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Community Safety Partnership Needs Assessment: Imperial Courts, Jordan Downs and Nickerson Gardens

Background:

Advancement Project - *Closing the Opportunity Gap*

Advancement Project is a public policy change organization rooted in the civil rights movement. We engineer large-scale systems change to remedy inequality, expand opportunity and open paths to upward mobility. Our goal is that members of all communities have the safety, opportunity and health they need to thrive.

Our signature is reach and impact. With our strong ties to diverse communities, unlikely alliances, policy and legal expertise, and creative use of technology, we and our partners have won over \$15 billion to extend opportunity. Whether it is to build 150 schools, transform the City of Los Angeles' approach to its gang epidemic, or revolutionize the use of data in policymaking, Advancement Project evens the odds for communities striving to attain equal footing and equal treatment.

Advancement Project's Programs

- 1. Educational Equity:** Ensures school facilities for all and expands educational opportunities for low-income children from birth through high school graduation.
- 2. Equity in Public Funds:** Reveals significant discrepancies between the allocation of public funds and the needs of low-income communities and communities of color.
- 3. Healthy City:** Transforms how people access and use information about their communities. Healthy City is an information + action resource that unites community voices, rigorous research and innovative technologies to solve the root causes of social inequity.
- 4. Urban Peace:** Reduces and prevents community violence, making poor neighborhoods safer so that children can learn, families can thrive and communities can prosper.

Community Safety Partnership

Project Description: After seven consecutive years of record crime reduction, most Los Angeles neighborhoods enjoy unusually high safety. There is no doubt that community leaders, neighborhood agencies and the LAPD have done an outstanding job in collaborating to reduce

crime. Nonetheless, citywide crime reduction does not mean that we have sufficiently reduced the risk factors that cause trauma and violence in some of our neighborhoods including many Los Angeles housing developments. In some housing developments, lack of safety still prevents children and families from normal daily activities such as going to school and playing in the park.

Recognizing the need to improve safety in the housing developments, the Housing Authority of City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) have agreed to a new and innovative partnership, the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). Under a 2011 agreement, HACLA and LAPD will engage residents and other stakeholders to promote safety and security at four public housing developments: Ramona Gardens, Nickerson Gardens, Jordan Downs, and Imperial Courts. CSP is unique in its recognition that safety cannot be achieved through policing alone, but requires coordination and collaboration among all stakeholders. CSP mandates that safety be achieved through relationship-based policing that relies on long term assignment of police personnel, data-driven community safety planning with the community and collaboration with community stakeholders.

Project Elements: HACLA and LAPD recognize the central role of sustained, healthy partnerships with residents, youth and community stakeholders in promoting safety of residents at the various public housing sites.

- Each project site will establish a Community Safety Partnership Team composed of community leaders, service providers, LAPD and HACLA representatives. The Team will develop site specific safety priorities and meet regularly to monitor progress and to solve problems,
- CSP programming will coordinate with schools, community-based youth services agencies and intervention agencies to secure routes to and from school and during after school activities.
- CSP programs will coordinate with parks and recreational facilities located within and near the respective housing developments to maintain safe public spaces for recreational and enrichment activities.
- LAPD will establish a team of dedicated, full-time law enforcement resources at each project site to help support a relationship-based policing model and allow officers to work with a variety of community stakeholders to increase overall “community livability.”
- CSP will operate for five years in all project sites

Assessment Methodology

Throughout the contract period with HACLA, Advancement Project (AP) focused on the dynamics of gangs and youth violence, developed a mapping and data analysis of the area, and gathered ground level community input to assess the needs of each development related to the implementation of the Community Safety Partnership as laid out in the 2011 Memorandum of Agreement between the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD).¹ A community profile was developed based on an examination of community history and an analysis of key demographics through information gathered and synthesized by AP's Healthy City. Demographic information included maps and charts (See Appendix 1).

Over 467 surveys were collected by community residents to provide a quantitative analysis of residents' perceptions of gang activity and community safety (See Appendix 2). AP conducted 22 focus groups targeting youth, parents, school personnel and community leadership; 45 interviews with relevant stakeholders in the public sector; observed nine community meetings, and trained 29 residents as community surveyors, which generated community level input that informed the assessment.

In an analysis of community infrastructure for assets and barriers to achieving community safety, the following themes emerged (listed here in no particular order): 1) Job and Economic Stability, 2) School Safety and Student Academic Achievement, 3) Law Enforcement, 4) HACLA Policies (Housing, Lack of Safety and Support Services), and 5) Community Based Institutional Leadership.

Community History:

Built in the post-War Los Angeles of 1955, initially Watts' public housing was racially mixed with white, African American and Latino residents. Federal housing policies however changed in the late 1950s and began to focus on settling applicants into communities with similar demographics. That meant preference began to be given to African American applicants to Jordan Downs housing development which greatly amplified the homogeneity. As African Americans continued to move into Jordan Downs and Watts, whites and middle-class African Americans moved out; with them, investment into Watts' social infrastructure began to decrease. The resulting lack of resources increased the sense of isolation and frustration in Watts. Frustration culminated in the 1965 Watts Riots when increasingly tense relations with law enforcement sparked six days of civil unrest. Law enforcement and public officials were unable to quell the crowds of teens and young adults who engaged in looting, fighting, and

¹ MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES AND THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT. As retrieved on November 5, 2011: http://www.lapdpolicecom.lacity.org/041211/BPC_11-0142.pdf

vandalism. Thirty-four people were left dead and 1,000 residents and 100 law enforcement personnel were left injured. The Riots hastened the exodus of Watts' middle class.

Post-Riots Watts: Post-riots Watts saw a boom in community activism and organizing. Noted labor organizer Ted Watkins founded the Watts Community Labor Action Committee (WCLAC) a community based organization focused on economic development in Watts. A number of cultural, arts and civic groups formed and successfully coalesced around several community projects including MLK/Drew Medical Center and the development of several other social programs.

Despite steps toward greater community cohesion, large numbers of youth in the housing developments and throughout Watts still lacked real educational and economic opportunities and therefore remained disconnected from much of the City infrastructure. The frustration of the 1960s gave way to more anger, as large numbers of youth began forming street gangs that would eventually grow to participate in criminal activity and territorial warfare. Formed during the 1970s throughout South Los Angeles and Watts, these streets gangs went on to become some of Los Angeles' most notorious gangs, including the Crips.

Meanwhile, patterns of tension and conflict persisted between African Americans and law enforcement throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Watts' housing development residents continued to see increases in unemployment and poverty following the decline of the region's manufacturing industry. By the 1980's with the onset of the "crack wars", crime ridden and dilapidated buildings dominated in each of the developments and the surrounding neighborhoods. One HACLA official at the time described raising children in Jordan Downs as "a form of child abuse." Money from increased drug sales and drug use empowered the local gang growth from a small operation into a violent and organized drug distribution network that eventually took nearly complete control of each of the developments: "Grape Street" controlled Jordan Downs, with "Bounty Hunters" in Nickerson Gardens and "PJ Crips" in Imperial Courts.

Gang Truce of 1992: The Gang Truce of 1992 between rival gangs resulted in a sustained interlude from the high levels of inter-gang homicides that marked the previous decade. Most notably, the Truce gave community residents a sense of freedom that had formerly been impossible. However, area unemployment rates languished and an overall lack of investment for lasting improvements in Watts meant that the underground economy, some of which was illicit drug dealing and other underlying criminal and gang activity, increased during the time of the Truce. (For additional crime statistical data relating to the housing development census tracts and other census tracts in Watts, please see the data attachment and HealthyCity.org.)

Troubled History of HACLA: Initially, HACLA’s Department of Public Safety was responsible for safety during these challenging times in the history of the developments. The small department was plagued by a lack of resources and capacity throughout its existence. Budget constraints throughout the 1990s in the City of Los Angeles resulted in more cuts to HACLA’s undersized law enforcement agency. Crime rates in Jordan Downs increased by 21% in 2004, the first year without the presence of HACLA’s Department of Public Safety. Currently the department is staffed with one officer, a “community liaison” to safety, Captain Scott Butler.

HACLA experienced a series of setbacks throughout the 1990s due to mismanagement. Several hundred Latino and African American residents in Jordan Downs sued HACLA in 1998 for neglecting to provide adequate safety and help in lowering racial tensions. The residents received a settlement, but HACLA admitted no fault and the records were sealed. A 2005 audit detailed \$13 million in missing funds from job training and work placements programs that were to be implemented for residents, but resulted in only a few long term stable employment positions. Furthermore, auditors found that HACLA employees used some of the program funds to enrich relatives and associates.² Despite the fact that the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has designated HACLA as a “high performer,” and HACLA has received other industry awards and grants serving residents³, these stories – all available in the public record- demonstrate a pattern of neglect and wrongdoing which has damaged the trust between the housing authority and housing residents.

Today in Watts: Today in Watts, new two-story condos and townhouses represent the only new investment in affordable housing in the area for the past 30 years. Homeowners that surround the three housing developments are older and more likely to be married than renters.⁴ Other privately subsidized housing located between Nickerson Gardens and Jordan Downs, includes senior housing, such as the Watts Arms Apartments.

As a result of the case *Juan Zuniga et al. v. Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles et al.*, (1995) HACLA is responsible, as any private landlord, to provide basic safety for its residents. Despite this court decision, the long-term presence of entrenched gangs in Watts mostly concentrated within the public housing developments still affect resident safety. According to some community leaders, the level of gang entrenchment requires that any community safety effort include all three of the major public housing developments: Nickerson Gardens, Jordan Downs, and Imperial Courts, in essence requiring a regional Watts strategy. The longstanding generational conflicts between gangs in the public housing developments make up a significant

² Kim, Victoria “Consultant ordered to pay housing agency \$1.9 million over fraud” Los Angeles Times 3 Mar. 2010

³ As reported by HACLA staff.

⁴ Based on 2010 Claritas Data from Healthy City.org

portion of the violence in Watts. Suppressing crime in one area only pushes crime to another area or housing development.

