in favor of campus improvements to attract students. For reasons similar to the problematic nature of GWU's disregard for the BZA's ruling, USC's choice to acquire and develop the property intended for development to increase the area's tax revenue increment is similarly discomfoting. In future projects, it would behoove USC to evaluate the entire context of development projects before deciding to move forward.

Chapter 9

Trinity College: Re-Envisioning Hartford, Connecticut

The city of Hartford, Connecticut is home to over 120,000 residents, the majority of whom are minorities (38% African American and 40% Latino residents).¹⁰¹ It has certainly had its hardships facing unemployment rates well above the national levels, high levels of high-school dropouts, and alarming reports of violence and criminal activity. It is also home to Trinity College, a small, private, liberal arts college that has become the poster child for positive town-gown relations. Trinity's contributions to Hartford have improved the community in numerous aspects. Its proactive, aggressive community improvement programs date back to 1967, long before most other institutions of higher education committed any significant amount of time or resources to town-gown issues.

Beginning in 1978, Trinity formed a formal organization with key players in the community, including Hartford Hospital, Institute of Living, and neighborhood residents and merchants. They call themselves SINA, or Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance. In the 1980s, when urban blight began to encroach on the College's campus, Trinity worked with SINA on new housing rehabilitation initiatives.¹⁰² The Neighborhood Housing Improvement Program and the Frog Hollow Revitalization Committee exemplify these initiatives. Trinity then expanded its involvement in neighborhood revitalization through the start of the HART HOME Program in 1991 by

¹⁰¹ "City Program Overview: Hartford, Connecticut." Urban Environmental Program in New England. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 3 July, 2003. 10 Feb. 2004. <http://www.epa.gov/region1/eco/uep/hartford>.

¹⁰² "History of Trinity in the Community." Trinity in the Community. 26 Mar. 2002. 29 Nov, 2003. <http://www.trincoll.edu/dept/ocir/history.htm>.

providing up to \$10,000 in down payment and closing cost aid to Hartford residents who bought homes adjacent to campus.¹⁰³

Despite all of the advancements made by the early nineties, major neighborhood crises developed due to gang violence and an explosion of drug trafficking. The crises spurred a community outreach program called the Trinity Center for Neighborhoods (TCN), funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Community Outreach. TCN contributed to the alleviation of neighborhood problems through training, data resources, and applied research assistance to community groups. By acting as a resource by opening itself up to the neighborhood rather than shut out the community and its needs, Trinity confirmed its dedication to maintaining an active role as a meaningful contributor to Hartford.

A major turning point in Trinity's town-gown relations came in 1995 with the inauguration of Evan Dobbelle as the 18th President of the College.¹⁰⁴ Dobbelle became a catalyst for the complete re-envisioning of Hartford when he announced the \$175 million Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI) to rebuild community infrastructure for families that sustained homeownership, neighborhood economic development, and educational improvement.¹⁰⁵ HUD's OUP cites the NRI as being an unprecedented collaboration, emphasizing the fresh, innovative nature of the College's work. The cornerstone of the NRI is the Learning Corridor, perhaps the most meaningful investments the College has made in the neighborhood to date.

¹⁰³ "Trinity College Neighborhood Revitalization and Community Partnerships." Trinity College. 29 Nov. 2003. http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/ocir/program/neighborhood_revitalization.htm.

¹⁰⁴ "History of Trinity in the Community." Trinity in the Community. 26 Mar. 2002. 29 Nov, 2003. <http://www.trincoll.edu/dept/ocir/history.htm>.

¹⁰⁵ "Trinity College Neighborhood Revitalization and Community Partnerships." Trinity College. 29 Nov. 2003. http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/ocir/program/neighborhood_revitalization.htm.

The Learning Corridor is a 16-acre campus featuring a Montessori Magnet School, the Learning Corridor Middle School, and a high school resource center which is the site of two new programs for high school students: the Greater Hartford Academy of Arts and the Greater Hartford Academy of Mathematics and Science.¹⁰⁶ Fully funded by the College and city subsidies, the Learning Corridor is a prime example of the influential role a college can play in its community. Crime rates have dropped rapidly and the presence of a positive learning environment has dramatically altered the cityscape.

Comparing USC to Trinity is difficult because of the size of the institutions and communities. Trinity's student body population of 2,200 students is only a small fraction of that of USC. In light of the relatively small population of Hartford (approximately 122,000)¹⁰⁷, however, the case of Trinity can serve as a microcosm for the possibilities of USC. While Trinity's investments into Hartford are surely just as beneficial to the College's image as they are to the community, this case exemplifies the benefit of true community engagement by educational institutions. If USC would take the time to evaluate the persistently pressing problems facing the South Los Angeles community, perhaps its neighbors would have a better opinion of it. For the local community around USC, the main problems include lack of affordable housing, lack of commercial and retail space, limited access to fresh food, and minimal park and recreational space. The University has consistently ignored or worsened these problems by failing to evaluate the magnitude of each problem and doing whatever is in its power to address it. Trinity College has seemingly done the opposite by going above and beyond the expected actions and tackling each community problem with 100% effort.

¹⁰⁶ Tuchman, Gary. "College Elevates Neighbors as Well as Students." CNN.com. 14 May, 1999. 6 Nov. 2003. <http://www.cnn.com/US/9905/14/college.urban.renewal>

¹⁰⁷ <http://epodunk.com/cgi-bin/genInfo.php?locIndex=9171>

In contrast, USC seeks to address problems when they are brought up in limited and ineffective ways. This is illustrated by the example given by Carolyn Webb de Macias that was meant to illustrate how much USC cares about the community. According to Macias, the administration decided to spend thousands of dollars renaming the different access points to the campus from “gates” to “entrances” in response to complaints from community groups that the campus excluded the neighborhood residents. An illustration of this is the renaming of the Exposition Boulevard Gate at Pardee Way to the Exposition Boulevard Entrance. The name change might have been meant to make the campus more inviting to community members, but nothing actually changed because the brick walls topped with iron fences still guard the campus from the community.

The central barrier that may well prevent USC from truly engaging with the community is its positive media portrayals, and its image as an institution that does a immense amount of good work within its surrounding neighborhoods. In 2000, TIME magazine and the Princeton Review named USC the College of the Year, referencing the University’s numerous community outreach programs.¹⁰⁸ USC administrators constantly cite this distinction when asked about how they view the role of the University in the community. It is clear that any institution that has been identified as being exceptional from respected news sources would not be likely to think of themselves as needing to change anything. Trinity College is a perfect example to the contrary because despite the positive reviews it has received from The Wall Street Journal and Kaplan’s Guide to Best

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.usc.edu/neighborhoods/>

Colleges¹⁰⁹, it continues to evaluate and improve upon the programs that enhance the campus-community partnerships.

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.trincoll.edu/AboutTrinity/CollegeFacts.htm>

Section IV - Recommendations and Conclusion

Chapter 10

Conceptualizing a New Campus-Community Partnership for USC and the South

Los Angeles Neighborhood: Recommendations

Despite its history of conflict, the events surrounding the Galen Center and the interaction between community members and USC administrators may mark a new era in town-gown relations for USC and South Los Angeles. A new campus-community partnership has already begun. Although only in its first stage, a partnership that appears more promising than the relationship between the university and its host neighborhood has ever seen is emerging in the form of dialogue between administrators and the Coalition for a Responsible USC (Coalition), described in Chapter 4. In a turn of events that resemble the episodes leading to Harvard and Columbia's changes in town-gown relations, it seems the community's voice has become a factor for USC to listen to rather than to ignore.

The partnership commenced with a series of meetings between administrators and Coalition representatives, which now have become a regular monthly occurrence, with more frequent meetings when needed. In striving to establish a campus-community partnership, the initial requirements have been addressed. The community has been defined; by forming a Coalition among a very broad variety of community organizations, there exists high assurance that the majority of residents are represented. Also, the organization of the Coalition has recently concretized in light of the new developments in the partnership, with identified representatives to attend meetings, a steering committee,

and a research team. The second requirement of establishing an effective campus-community partnership is a clear structure in the form of rules or formalities that is acknowledged and accepted. While the Coalition and USC have perhaps not completely addressed this concept, the first steps have been made. Clear lines of communication have been established through mutual agreement between Sandra McNeill and Gilda Haas, speakers for the Coalition, and Carolyn Webb de Macias, USC Vice President for External Relations. Lastly, each party has a clear agenda. Through the steering committee, the Coalition systematically reaches agreements between the different organizations represented concerning the most important issues and attainable goals that should be brought to the table.