Socio-Demographic Data

The demographics are changing in Watts. Table 1 shows that in 2000, Latino residents made up a 61% majority in Watts and today, Latino residents represent a full 70% of all Watts residents. The demographics of the three developments in Watts are also comprised of increasingly more Latino residents. All three developments have significant African American populations (roughly between 30 and 40%) but the majority of residents are Latino. A demographic shift of this magnitude in an area that is so deeply tied to its African American historical and cultural underpinnings has not come without pain and discomfort. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisor seat, the United States Congressional seats, the California State Senate seat and the State Assembly seats are all held by African Americans. Efforts to develop leadership within the Latino community usually stall in the face of Watts' history and traditions. Rumors, innuendo and distrust often develop in conversations around race in Watts. It is important that the Community Safety Partnership focus on the real dynamics on the ground as evidenced by data to support the cross-cultural relationship building needed to reduce violence, increase resident perception of safety, and reduce the influence of gangs in the housing developments.

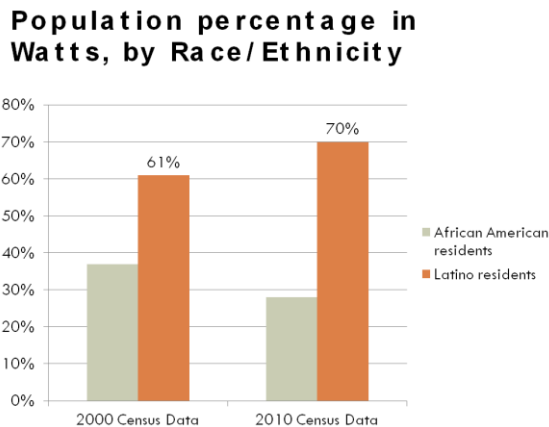


Table 1: Population of Watts

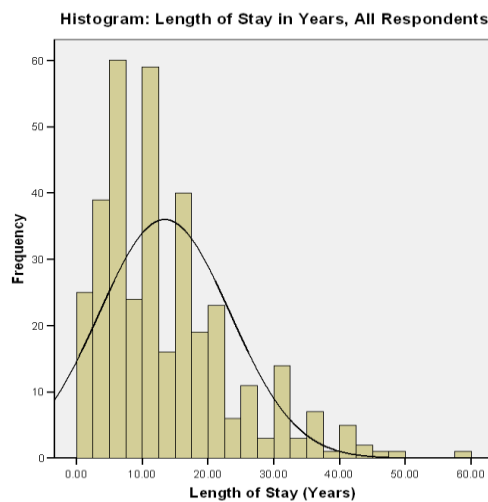
Residents in each of the three developments in Watts speak of their strong sense of shared community. Multigenerational and inter-related families are factors that enhance community cohesion among some residents. However, the physical and cultural insularity of developments increases social insularity. New residents may find a tentative cohesion with their new

neighbors; however, safety concerns often delay or deter them from developing strong community and social networks.

Longer term community residents speak of their lack of fear. When asked about what she liked about the Jordan Downs community, one Latina youth replied “It’s cool here. The violence is normal to us. When we hear bad things happen, we think, ‘Aw, that’s nothing.’” In contrast, new residents, many of whom are Latino, report that they rarely go outside and experience trepidation in participating in community events. Intimidated and apprehensive, these socially isolated families sit on the sidelines and discourage their children from participating in enrichment activities and some services. The rapid pace of demographic shifts in the three developments exacerbates tension and mistrust among African American and Latino residents.

The majority of residents in the three developments are mostly under the age of 40. In fact, over 50% of residents in all three developments fall between the ages of 6-13 or 21-40. Young and multigenerational families make up the majority of resident households in the three developments. Watts’ public housing is, at any given time, a mix of residents that are relatively new to the developments and residents that have lived in the developments for 10 years or more. Newly arrived residents are less integrated into the housing community and were therefore difficult to reach during the assessment. Table 2 shows the average length of stay of residents who completed the needs assessment survey. Perhaps because surveys were administered by other housing residents, the average reported length of stay of all respondents was longer than 10 years and therefore the perspective of newer residents is understated within the survey data.⁵

Table 2: Length of Stay of Survey Respondents



⁵ The survey data represented in “Histogram: Length of Stay in Years, All Respondents” does not include the final input of Imperial Courts Surveys.

Percent Unemployed

Percent Families in Poverty

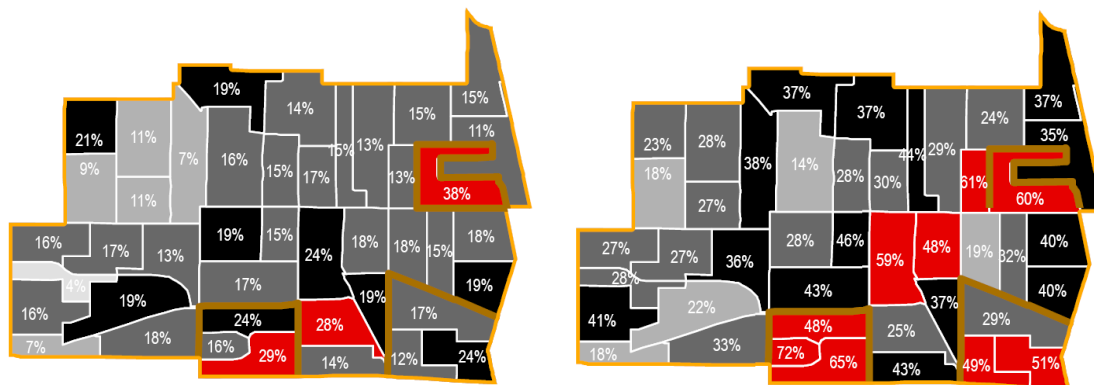


Figure 1: Map of poverty/ unemployment in Watts

The families experiencing long-term poverty are discouraged from participating in most programs that come with a cost. Residents in the developments are also more likely to have less than a college education, live in a single parent household or a household with single income than other residents in Watts. Figure 1 shows the housing developments Census tracts with higher concentrations of poverty and unemployment rates than neighboring Census Tracts. Poverty and unemployment are both risk factors for sustained community violence levels. Parental supervision, especially for single-parent working families, becomes a challenge when parents are unable to access adequate and free afterschool care for their children. Lack of supervision due to working parents or lack of resources to fund after-school activities were frequently cited in focus groups by parents and youths as strong drivers to gangs.

- **Jordan Downs:** Jordan Downs has a high number of youth, young parents and single family households. Jordan Downs has the fewest percentage of African Americans compared to the other two developments (30% compared to 42% in Nickerson Gardens and 41% in Imperial Courts.) There have been several interrelated activities during the Jordan Downs Redevelopment process that have increasingly created a perception among African Americans that racially motivated evictions are occurring.. Whether this perception is justified by actual evictions is unclear.

For instance, the inability to get a clear answer from HACL A about the reasons behind the installation of closed circuit cameras in Jordan Downs raises suspicion among African American residents. However, HACL A asserts that “no eviction has occurred based on evidence obtained by the cameras at Jordan Downs.” In addition, some official communication confuses rather than clarifies resident questions.

In a 2009 Jordan Downs Redevelopment Newsletter under the section entitled "Truth be Told," an article states, "Jordan Downs has experienced an increase in evictions within the past several months as a result of Management enforcing the rules and regulations stated in the resident's rental agreement and HACLA policy."⁶ The article, however, did not address resident's concern about racially motivated evictions or clarify HACLA was intensifying the enforcement of certain housing policies.

Despite this tension, there are positive developments in Watts as well around HACLA-community relations as well as racial cohesion. Resident community groups such as Project Fatherhood and Motivated Mothers expressed willingness to support and partner with Community Safety Partnership officers. Both groups, like many other residents, noted the lack of quality jobs for residents and afterschool activities for youth. Despite their concerns, participants in these groups were more restrained in their criticism of HACLA and the Los Angeles Police Department than other residents who participated in the assessment process.

- **Imperial Courts:** Imperial Courts closely resembled Jordan Downs in crime and demographic statistics, despite being significantly smaller in size. The population is also slightly younger. Like Jordan Downs, a little more than 57% of all residents are 18 years of age or younger. At 41% Imperial Courts has the highest percentage of African American population among the three developments. As such, Latino residents here are less numerically visible and more isolated than in other developments. Table 3 shows the percent of residents reporting that they can NOT trust their neighbors is much higher for Latino residents of Imperial Courts than for African American residents. Imperial Courts had the least community cohesion of any of the other developments, averaging barely a two on all five measures of community cohesion, rated on a scale from one to five.

⁶ Jordan Downs Redevelopment Newsletter Vol. I, Issue II, Q1 2009 page 5
<http://www.jordandowns.org/NewsLetters/JDNewsletter2.pdf>

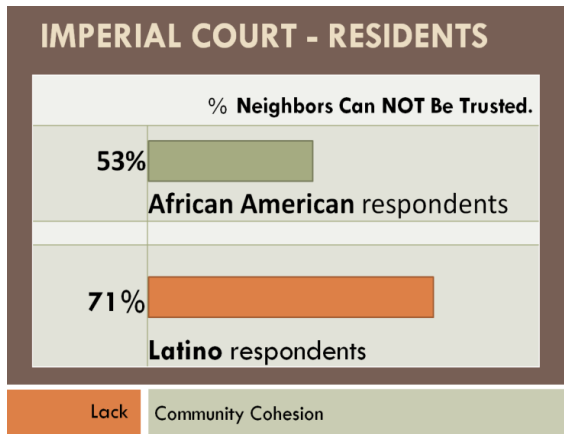


Table 3: Trust Amongst Neighbors, Imperial Courts Residents

- Nickerson Gardens:** Nickerson Gardens is the largest of the three developments with the highest number of residents - nearly 3,200 - and also the greatest number of youth among the three developments. The sheer size and number of residents makes it more difficult to physically secure the premises and more difficult to outreach to residents. Despite more residents in attendance at community meetings, many more Latino residents are insular and do not participate robustly in housing events.

Community Organizations and Leadership

Much of the community organizational leadership lacks real participation from the Latino community as most organizations still lack the capacity to engage with the Latino residents, especially recently arrived immigrants. As noted from earlier figures, demographics have changed significantly within the housing developments and throughout Watts. Despite Latino majorities, community leadership within the developments and throughout Watts, as well as resident leadership is still heavily African American.

Community based organizations such as Watts Century Latino and the St. Lawrence Church’s Men’s Leadership Group continue outreach to Latino families, including newly arrived immigrant families who are the least engaged in public sector activities in Watts. For example, the Watts Gang Task Force (WGTF) had only African American active board members until recently and little or no Latino participation in its weekly meeting. Breaking this pattern, Maria Aguirre is a long-standing Latina community stakeholder, who serves as Community Relations Manager at Kaiser Permanente Watts Counseling and Learning Center and recently became a WGTF board member. She is beginning to support WGTF’s efforts to build trust with Latino families and mothers as well as African American families in the Watts housing developments.

- Jordan Downs** HACLAs intentional resident leadership development supported through the Jordan Downs Redevelopment effort has played a role in broadening the participation of all residents in WGTF and other community-wide Watts events and activities. Notably, Latino resident participation has increased significantly at public housing-related and community events. Table 4 shows that since the redevelopment assessment last year, Latino residents saying they “usually or always seek” HACLAs for services, although still only a third, has nearly doubled in Jordan Downs. More importantly, both African American and Latino residents who do participate report feeling more comfortable in speaking out and safe to engage with their neighbors.

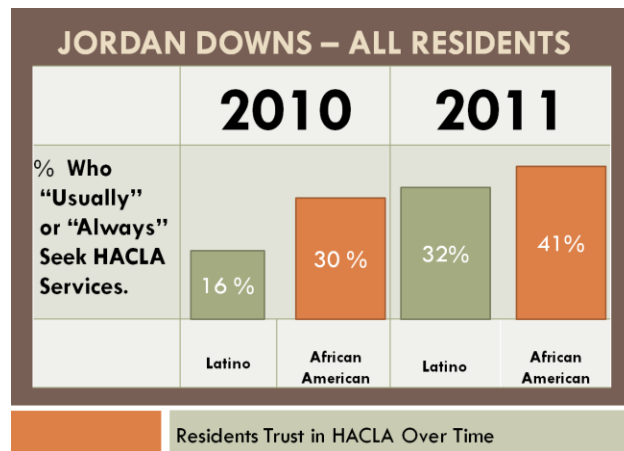


Table 4: Jordan Downs residents who “Usually or Always” Seek HACLAs services

Jordan Downs Redevelopment staff have partnered successfully with community-driven resident groups, such as Project Fatherhood and initiated others, such as the Motivated Mothers. These groups along with the Jordan Downs Block Group and Resident Advisory Committee include parents, youth and Latino families, all of whom play a key role to community partnership success.

Site management staffs are continuing these positive efforts to bring greater community cooperation and participation through outreach with block captains, Resident Management Corporation members and other community stakeholders and residents. Despite these positive developments, still nearly half or 44% of survey respondents within Jordan Downs housing developments reported that “people do not feel safe enough to speak out” at HACLAs-led community meetings. This is a sizable number and will require continued efforts at intentional community engagement. While the new resident groups can help the CSP project and CSP officers to facilitate broader resident outreach, they will continue to require support to sustain their positive efforts.

- **Nickerson Gardens** Here HACLA has had a long term investment in community leadership evidenced by two staff members and lifelong community residents, Donny Joubert and Hank Henderson. While they are paid as HACLA staff, as very active community leaders who participate in numerous activities including recreation and WGTF, community residents' perception of their role is much broader. As founding members of the WGTF and respected members of the Nickerson Gardens and Watts community, they both have been able to foster community engagement between HACLA and Nickerson Gardens residents, including gang affiliated residents, youth and families. More recently, their efforts have focused on broadening trust between HACLA and Latino residents in Nickerson.

And yet these are only two individuals and their staff responsibilities limit their capacity to reach out to all residents. They both play leadership roles on staff in addition to their leadership role within the community. This dynamic concentrates their influence and may intimidate or alienate their colleagues and some residents, especially newly arrived immigrant families and youth. Training and resources are needed that can nurture and augment these existing capacities. Support from the CSP project can support long-term community-based participants like Donny and Hank, while continuing efforts to nurture new leadership, ensuring greater accountability to all residents through broader community engagement capacity.

- **Imperial Courts** In Watts, prevention, reentry and intervention community service agencies are predominantly informal organizations, independent contractors, and grassroots community activists that receive little to no public funding, often operating with their own personal funds. This is especially true for service providers and community leadership in Imperial Courts. The small community organizations and informal community leadership remain wary and distrustful of public sector activities in Watts, including HACLA and LAPD. In fact, the small community organizations and community activists in Imperial Courts remain wary of most individuals or organizations with no links or relationships based with existing influential Imperial Court residents.

The expansion of the Summer Night Lights (SNL) program by the Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) and HACLA into Imperial Courts two summers ago built some trust between community leaders, residents and the public sector. However, public sector agencies like police, GRYD, HACLA and schools have grown increasingly dependent on the volunteer efforts of community leaders to sustain improvements in community relations.

Without more transparent and formalized recognition of their role in the on-going initiatives, these informal community based organizations, however, do not have the

resources or the operational capacity to sustain their engagement with any public sector safety initiatives. Lack of transparency regarding the role of these informal community organizations also reinforce resident distrust of HACLA practices and can be seen as HACLA condoning questionable practices of a select few “gate keepers”. For example, HACLA executive staff admitted several times during the assessment process to being successfully extorted by Imperial Court actors during recent projects or government-funded programs. There is a need for a uniform and open process that involves and informs all residents in the benefits of partnering.

The relationship between these community leaders and public sector is under constant threat of eroding as a result of these pressures. Two youth were killed in officer involved incidents earlier this year, and since then Imperial Courts community leaders have expressed difficulty in assisting police and HACLA to partner with community residents. These community leaders have increased their calls for funding for their largely volunteer engagement services. “Volunteer engagement services” means – services to support resident engagement done on a volunteer basis or for no formal payment. HACLA's Imperial staff have underdeveloped relationships with residents and often relies on informal or volunteer support for its resident engagement and organizing efforts.

Several Imperial Court residents, housing staff and community residents noted that engaging resident has been hindered by the lack of participation, outright opposition, or even extortion by volunteer community leaders or informally engaged organizations. Imperial housing staff admitted that typical HACLA outreach efforts such as flyers have been unsuccessful at increasing resident participation. The staff relies on a small group of influential residents to organize resident outreach.

Finally, in addition to these challenges, there is a clear lack of cultural competency among both recognized community leaders and Imperial Courts staff to meaningfully engage Latino residents (Imperial Courts’ Resident Manager has been on site for under a year.) Cultural competence requires that organizations have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable them to work effectively with residents of diverse backgrounds, language and culture. In assessing cultural competency important thing to consider are: whether the staff has been trained, what policies the organization have in place and how well they are followed, the consistency and the availability of such services. For example, in Sept. 2011, an AP policy analyst witnessed residents’ repeated attempts to communicate with the main office staff and their frustration due to the lack of Spanish speakers available at the desk as well as lack of any attempt by staff to find a translator.

Schools

Watts' school reform efforts that were initiated in 2009 have recently expanded. The Mayor's Office of Partnership for Los Angeles Schools and Green Dot Charter Schools were both recently awarded the joint administration of Jordan High School. This news was welcomed by residents in the housing developments and remaining school staff at Jordan High. In SY2010, Green Dot was able to retain and graduate 93% (or about 800) of Locke High School seniors, which, according to the data, meant an unprecedented 36% increase in the graduation rate as compared to previous years under LAUSD administration (See Table 5). The vision now is to tailor and replicate Green Dots' successful strategies at the troubled Jordan High.

Jordan High's poor student performance has continued most directly due to the entrenched gang dynamics and lack of safety on school campus. Most school staff readily discuss the level of danger faced by youth on campus. One person on the Jordan High staff reported: "If you are a young guy, slight build and don't have protection of a gang, you become a target. Period." Many housing development residents also confirmed the lack of safety en route to school and on campus. Last year, students attending Jordan High reported feeling abandoned by adults on campus and labeled as "project kids." These youth admitted to not feeling confident that many adults on campus had their best interest in mind. There were passionate teachers on campus, however: some spoke of holding secret classes in basements for determined students whose education was being disrupted by the flagrant lack of standards during regular school hours. This year, students were hopeful about the improvements, but mainly were concerned about the uptick in racialized gang violence that spilled over from the summer.

Schools Nearby

Quick Facts by School										
#	Enrollment			API Score			High School Grad. Rate	Truancy	Suspension	
	Total	Latino	Black	2008	2009	2010			V/D	Total
1	163	122	40	529	572	461	45.1	142.3%	3	
2	1547	1229	305	543	560		54.5	74.3%	148	423
3	1635	658	933	704	727	754	93.8	4.8%	28	65
4	70	51	16	478	537	358				
5	1263	931	328	536	525	569		53.1%	256	603
6	154	118	36			765		4.6%		
7	40	11	28			677				
8	1277	837	437	515	539	572	53.5	3.1%		
9	410	296	114	582	587	605		1.7%		
10	325	252	72		479	561		1.5%		
11	304	198	103		571	602		1.3%		
12	290	171	117		503	490		1.0%		
13	117	78	38			536		4.3%		

V/D - violence and drug related suspension
Expulsion data not available.

Table 5: School data for secondary schools near Watts housing developments

Unfortunately, due to high level of staff turnover at Markham Middle School, the Mayor's Partnership has struggled to increase student academic performance. While API scores

increased 45 points in 2010, just 16% of Markham's students are English language or math proficient. While the school often is praised for a quieter campus more conducive to learning, residents of all three developments – both Latino and African American - complain that the school administration is hostile to parents and too often criminalize adolescent behavior. For example, in SY08 nearly a hundred students were arrested on Markham campus. Markham’s principal resigned at the end of last year and the Partnership schools selected Paul Hernandez as the new Principal. Principal Hernandez has a reputation of being reform minded and has already begun aggressively implementing new policies – for example, extended school hours - to improve academic outcomes for Markham students. These ambitious efforts need support from the broader community in the form of establishing a level of community safety so that the students can focus on learning.