With the seeds of partnership planted, the next step is to identify concrete policies and actions the different parties can work towards to create a lasting, positive campus-community relationship. There are numerous ideas about this aspect of the partnership, but it is very important to choose thoughtfully which ideas are pursued. Keeping in mind the pressing issues for the community, namely housing and jobs, the Galen Center presents an enormous opportunity for the University to make a meaningful change in a positive direction for the relationship.

The Galen Center will provide nearly two hundred permanent jobs for the local economy. Therefore, USC should institute a local hiring policy that truly ensures that the majority of employment opportunities created by the development and operation of the center goes to neighborhood residents. This will not only benefit the community residents through jobs, it will also decrease the number of commuting employees, improve the economic situation of community residents and thus the area's economy,

which will help fulfill the mission of the Hoover Redevelopment Project. Drawing from the implementation of the Staple's Center Local Hiring Policy, one way USC and the Coalition could work together on this is for USC to advertise job opportunities to the members of organizations in the Coalition (church members, residents of Esperanza Community Housing Corporation buildings, etc.) Additionally, USC can require that employees hired for the Galen Center identify their permanent residence as being located in the immediate neighborhood.

In light of the University's obvious effect on the local housing market, an affordable housing fund could be created that raises money for the development of affordable housing by local organizations. While the majority of ticket surcharges on tickets for university and college athletics are intended to ease the cost of renovation, the concept of a ticket surcharge is not new to special events centers and stadiums. The surcharges usually come in two forms. Either a minimal one to five dollar surcharge is added to the cost of every ticket, or ticket holders for select group of seats (usually the most expensive, which are sold in the form of season passes) are asked to make additional payments ranging from 45 to 500 dollars, depending on the size of the stadium and location of the seat. Mick Jackowski, writer for the Athletic Business newsletter, states that event organizers provide almost the entire resistance to ticket surcharges.¹¹⁰ In the case of the Galen Center, USC is responsible for both the operation of the center and event organization, therefore one can anticipate less resistance to a surcharge.

The benefits of a surcharge imposed on all tickets sold for events held at the Galen Center are substantial. With 10,258 seats and 52 home games for the men's and women's basketball and volleyball combined (based on the 2003 schedule), a minimal

¹¹⁰ Jackowski, Mick. "Telling Advice." Athletic Business. Oct 2001.

ticket surcharge could potentially generate substantial funding. Although these games do not normally sell-out, a substantial number of students, faculty, administrators, and alumni do attend every game. If each game sold 80% of the maximum capacity of seats, and a surcharge of one dollar were in place, the University could generate \$426,733 in one academic year alone. The most positive aspect (from the University perspective) of an affordable housing fund through a ticket surcharge established by USC is that it would make a strong contribution to the community without having to pay for it itself.

A third specific, immediate goal to improve the town-gown relationship for USC and South Los Angeles is a policy to require the filing of a campus master plan with the Los Angeles City Council on a regular basis. Numerous other cities require that colleges and universities submit their campus plans for approval by the city council before they can forge ahead with new developments. Besides Washington D.C., the City Councils in Portland, Oregon, Seattle, Washington and Boston, Massachusetts all have policies in place to ensure that the campus planning process is public. The specifics of the policies vary, but they generally outline a process through which the university must submit a campus plan for approval every five years and then a fully revised plan every ten years. The lack of this kind of policy for the city of Los Angeles means that first and foremost, it is left up to the city officials to keep an overview of how each individual development project fits into the bigger picture of developments for the entire area. A master plan contextualizes projects of the already existing area. Secondly, community groups like FCCEJ and the Coalition are constantly operating from a reactive/defensive position.

In the case of the Galen Center, community members expected one type of development (for-profit, positive economic project) and learned about the change in plans

(to non-profit, significantly smaller positive economic impact) only once they were official and close to approval. When there is a structured procedure for obtaining approval for development, community groups have more power in contributing their input and views on specific projects. Although GWU's lack of compliance with the BZA's ruling that they could not commence any new developments until they house at least 70% of the student body in on-campus housing makes the process less effective, the fact that the University in that case is drawing negative criticism for non-compliance does bring more pressure to act responsibly. USC currently has the capacity to do as it pleases because there are few requirements that forces it to acknowledge a community perspective.