Promising Practice Sherri Williams’ strong leadership at 99th Street Elementary School led to a host of accomplishments not least of all an increase of 52 points in the schools API score in one year and an increase of 106 in the last two years. At some school events, the school saw a 96% parent participation rate, mainly as a result of Principal Williams’ strategy to engage parents that lived within each of the housing developments. Engaging fully in WGTF and other community initiatives, Principal Williams also tapped local law enforcement and community volunteer networks. She, together with leadership from LAPD’s Southeast Division, was able to pilot a first of its kind, LAUSD School-Community Policing program. Her long-term relationship building efforts with HACLA, law enforcement and other community leadership in Watts has laid the groundwork for a diverse array of programs built around a community school model. Partnership chose Sherri Williams to lead their efforts at Jordan High as the new principal and therefore, her record of implementing promising practices stand to increase student safety as well as student academic outcomes for Jordan High School students.

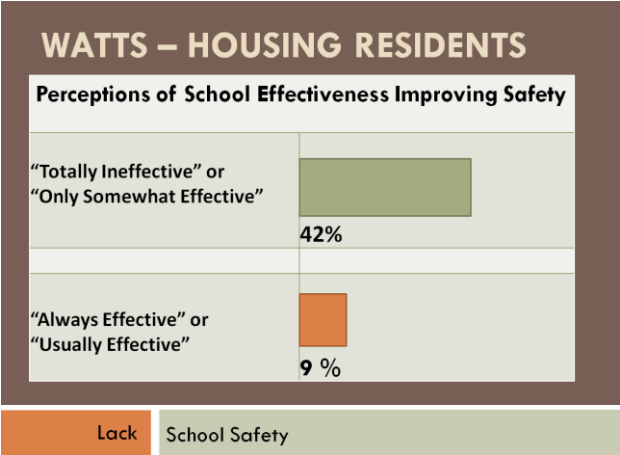


Table 6: Effectiveness of School Safety Measures

School Safety Youth and parent participants overwhelmingly cited safety as their most urgent concern at all schools. The issue of schools being located within gang territories posed unique obstacles for youth in Watts' housing developments. LAUSD assigns some 95% of eighth graders promoted by Markham Middle School to Jordan High; astonishingly, only about half of eighth graders tracked by Markham will ever register for ninth grade at Jordan High. In some ways, given that Markham is the first time students from the three housing developments, and therefore, three different assumed affiliations with the dominant gangs in each housing development, ever come into contact with each other, the fact that students who do not identify with Jordan Downs development end up not matriculating to Jordan High School is not surprising. Staff, students and residents all reported that any youth that did not live in Jordan Downs housing developments or have some affiliations with the Grape Street Crips or Southside Grape gangs, were immediate targets on Jordan High School campus. Most students that live within the attendance boundary fear Jordan High and consider it prohibitively unsafe to attend. These students seek transfers before ever stepping foot on campus. Youth residents from Imperial Courts and surrounding area apply for student transfers to in-district and out of district magnets, private Catholic, charters and local pilot high schools. As of now, there is little way to track those students.⁷

Youth whose parents are unable to afford transportation or incapable of navigating LAUSD's student transfer policies must live, what school administrators, parents and youth described, as "double-lives." On campus, they guard their home addresses and are careful not to tell classmates or school administrators where they live. After school, these students rely heavily on the efforts of the single Safe Passages Coordinator to navigate neighborhoods with some of the highest gang concentrations in LA. The Safe Passages program allows school police and campus security to coordinate with parents, local agencies and local police to escort youth to and from school and to mediate on-campus conflicts. Watts' housing development residents spoke of the need to expand the Safe Passages programs at both Jordan High and Markham Middle Schools to increase parents and community members' participation.

School dynamics – such as the lack of resources for school safety and cultural awareness education – aggravate gang flare-ups around racial tensions. For example, if a student reports feeling unsafe due to gang intimidation, threats or racial tensions, LAUSD policy typically calls for their immediate transfer. Little is done to educate classmates about safety issues or cultural dynamics. In fact, the policies are not well-known. The culture of secrecy and the lack of transparency fuels tensions and emboldens the gang members on campus. Table 6 illustrates the frustration of housing residents with school safety efforts. Nearly half or 42% rate the school safety as ineffective and only 9% of residents rated school safety measures as effective.

⁷ Anecdotal evidence from Jordan High School official suggests as many as 500 youth every year are tracked to attend Jordan, but never do.

Security personnel, school administration and the students themselves noted the need for more individualized attention to students from caring adults.

Public Housing

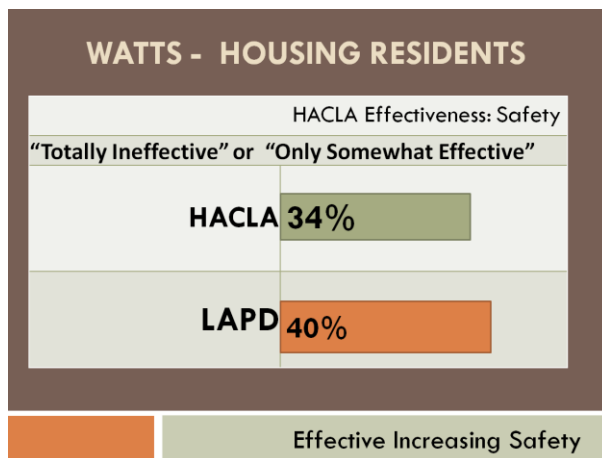
A history of failed initiatives and broken promises has instilled a longstanding distrust between most residents and the housing development administration. Residents lack understanding of housing policies. Their confusion is exacerbated by conflicting explanations of the HACLA policies from site staff and the lack of systematic and culturally competent educational outreach to help understand such policies. For example, although HACLA provides a 30 day comment period to residents along with copies of any policy changes in English and Spanish for their review, there is little evidence that residents actually receive the notification or any reminders and whether HACLA provides any supports for residents to ensure that all residents can in fact communicate their comments (including options of residents with limited literacy or language needs.) This lack of understanding increases the fear of eviction and distrust of HACLA amongst residents; fear and distrust in turn erodes community cohesion making the development evermore harder to secure.

The housing authority's inability to respond appropriately to the safety concerns of residents empowers nonresident actors who physically are present onsite and exercise their influence as traditional power brokers in ways that further discourage resident participation. For example, quarterly safety meetings are too infrequent to capture residents concerns and survey data highlight how more than half of Latino respondents say residents are uncomfortable participating in HACLA resident meeting.⁸

Survey respondents from housing developments in Watts ranked HACLA as second only to LAPD as the agency most responsible for maintaining safety on site. Yet, Table 7 shows that in the same survey, respondents reported HACLA as "totally ineffective" or "somewhat effective" at improving neighborhood safety. Only LAPD, ranking last among all agencies, received lower ratings than HACLA in effectively improving safety.

⁸ In the survey, of all Latino respondents who reported that they were residents of one of the three major housing development in Watts and 36% reported that they somewhat agreed that "people in my neighborhood feel comfortable participating in housing authority resident committee meetings" while nearly 15% of Latino respondents reported that they strongly agree with that statement for 50% (or about t50 respondents total.)

Table 7: Effectiveness of HACLA's Safety Measures



Residents are generally confused and under informed about HACLA policy. For example, during community meetings, residents would complain about changes in rental benefits and request personal consultation with staff, often with paperwork in hand. Residents have also become discouraged by what they see as the arbitrary enforcement of these policies. Some residents would complain about preferential treatment and speculated on a number of different causes. For example, resident who feels HACLA arbitrarily enforces policies or provide preferential treatment to some residents, are encouraged to seek relief from the site manager, Assistant Director and Director of Public Housing – however these may be the very people who residents fear retaliation or eviction for reporting. In fact, there is little evidence that residents know about the grievance procedure or have the capacity to access it. Many in the focus groups and community meetings spoke about receiving preferential or punitive treatment based on their race, location within the development or even length of residency. A few residents would put forth their conjecture as fact, thereby increasing negative rumors and fueling community distrust.

Confusing/Contradicting Policies HACLA does not clearly or effectively explain its policies to residents and has no consistent method of informing residents of relevant changes to policy. Conflicting state and federal mandates complicate policy enforcement for HACLA staff. Therefore, how policies are explained or translated vary greatly across the developments and even among staff at the same development. For example, HACLA policy states that households with undocumented family members must pay prorated rents and that HACLA cannot refuse

residency to a family with at least one eligible citizen.⁹ A family that has at least one member without documentation or has a family member that refuses to state their immigration status may be required to pay more in rent. The confusing and seemingly contradicting policies around immigration status discourage families with undocumented members, already in fear of deportation, to report their public housing residency status. Needless to say, families who are fearful of eviction and/or deportation rarely will report their safety concerns to anyone else to prevent bringing attention to themselves.

Policies that Threaten Safety HACLAs enforcement of its policy without consideration of the unintended negative impact of such enforcement on resident safety causes residents to believe that HACLAs does not care about their well-being. The maintenance charges or “fix-it” policy authorizes HACLAs to charge residents for repairs to items and maintenance services due to any damages in their unit due to “tenant misuse, abuse or neglect.” HACLAs executive staff have asserted that the first lock replacement is free, but many residents attested to having been penalized contrary to the stated policy. HACLAs reported that in 2011, “only 8.9% of all work orders were changed to residents.” It is unclear how many were charged in the three housing developments in Watts and in Ramona Gardens, how many of those charge work orders were for broken locks, or how many residents never requested a broken lock work order for fear of charges and have therefore placed their families at greater risk.

Residents are held responsible for any subsequent lock replacements unless they can present management staff with an official police report. The negative impact of this policy is further exacerbated by actions of other public sector entities such as LAPD. In focus groups, residents complained that sometimes calls to LAPD went unanswered. Others residents reported that officers took reports at the scene, but they were then unable to locate the information from the station after the incident. Residents say they are often unwilling to report crime or assist police for fear of retribution from the gangs Caught between HACLAs fix-it policy, difficulty around securing a police report, and the general fear of gang retaliation, all of these residents are at high-risk of being re-victimized.

Inconsistent Enforcement Residents mentioned a specific policy - the one-strike policy – that gives HACLAs the authority to evict residents if anyone on the lease has a criminal record. Despite federal guidelines that discourage such broad interpretations of the policy, many residents reported friends, neighbors and relatives being evicted over the one-strike policy.¹⁰

⁹ Admission and Continued Occupancy Policy for Public Housing and shall apply to all HACLAs owned and operated public housing properties (24:54) <http://www.hacla.org/attachments/wysiwyg/10/2009ACOP.pdf>

¹⁰While HACLAs must abide by federal policies, there is support for the idea that local public housing authority can and should exercise discretion in the interpretation of a federal policy. One example regarding a related but different issue is applicants with criminal records: “PHAs must also formally allow all applicants to appeal a denial for housing giving the applicant an opportunity to present evidence of positive change since the time of

According to the residents, in some cases the one-strike policy meant elderly residents were evicted when it was discovered that their grandchildren received mail at their address. It is important to note, that it is nearly impossible for HACLA to enforce this rule with any sort of consistency. HACLA can only react to the information they receive from the law enforcement and criminal justice agencies. Inconsistencies from those agencies alone mean many residents who are unsure whether they fall under this one-strike policy will never register in the HACLA system.

The inconsistent enforcement of the one-strike policy works against community wide safety in two key ways. First, the lack of clarity around the policy encourages residents to hide or not report family members that either live with them or that are short-term guest for fear of eviction. HACLA officials admitted that fully a third of all people residing in public housing in Watts are not on the lease. Secondly, the lack of fairness breeds distrust and suspicion and fuels rumors – all of which community gang experts said are used by gangs to disrupt community cohesiveness in the housing developments. Building trust amongst neighbors is impeded when so many residents live in constant fear of eviction. The shadow status of these and other housing development dwellers provide cover for criminal activity that leads to the disruption of community peace.

Ill-informed Staff Ill-informed or misinformed HACLA staff sometimes needlessly aggravate negative resident issues. While residents technically could seek out other HACLA staff to correct the misinformation, because HACLA staff are seen as an authority on such matters residents may not question the validity of the information given. During one community meeting, a staff member responded to residents' concerns about the security cameras by reporting that HACLA had nothing to do with the installation of security cameras and that concerns would have to be voiced with LAPD. In fact HACLA requested their installation and covered part of the cost. Staff at the three developments were at times wary or uninterested in participating in HACLA's Community Safety Partnership assessment. The few staff who had heard of the Community Safety Partnership project reported discomfort and hesitancy in participating in the project, stemming from the lack of clarity from their superiors about what was expected of them. Staff who had heard of the project repeated hearsay that HACLA is funding a "\$45 million a year for LAPD." In reality, under the Memorandum of Agreement, HACLA is investing \$6.2 million over five years, with \$5 million going towards advance pay upgrades and other LAPD costs and \$1.2 million being set aside for auxiliary programming. LAPD is bearing the bulk of the cost by

incarceration. Working within the parameters and flexibilities of the above regulations, many PHAs have established admissions and occupancy policies that have promoted reuniting families in supportive communities and using stable housing as a platform for improving the quality of life." Reentry Mythbusters, Federal Interagency Reentry Council. 2011. 1:2

http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/documents/0000/1090/REENTRY_MYTHBUSTERS.pdf

funding the base salary of all officers being deployed through the project even though these were existing costs within the LAPD budget. Nevertheless, it is a significant reallocation of officers for this long-term deployment.

Lack of Timely Information Sharing with Staff/Staff Capacity Delays in information or lack of staff capacity frustrates residents in the developments and dampens trust in HACLA. Just hours before the start of the Summer Night Lights event, in one development, staff were caught off guard and professed to being unaware that the kick-off was to start that evening. The front office staff seemed unprepared that they would have to stay past normal work hours with such little notice from their superiors. In the main office of another development, a monolingual Spanish-speaking resident entered with questions about her son's court appointment. Unfortunately, no one spoke enough Spanish to explain to her that the housing authority couldn't make decisions about her son's court appearance. Staff reported feeling regretful after the resident left with her issue unresolved.¹¹

Examples abound of policies that residents feel are unfair. For example, at all the developments, the vast majority of non-HACLA job postings in the management office require at least a high school diploma and some specialized training, making them inappropriate for roughly 2/3^{ds} of residents that lack such educational background. There should be adequate attempts to post jobs that meet the residents need in addition to meeting the requirements of HACLA. Residents complained repeatedly that the job postings seem like an afterthought. In another example, HUD guidelines encourage housing authorities to educate residents about pest control by developing an outreach/educational program.¹² Instead, staff had the entire development sprayed with pesticides at the three developments, while residents reported being under constant threat of penalties for excessive pest treatments. A five-minute resident training video is being developed but has not been distributed at the time of this report. In another example, residents that live on the outside of the development receive the benefits of landscaping and frequent maintenance, but residents in the interior were penalized and could be evicted for any alterations to their units or if their units were left improperly unkempt.¹³ Lastly, one resident frantically reached out to data gatherers to report she believed staff may have been responsible for the stolen money order she delivered to the management officer for rent payment. Despite having knowledge of an increase in thefts in the area and no formal

¹¹ Incidents described witnessed while on site with staff.

¹² HUD's Guidance on Integrated Pest Management. February 3, 2006, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development issued its Guidance for Integrated Pest Management. On May 24, 2007 and May 28, 2008, HUD renewed the guidance. <http://www.nchh.org/Portals/0/HUD%20Guidance%20on%20IPM.pdf>

¹³ HALCA partnered with North East Trees to plant over 200 trees in Imperial and Ramona Gardens and over 500 trees were planted at Nickerson. Planting on the outside of the development was in response to a congressional member's request and HUD mandate to improve "curb appeal." SOURCE: HACLA Memo to Advancement Project, February 2012.

mechanism for this resident to report and resolve her issue, three days later HACLA staff promptly processed a notice for her eviction for unpaid rent. While HACLA is obligated to implement and adhere to local, state and federal policies, the way HACLA has implemented some of these policies does not breed confidence among the residents that HACLA has any regard for the residents' best interests.

Very few Latino families in the three developments felt comfortable enough to speak in an open forum about safety. In housing settings where Latino residents were able to speak freely, praise abounded for the individual efforts of Block Captains. African American families also reported trust in the Block Captains. In use in Nickerson, but on hiatus in Imperial Courts, the Block Captain model has found most success in Jordan Downs. Redevelopment staff have begun initiating smaller Block Captain gatherings and the initial results have been positive. The intimate setting has allowed for more equal participation amongst residents. Further, the Block Captain structure helps to foster the necessary safe space to build trust among neighbors. This security, in turn, has increased the willingness amongst all residents to participate in housing development activities and services. Residents are hopeful that these efforts will allow them to engage more equitably with HACLA. While a budding optimism struggles to take hold in Jordan Downs, Imperial Courts and Nickerson Gardens chafe under what residents see as continued lack of accountability, transparency and staff capacity from HACLA.

- **Jordan Downs** Most of the continued success of the Block Captains in Jordan Downs is due to the support of Redevelopment staff and resources. There is still a lingering skepticism among some residents as to whether the Redevelopment efforts will manifest in ways that have been promised. Despite that, there is no mistaking the fact that there have been large, positive changes in Jordan Downs as a direct result of the Redevelopment staff's community engagement efforts over the past three years. In addition, Redevelopment staff have recently announced that SHIELDS for Families was selected to provide assessment and case management services to every family within Jordan Downs.
- **Nickerson Gardens** Nickerson Gardens has a culturally competent front line staff and an accessible, enthusiastic and knowledgeable Resident Manager. Staff at Nickerson Gardens had more time on site and experience overall than staff at Jordan Downs and Imperial Courts. HACLA staff at Nickerson Gardens were able to attract Latino youth applicants to its Summer Youth jobs program, slightly more than GRYD. This shows that with intentional effort, the Nickerson Gardens staff have become more adept at problem solving with residents and that they have the capacity to exceed the requirements of their roles. Even with the positive efforts, the staff at Nickerson Gardens need additional capacity in order to ensure consistent safety to all residents.

It is commendable that HACLA's efforts have led to more Latino residents attending housing development meetings and participating in activities; however, once there, Latino residents speak out about the lack of safety in Nickerson Gardens and the lack of accountability from HACLA. Over the summer, youth workers, staff and residents reported an increase in the number of muggings, chain snatchings, "pocket checks," and sexual assaults/harassment. Donny and Hank are effective community interventionists, but cannot be everywhere as full time members of the maintenance staff. Several residents reported understaffing at GRYD's SNL and many parents felt that children were left unsupervised, resulting in bullying and intimidation. Latino youth reported feeling unwelcome at GRYD and HACLA events. Latino youth were overall less likely to participate in housing related activities including summer programming and reported that they felt programs and services were not "meant for them" or were "for little kids."

- **Imperial Courts** Staff at Imperial Courts had less experience on the whole than either Jordan Downs or Nickerson Gardens. A new Resident Manager meant that at the time of the assessment, Block Captains had not been convened for the better part of the year. In addition, at the writing of this report the Resident Advisory Committee had all "termed out" and no longer had enough members eligible to participate. Residents reported that previous management had done little to build trust. As such, the resident engagement infrastructure at Imperial Courts has laid dormant for a significant amount of time. Some residents and community leaders may argue that the lack of accountability to residents has been a long standing problem at Imperial Courts.

Because of the void left by a non-functioning HACLA resident engagement structure, a parallel power structure has developed within Imperial Courts led by former and current residents. These resident and non-resident actors have attempted to hold HACLA and Imperial Courts staff accountable through participation at community meetings, commission board meetings, testimony and marches. Sometimes adversarial but also expressing a desire to work with public sector agencies, these resident and non-resident actors engage, outreach and otherwise organize resident participation in community activities in ways that HACLA and other agencies depend on. Despite the usefulness and influence of non-resident actors, the behavior of some has come under increased criticism from HACLA as well as other community stakeholders, while the community actors themselves feel that they are not being fairly compensated or recognized for the increased expectations placed upon them.