The long-term goals for the relationship are broader and encompass the specific ones just mentioned. In working with the Coalition's research and strategy team for six months, three clear, long-term goals have emerged that can be realized if the positive university-community partnership continues. These goals are to make transparent planning, collaborative planning, and housing solutions part of the foundation in the University's work with the community. With these long-term goals, the University can be sure to maintain a more positive position within the community in which it is such a huge player.

The first goal, transparent planning, refers to the concept of making all plans for development, whether on campus or off, known to the neighborhoods and communities affected by the development. This means that the University must effectively communicate to the community all information regarding expansion and development from the beginning of the idea (rather than when all of the funding has been secured, the

land acquired, and ground-breaking just around the corner). As the Galen Center case illustrates, the University is not held to the same standards as for-profit developers when commencing big projects, and transparent planning becomes even more important to the community. When University development can be expedited because it does not have to comply with all of the regulations required of others, the community has less time to research potential effects of the development, lodge complaints, and respond in general. Transparent planning that not only gives insight to parcel planning (or the planned development for a single property), but also to master campus and expansion plans, creates a due process that is fairer.

The concept of transparent planning is complemented by that of collaborative planning, specifically referring to the collaboration of campus planners, administrators, and residents of affected neighborhoods that do not have a bias (such as University employees or alumni). Beyond the obvious reasons for including community members in the campus planning process, community members are a valuable asset when thinking about the future role and shape of the University. For one thing, people who have resided in the community for a long time have a great understanding of the history of the neighborhoods. At Columbia, community residents gave a great deal of insight into the architectural history of Morningside Heights, which aided in the creation of the *Framework for Planning*. At USC, a campus that has a very distinct architectural style, community residents might contribute some meaningful insight into how that style could better incorporate or complement historically important architectural trends.

The most obvious reason that a collaborative planning process should become a long-term goal for the University and community is because it helps bring the biggest

neighborhood concerns to the discussion table. The hope is that, with the establishment of a collaborative planning process, the University will recognize the community's needs for access to fresh food, commercial and retail developments that boost the local economy, parks, soccer fields, etc. USC has a great deal of clout in California and nationwide, thus local problems would be alleviated quickly and with ease with the help of the University.

The University could argue that it already has a collaborative planning process in place. However, it is important to recognize the distinction between working with community members and working with the University appointed Community Advisory Council. Due to the recent changes in the town-gown relationship caused by the start of two-way dialogue between administrators and the Coalition, true collaborative planning seems to have begun. Following the first few meetings with the administrators, USC committed to explore collaboration on two substantial community development and planning projects, one on the east side of campus, and the other for the University Village site. The proposals formulated by the Coalition would have never been recognized or considered had the partnership not been established. Now, two specific projects are in its initial stages due to the start of real collaborative planning.

The third long-term goal to be addressed by the campus-community partnership is to create, evaluate, and implement housing solutions for students, faculty, and community members. Housing is a fundamental need for all and it currently is the source of a major tension for the town-gown relationship (as described in Chapter 2). USC must commit to creating more student housing on campus in order to get at the source of the problem. With a constantly growing student body, the housing woes for both students and

displaced community members will only grow unless the University creates a plan to increase the number of student housing units. With less students looking for housing in the community, neighborhood residents can live without the fear of being evicted at any time, which is an enormous source of the negative feelings held towards USC students. Additionally, taking a cue from Harvard and investing in affordable community housing would also greatly improve the campus-community relationship. Showing neighborhood residents that not only does USC want to indirectly help their housing concerns by creating more student housing, but that it also wants to directly help community members by developing affordable housing would help erase some of the mistrust. Collaborative planning in conjunction with this goal would be important because residents could identify locations where housing need is greatest for community members. Pastor Ecklund from St. Mark's Church dreams that one day there can be a housing project that unites students and neighborhood members in one building. Perhaps if the goal of housing solutions is seriously adopted, his dream can come true.