Law Enforcement

Perhaps more than any other bureau in LAPD, South Bureau has had the longest history of close collaboration with community leaders and gang intervention workers to reduce gang activity. Southeast Division leadership specifically credited the WGTF as an important partner in effectively reducing violent confrontation between gangs. Despite historically low levels of violent crime in the three developments, outbreaks of high violence continue to test the limited capacities of the law enforcement and gang interventionist collaborative efforts.

Targeted Suppression and Community Relations Southeast Division leadership moved away from intensive enforcement of gang injunctions and other gang suppression efforts in Watts. The enforcement efforts had negatively affected community relations with housing residents who fear HACLA's enforcement of evictions related to any gang affiliation. Recently, Southeast has increased its efforts to foster trust and credibility within the African American community leadership. Most notable of these efforts has been the consistent participation in the weekly WGTF meetings. Other efforts have included partnerships and collaborations with other public sector entities such as the Jordan Downs Redevelopment project and the Sheriff's Department community events. Two key elements of LAPD Southeast's increased partnership with community stakeholders in Watts are its school-based partnerships and its partnership with gang intervention agencies.

Schools Over the past two years, LAPD's Southeast has nearly doubled the number of its Community Relation officers and increased its presence and partnership with local schools in Watts. The partnership with the 99th Street Elementary School is a model school-police partnership where officers participate in book readings, dialogues and field trips with both students and parents. LAPD Southeast has been able to use such partnerships for community based activities as well as excursions to local landmarks and parks that have expanded officers' opportunity for positive contact with the area youth. Southeast leadership has noted a reduction of over 50% in the number of juvenile arrests since the implementation of the community youth outreach efforts.¹⁴

Community Relations between the community and law enforcement demonstrate a significant paradigm shift. Both have shown a new commitment to maintaining open channels of communication and building trust. Both residents and law enforcement have recognized the need to put past differences behind them, and unite to achieve the common goal of reducing violence throughout Watts. Law enforcement must continue to engage with the community and develop relationships with the most marginalized community members, paying specific attention to ways of engaging and sustaining the trust of the Latino community in public safety efforts. For instance, some Latino housing residents remain skeptical that the WGTF is an open forum for all community members. Therefore LAPD's continued participation in WGTF without

¹⁴ LAPD Southeast Captain Philip Tingirides, Watts Gang Task force Meeting, August 8th, 2011

intentional outreach to these residents only serves to reinforce the impression that LAPD is not accessible to the Latino community. LAPD Southeast sees its partnership with WGTF as a useful community policing tool; however it must continue to look for ways to expand community outreach and meaningful engagement with all residents of the housing developments.

The sheer level of violence and gang entrenchment within the developments means that residents still fear retaliation and therefore do not report crime (especially property crime), speak out in community meetings, or cooperate in investigations.¹⁵ Law enforcement officers who work the developments report the difficulty in receiving any information from witnesses and even victims of crime. In addition, officers stressed the need to empower new and Latino residents of the housing developments to take more of a leadership role in community safety. Other law enforcement officers spoke of the need for formal accountability in the field of gang intervention.

While LAPD Southeast has spent more of its community outreach efforts toward African Americans, negative police contacts with other LAPD officers continue unabated. The positive gains in community-LAPD Southeast relations are tenuous as Table 8 shows. African American residents concede that relations between law enforcement and community have improved at the LAPD leadership level. However, they repeatedly reported that negative individual contacts with LAPD and Sheriff officers were still the frustrating norm. CSP officers will need to remain aware of and attempt to avoid that negative dynamic by striving for respect and congeniality with residents, to counter the history of mistrust, suspicion and hostility.

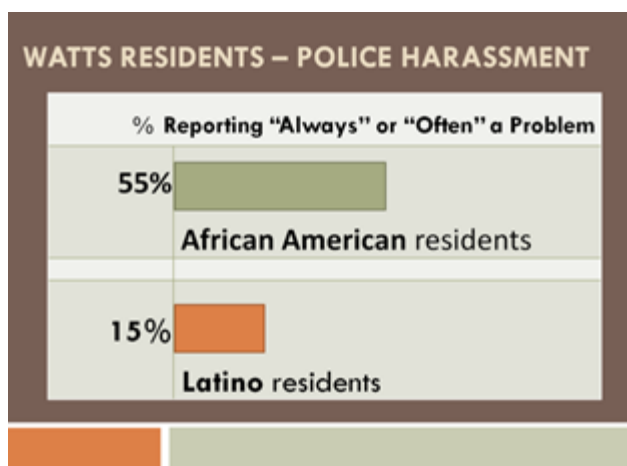


Table 8: Watts Housing Residents Reporting Police Harassment "Always or Often" a Problem

¹⁵ Zip Code 90002 in Watts received a grade of "F" in a Safety Score, ranking 104th of 104 zip codes. For methodology see Community Safety Scorecard: City of Los Angeles 2011. Advancement Project's Urban Peace & Healthy City programs and the Violence Prevention Coalition <http://v3.advancementprojectca.org/sites/default/files/imce/Community%20Safety%20Scorecard%20FINAL%20LowRes%2010-25-11.pdf>

The issue most raised by residents during meetings, focus groups and interviews was the lack of monitoring of the security cameras in the developments. Surveys and focus group data made clear that after initially rejecting the security cameras and being suspicious about what more monitoring would entail, most residents came to accept the cameras. Residents reported that crime and gang intimidation decreased and that law enforcement was more responsive in the areas covered by cameras. Eventually, however, many residents began to note that crime had simply shifted to other parts of the community where the cameras could not monitor. As more time passed and as many crimes that seem as if they could have been solved are not solved due to the failures of the cameras, resident opinions began to again turn against the cameras. Table 9 shows that the security cameras received mostly negative response from residents – they ranked second only to the gang injunction as the gang reduction initiative with which residents were “most dissatisfied.”

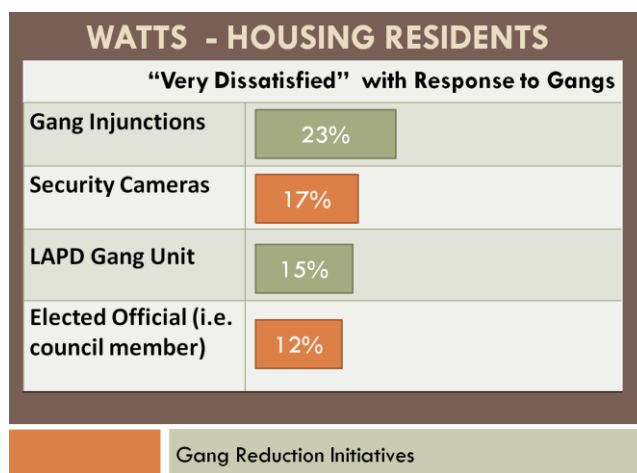


Table 9: Watts Housing Residents Ratings of Gang Reduction Efforts

Research showed that other LAPD divisions with Closed Captioned Security cameras have the capacity to staff the cameras 24-hours a day.¹⁶ Yet, cameras in the Watts developments are left mostly unstaffed. Residents in many different forums complained that even when there was crime occurring in plain view of the cameras, the cameras were useless because they were unmanned, not recording, or immobile to follow the progression of the crime. Unfortunately, this scenario happened repeatedly last year - three times in relation to officer involved shootings involving housing residents and community youth. The community had the

¹⁶ For example, the installation of six motion-censored cameras in Baldwin Village through LAPD's New Technology for High Crime Area <http://www.lapolicefoundation.org/projects.html> project was notable. LAPD received financial support from Target and the LA Police Foundation to install the cameras but it is unclear whether private funds were raised for staffing costs.

impression that these repeated camera failures seem to benefit the police, further eroding the level of confidence in the security camera program.

Gang Intervention

The majority of Watts' gang intervention workers provide hardcore, street-based gang intervention services primarily to the area's African American gangs. In addition, gang intervention workers in the GRYD zone often work closely with youth and serve as positive role models, especially for young males at risk of gang involvement. In addition to violence interruption, gang intervention workers also lead youth programming such as recreational activities, field trips, and support groups. Most gang intervention experts spoke of the growing need to address the lack of gang intervention capacity in Watts for the emerging power, influence and violence within Latino gangs, such as the Hacienda Boys and South Side Grape.

Southeast continues to be a model amongst LAPD divisions in its long-term partnership with gang intervention in Watts. Through coordination with GRYD and Summer Night Lights, gang intervention and LAPD officers partner closely to support the healthy participation of all community residents in the community-wide activities. During high stakes incidents and crisis, LAPD have spoken often of the vital role gang intervention plays in de-escalating tensions and violence. Southeast has been one of the most active LAPD Divisions in validating gang intervention as a necessary tool to increasing community safety in gang entrenched communities.

Continued Challenges The first step to engaging and building the trust among the Latino and the African American community is for LAPD Southeast to increase responsiveness to distress calls and to ensure follow-ups with residents willing to break their silence and report crime. Residents said repeatedly that whenever they did report crime, it was difficult to get a timely response from LAPD and follow-up after the incident. Residents often report on LAPD's lack of responsiveness when the issue of safety is raised at community meetings, which then discourages other residents to report crime.

- **Jordan Downs** Residents community groups such as Project Fatherhood and Motivated Mothers expressed willingness to support and partner with Community Safety Partnership officers. Gang intervention agencies work closely with these groups and also expressed a willingness to partner with the program. Both parents and interventionists spoke of the negative interaction between LAPD and youth – being chased through the housing development and rarely being positively engaged or mentored, for instance. They also

spoke of the high level of distrust between residents, LAPD and HACLA due to the lack of consistent staffing of the security cameras.

- **Nickerson Gardens** Resident community groups such as Resident Advisory Committee and the Block Captains expressed willingness to support and partner with Community Safety Partnership officers. They too felt a strong level of distrust associated with the security cameras. One Latina resident who spoke up at a community meeting reported that she was mugged under a security camera near an alley. After filing a police report, she was then told by the police officer that the cameras were not staffed at the time. The officer offered no other assistance in apprehending the culprit or returning her stolen necklace, and the resident reported being afraid of retaliation for reporting the incident to police.

The gang interventionist agency contracted through GRYD to serve Nickerson Garden is KUSH, Inc. The executive leadership of KUSH Inc. expressed strong reservations about the Community Safety Partnership, partly due to a strong distrust of LAPD. KUSH Inc. also expressed an unwillingness to participate in the Community Safety Partnership table without compensation. They, like residents, expressed a concern about the investment of a security camera system when funds for prevention programming remained so scarce.¹⁷ The need for balanced investment into prevention, intervention and law enforcement activities was an often repeated theme in all three housing developments.

- **Imperial Courts** The gang intervention capacity in Imperial Courts is still informal, although new entities like United Cultures are attempting to build their organizational capacity to provide more formal services. Some gang intervention workers formerly affiliated with United Cultures have been subcontracted through GRYD to provide services during Imperial Courts' Summer Night Lights. Despite sometimes strained and contentious relations, gang intervention in Imperial Courts has continued to work with law enforcement as the influence of the community activists who lead such efforts remains steady in Imperial Courts and the Watts community.

Gang intervention capacity in Imperial Courts as well as in the other housing developments sometimes behaves in an unprofessional manner. This is particularly true in Imperial Courts where capacity is being coalesced under a new organizational structure. However, whether speaking out about the need for youth safety at community meetings or facing criticism from police officers for inappropriate behavior, Imperial Courts intervention workers remain steadfastly influential. What often waivers is their status vis-à-vis HACLA staff and

¹⁷ See more on KUSH, Inc. under "Other Public Sector: GRYD"

administration. For example, during the data gathering stage of the needs assessment HACL A administration officials and executive staff repeatedly described the relationship between HACL A and one Imperial Courts activist as “pay to play.” That is, whether rubberizing a playground or holding a community meeting, HACL A administrators felt “forced” into providing this community actor the necessary “remuneration” as a quid pro quo to ensure the safety of staff, visitors, contractors and even property. Without payment, HACL A officials admitted that they feared for the safety of the staff, contractors and HACL A property. Yet, in numerous public appearances HACL A touts a relationship with this same actor who is currently on HACL A’s website as a “community activist.”¹⁸ This dysfunctional relationship prevents a true and ethical partnership; yet it simultaneously empowers his role within the development as a “community gatekeeper” and virtually ensures that HACL A will be unable to effectively engage the community without him.

Other Public Sector

Watts residents generally feel ignored by the public sector. Other public sector agencies, such as social workers from the Los Angeles County’s Department of Children and Family Services, are as feared and mistrusted as are law enforcement and HACL A. The lack of accessible hospital and preventive services aggravates the already precarious health and financial problems of low-income families residing within the housing developments. Residents expressed a high level of distrust and yet resignation to the substandard services they have come to expect as low income residents of South LA.

Mayor’s Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development It is hard to overstate the importance of the GRYD Summer Night Lights (SNL) programs to youth and families of Watts. It is also hard to overstate the unfamiliarity residents’ have with GRYD programming during the rest of the year. In fact, few if any residents knew what GRYD programming was. For example, very few people in the housing developments knew or had heard of “GRYD” and only knew it primarily as “Summer Night Lights.” Those who did know expressed strong disappointment about GRYD’s lack of programmatic capacity to meet the needs in Watts. Summer Night Lights, which is jointly administered by GRYD, HACL A and LAPD in partnership with other public sector and community agencies, by far received the most positive marks of all gang reduction initiatives: as Table 10 shows, 30% or nearly a third of all Watts housing development residents said that they were “very satisfied” with the SNL programming in their development. Despite this, GRYD continues to struggle to reach out to Latino residents. Their participation in SNL

¹⁸ HACL A Commissioners & CEO visit Imperial Courts. As retrieved on Nov. 5, 2011: <http://www.hacla.org/hacla-commissioners--ceo-visit-imperial-courts/>

varied by developments and Latino survey respondents offered more qualified approval of SNL programming.

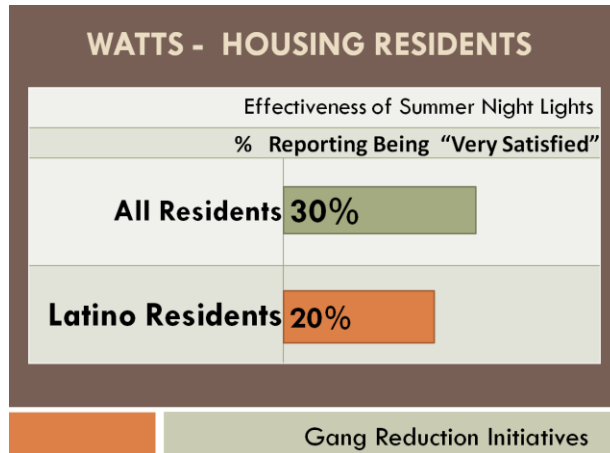


Table 10: Watts Housing Residents Satisfaction with Summer Night Lights

The Watts/Southeast GRYD contracts with KUSH Inc. to serve its one GRYD zone in Watts which includes Nickerson Gardens. However, KUSH Inc. does not have broad enough influence to provide hard core gang intervention services to residents outside of Nickerson Gardens and its surrounding areas. Watts Labor Community Action Committee is contracted through the Watts/Southeast GRYD to provide prevention services. While program capacity is limited to roughly 150 youth, it covers a large geographic area that includes many more hundreds of youth residents in need of similar services.

The community reputation of these agencies has suffered in no small part due to these limitations of the GRYD contract. In focus groups and community meetings, residents sounded off on a common theme: the suspicion that many community agencies receive funds for services that housing residents never receive. For instance, Watts Labor Community Action Committee has been accused at the WGTF meetings by community activists as an agency that receives funding, but lacks the capacity to serve the developments. GRYD contracted agencies that target the GRYD zone for services which is only a small part of the overall Watts region end up being perceived as limited in capacity and unable to meet the scale of need. This negative perception reinforces mistrust.

WGTF Janice Hahn’s longtime public sector stewardship of the WGTF is coming to an end with the election of her former council seat on November 8th, 2011. Many of the top candidates have expressed support of the WGTF, but whether they can or will be willing to support WGTF at the level that Councilmember Hahn did remains to be seen. Despite its shortcomings including its failure to include Latino representation, the WGTF is the only multi-sector, multi-

development table focused on safety and gang violence reduction in Watts. Losing this resource would be a blow to the cross-sector momentum in Watts.

There have been some efforts led by participants at the WGTF to mobilize trash clean-up, sidewalk and pothole repair and otherwise provide the basic government services that other areas of the City receive. Social workers from Department of Children and Family Services have begun partnering with community leaders in Imperial Courts during SNL to build relationships and provide informal education to residents. Recent housing development communities and the Los Angeles Fire Department have increased partnerships through supporting community events receiving mutual assistance from community around lost persons and fire hazard safety.

Gangs and Crime

Despite being almost identical demographically and separated by less than a mile, residents and youth do not come together or access services from each other's respective developments. In fact, gang strife and rivalry are so embedded amongst residents that it is common for many youth to avoid uttering the name of the housing developments where they do not live. Gang entrenchments have reinforced these dynamics. As such, the three housing developments have been involved in a decades long gang war that continues to divide the Watts community.

Gang membership is not restricted by age, but research shows that gangs primarily attract and affect youth. Perhaps nowhere in Los Angeles is that illustrated more than in the public housing developments in Watts. Each is densely populated with a large concentration of children and youth. More than half of the residents in the three developments in Watts are 18 years of age or younger. All of the African American gangs in the Watts/Southeast GRYD are cliques or sets of the Bloods or the Crips. According to law enforcement, the gangs in the area are active in narcotics sales, robberies, assaults, batteries, carjacking, murder, witness intimidation and vandalism. Gangs are a significant contributor to violence in the Watts/Southeast GRYD. According to the LAPD, 66% of the 184 gang crimes were violent crimes in 2007.¹⁹

Housing development residents in the GRYD experience a disproportionate amount of gang activity. The use and sale of drugs is commonplace in the public areas of the housing developments. During the assessment, it was not uncommon to see residents or guests using marijuana in plain sight of – or sometime while conversing with – housing development management. Like previous assessments, residents again cited witnessing gang members hiding

¹⁹ GRYD/Southeast Assessment, 2007. Available at http://mayor.lacity.org/stellent/groups/electedofficials/@myr_ch_contributor/documents/contributor_web_content/lacityp_005677.pdf

drugs on their property and running into their homes while being chased by law enforcement officers; shooting exchanges between gang members on multiple occasions; and even having bullet holes left in their homes.

Crime Residents shared that they had been vandalized and mugged, their homes burglarized or being caught in gun crossfire, though all admitted such incidents have decreased in frequency and severity over the years. Newer residents remained particularly vulnerable. During the assessment, a Latina data gatherer who was mistaken for a new resident was twice approached with hostility by long-term residents in one development. “What you doing in my neighborhood?” asked one resident. Another man, identified by the resident manager as not a resident on any lease, but friendly with many gang members aggressively confronted data gatherers, but noticeably relaxed after introductions. He remarked, “Oh, I thought you were moving in to the empty unit.” Most youth and many adults – mainly male - spoke of being confronted by gang members on numerous occasions asking where they were from. Many residents did not report most of these crimes either out of fear or a lack of faith that LAPD would follow-up.

Recruitment Recruitment and intimidation of youth for gang involvement was described as an almost constant threat for young males in the three housing developments. Of course, families play a significant role in a youth’s risk for joining a gang. For multigenerational gang-involved families in Watts, gang activity becomes closely intertwined with community life. For youth in those families, gang involvement of family members creates an easy transition into gangs. One school administrator stated, “Kids around here don’t join gangs. They are born into them.” Youth recognized that many did not want to join the gang but felt obligated. Law enforcement strategies that target the entire, multigenerational gang-involved families as a means to targeting individuals involved in criminal activity can lead to an increase in the number of youth having early contact with the juvenile justice and/or the foster care systems, which ultimately increases their risk of gang joining.