The tools to meet this goal are all present. The community is home to a non-profit affordable housing developer, Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, which would be more than thrilled to work in conjunction with USC. USC students have started a grassroots movement for raising awareness about the shortage of student housing and the rights of community members against unscrupulous landlords through the formation of Student Community Housing Coalition. The University is highly skilled in the area of fundraising. Through collaborative planning, the university-community partnership can be an extremely effective channel for developing housing solutions.

All of the goals mentioned above are important to developing and maintaining a strong relationship between USC and South LA. By setting goals and working towards achieving them through partnership, the relationship will only become stronger and more effective. Even the short-term goals may be too great to conceptualize at the present time, but in working towards them, smaller victories will be won for both the community and the University. With each victory for the community, the mistrust of the University will decrease in magnitude, although as residents of communities around other urban universities have commented, the mistrust never fully vanishes.

Chapter 11

Conclusion

In examining the areas in which the University of Southern California has contributed to the development of a negative relationship with the surrounding community of South Los Angeles, it is most important to focus on the potential for positive town-gown relations. Both at USC and at colleges and universities nationwide, creating positive campus-community relationships and elevating those relationships to partnerships is extremely important because of the permanent nature (physically) of the majority of institutions of higher education. This is especially true in the case of urban universities, where an ongoing interaction with the community exists whether the university or the community want it or not. As the costly experience of negative town-gown relations between George Washington University and residents of Foggy Bottom illustrates, it is beneficial for both the campus and community to work to maintain a steady, positive relationship.

The Coalition for a Responsible USC has had a significant impact on changing the dynamics of the town gown relationship. This significance is compounded by the USC administration's change in attitude towards the community. As of April 2004, the relationship has become an overall positive one, with regular meetings between the two groups, a prioritized list of collaborative goals, and open lines of communication. As long as the relationship can continue, adjusting to successes or failures in achieving partnership goals, the outlook for a new town-gown relationship is relatively good. However, there are without a doubt challenges that lie ahead.

One challenge is the upcoming changes in individuals who provide leadership for various groups within the Coalition and for the Coalition itself. Sandra McNeill, organizer and researcher for Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, who has served as the primary visionary for the Coalition alongside Gilda Haas, plans on leaving the Southern California area for a year abroad in June of 2004. She has been a very strong driving force behind the Coalition's work by developing campaign strategies and building relationships with individuals at USC, the CRA, and the Los Angeles City Council. Whoever assumes her position will face considerable challenges in re-establishing these relationships, understanding the complicated history of the relationship, and finding a voice within the Coalition and the relationship.

In addition, university administrators also serve for limited amounts of time. As Roger K. Lewis points out, "whenever a new leader assumes power, he or she naturally wants to create a new plan, believing that it will leave an immutable personal legacy."¹¹¹ Just as Webb de Macias' predecessor, Jane Pisano, left a legacy of a high number of service-learning projects and programs implemented more to boost the University's reputation than to serve the community, Webb de Macias might leave a legacy of real community engagement. But who is to say that the next administrator to take her place will have as much power in directing the relationship from the university's side and will not change the dynamic of the relationship again? The hope is that the positive town-gown relationship that is currently being established will create such a great benefit for both the local neighborhoods and for the University that the partnership formed will be strong enough to prevail through changes in leadership.

¹¹¹ Lewis, Robert. "Bricks, Mortar, and Vision: A Guide for Campus Planning." The Chronicle of Higher Education: Campus Architecture. 26 Mar. 2004.

Change occurs through persistence. If a group wants something badly enough, whether it be affordable housing or more access to plans for expansion and development, and it works in an organized way to get it, they will prevail. On the other hand, if a university wanted badly enough to exclude the community, it could easily do so. For these reasons, it is extremely important for the community groups to stay organized and driven towards achieving goals and for the University to recognize the benefit it receives from working with the community.

There is a great deal of interest in new ways of framing campus-community relationships in the field of higher education. The leading journal for colleges and universities, the Chronicle of Higher Education, shows that the formation and maintenance of positive town-gown relations is an arena that administrators have pushed into the limelight. The current climate is very good, and thus the birth of a campus-community partnership for the University of Southern California and the South Los Angeles is timely and appropriate.

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