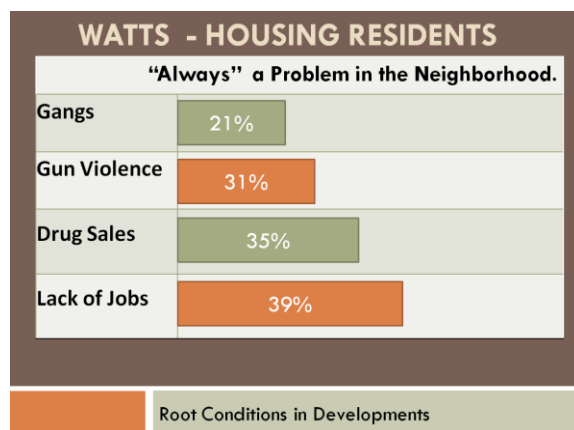


Table 11: Issues that Watts Residents as “Always” a problem in the Neighborhood

Table 11 shows that survey respondents overwhelmingly rated top issues facing housing residents in Watts as drugs, guns and the lack of jobs. Gangs – intimidation and recruitment - closely ranked as the fourth most pressing issue. In focus groups and interviews it was clear that although far from harmless, residents recognized that the gangs themselves were not the primary draw for youth to a life of crime. The lack of jobs, the lure of easy money and the availability of low cost weapons served as conduits for gang joining and gang influence. For far too many youth residing in the three housing developments, the cultural pressure to affiliate with gangs is constant and starts as early as elementary school. Most youth contacted during the data gathering reported that the pressures to claim a gang intensify in middle school.

Markham Middle School sits squarely in the middle of nine different hostile Blood, Crips and Latino gangs, and three different public housing developments: Jordan Downs, Nickerson Gardens and another development in Watts, Gonzaque Village. For many youth, Markham Middle School is the only time they will interact with youth from other public housing developments. Given the known rivalry between the gangs who claim each of the housing developments, many youth are pressured to start claiming a gang on the basis of where they live once they enter middle school. Markham students, parents and administrators noted that students are often targeted by bullies, robbed at knife point by petty thieves, and harassed physically, verbally and sometimes sexually on the way to and from school on 103rd street. Nickerson Gardens and Imperial Courts youth attendance has dropped off significantly at Markham. Youth, parents and community residents reported that youth were being forced to seek out gangs for protection and sanctuary.

- **Jordan Downs** The Grape Street Crips are a notorious criminal street gang with transcontinental ties and a strong influence within the California prison system. Although it is closely affiliated with a Latino clique – the Southside Grape – its members consist predominantly of African American males based in and around Jordan Downs. In 2003, the City permanently enjoined the Grape Street gang and as a result of the injunction many affiliated members relocated to nearby areas outside of the development. Grape Street, like many Crips gangs, is notorious for its internal “beefs” and many gang-related eruptions of violence in Jordan Downs can be traced to internal strife within the gang. Since the breaking of the 1992 Truce, there continues to be sporadic outbreaks of violence between Grape Street members and Bounty Hunter Bloods in Nickerson Gardens as well as the PJ Crips located within Imperial Courts. Grape Street claims Jordan Downs High School and the surrounding area. The gang’s primary criminal activity includes drug sales and the production of methamphetamines.

- **Nickerson Gardens** Nickerson Gardens is claimed by the Bounty Hunters, a Blood gang. Violent crime has been decreasing since 2005 in the Watts/Southeast GRYD, especially homicides. However, gang-related crime has remained constant and property crime has increased minimally in the past three years. Disputes regarding the sale and distribution of narcotics are one of the main factors that contribute to violence among the Bounty Hunters, but many internal and external disputes are initiated over “respect” and “reputation.” Bounty Hunters claims Gompers Middle School and Locke High School, Maxine Waters Employment Center and much of the area west of Grandee Ave. in Watts. The gang’s primary criminal activity includes drug sales, prostitution, and robbery.
- **Imperial Courts** Imperial Courts is controlled by the PJ Crips (or Project Crips). Unlike the other two gangs, their territory - roughly 12th Street to the North, Imperial Highway to the South and between Grape Street and Mona Blvd - does not extend much beyond Imperial Courts’ own boundaries. Local gang experts reported that the PJ Crips got along with Grape Street until the late 80s and since then have been engaged in a deadly feud. PJ Crips were briefly said to have engaged in an unofficial alliance with the Bounty Hunters against Grape Street. Today, no such alliance exists, but shows that Grape Street is a more sizable and influential gang than PJs.

Watts Regional Strategy

Watts was a community that shared one history and a shared culture. For the past 35 years it has been divided by gangs and gang violence with real consequences for investment and development of the area. Despite intermarriage and plenty of informal intermingling, residents from each of the developments can have no formal or public contact with each other for fear of gang violence or retaliation. Additionally, the communities that surround the housing developments view the developments themselves as largely off limits. Despite all three developments being managed by HACLA, being separated by about a mile, and located within the same zip code, they all received different resources at different intervals, have different programming and operate under slightly different policies. The direct investment of resources and services as well as the equal access to the services for all families in Jordan Downs as a part of the Redevelopment will continue to build on the recent successes there in resident capacity development. However, it also stands to increase the existing sense of inequity between the three developments.

The focus area is by and large isolated from other neighborhoods in Watts by the railway to the West, the 105 freeway to the South, and large industrial parks and the unincorporated area of

LA County to the east. The area is further bounded by four different municipalities and therefore separate public sector jurisdictions on three sides (north, south and east.) Gangs and criminal networks capitalized on the confusion caused by gaps in services around multijurisdictional areas such as Watts. For example, the year after cameras were installed in Jordan Downs, assessments found that crime had increased in the zip codes immediately surrounding the developments. In addition, effective violence intervention requires the capacity to engage multi-gang dynamics – whether rumor control, funeral planning or safe passages. Again, the need for balanced investment into prevention, intervention and law enforcement activities was an often repeated theme in all three housing developments. Without a coordinated regional strategy, gang interventionist or law enforcement will be unable to effectively sustain violence reduction efforts.

Conclusion

The lack of safety in the three housing developments is often aggravated and negative dynamics often worsen due to the failures by the public sector to take adequate responsibility for community safety. Residents, who struggle under poverty and low educational attainment, still seek better lives, education for their children and to live in safe and healthy neighborhoods. However, they feel they are not supported by HACLA, LAPD and other public sector agencies in the most effective ways.

A long history of African American community activism has been instrumental in creating the gang intervention and community leadership infrastructure along with improved collaboration with LAPD Southeast Division to bring about significant reductions in violence. However, the lack of Latino resident representation within the existing community leadership, despite the fact that Latinos comprise a majority of residents within Watts and the developments, continues to strain community cohesion. African Americans resident feel they get the majority of negative attention from LAPD; while Latino residents feel African American residents also get most of the positive attention and resources.

Youth of all races struggle to navigate under-resourced schools and high levels of community violence without individualized adult attention or sufficient support services. Long-entrenched neighborhood gangs capitalize on chaos sustained from the lack of public sector coordination and community cohesion to maintain lucrative criminal networks. The lure of financial resources and adult mentorships through gang membership provides a constant draw to the unsupervised and impoverished youth that live in the developments. Those able to resist temptation are often pressed into gang affiliation for safety reasons, as adults and community leadership have conceded de facto control of schools and other public spaces to the gangs.

Only through intentional resident engagement and community partnerships can HACLA and LAPD build the trust necessary to support residents and youth to increase community safety. HACLA must clarify its confusing policies, educate residents on all policies and reconsider enforcement of policies that negatively impact resident health, safety and well-being. LAPD must work to engage all residents in the housing development in more positive community-police interactions focused on problem solving. Officers must improve on response to residents' distress calls, follow-up and offer patience and understanding about the limits of community participation given present gang dynamics. HACLA and LAPD must coordinate better together and encourage better coordination and collaboration between public, private and community sectors in the region.

Watts Recommendations

Community Safety Partnership: Immediate Actions

Targeted Outcomes: 1) To improve trust between community, HACLA, and LAPD; 2) Increase the readiness of both HACLA local management personnel and CSP officers; 3) Improve trust and engagement between HACLA/LAPD and immigrant and undocumented communities; 4) Improve interagency coordination and data sharing among law enforcement agencies and HACLA; 5) Improve collaboration with prevention, intervention and reentry resources; 7) Decrease the number of arrests for non-violent offenders; 8) Increase multi-jurisdictional coordination; 9) Improve cultural competency of HACLA and LAPD staff; and 10) Ensure efforts and strategies are Community-Based & Culturally Competent Service Delivery, use Data Driven Policy Making and have Built-in Accountability) during the project implementation.

To ensure the successful implementation of the Community Safety Partnership:

Personnel/Training

- *HACLA* should immediately appoint staff at each development site who will serve as the lead for the Community Safety Partnerships and serve as the HACLA liaison to LAPD and other partners.
- *LAPD CSP officers* should spend sufficient time on foot patrol and participating and organizing community functions to slowly build relationships and gain community trust.
- *HACLA and LAPD* should offer on-going training opportunities to CSP officers and housing staff on how to engage the community in a culturally competent and consistently objective manner with a long-term view of building relationships.
- *HACLA and LAPD* should train all relevant staff, specifically housing administration, SLOs and community relations officers working within the developments on the cultural sensitivity, safety dynamics and the goals of and their role within the Community Safety Partnership.
- *LAPD CSP officers* serving at each development site should attend training designed to educate them on the role of highly trained gang interventionists (e.g., joint LAPD/LASD Advanced Law Enforcement Training Module 1 Intervention).

Resident Engagement

- *HACLA* should make intentional efforts with the full participation and support of onsite staff to reach as broad a segment of the resident population as possible including public signs (e.g. banners) that announce events, meetings, and projects. Particular efforts should focus

on immigrant and newly arrived families within the three housing developments and strengthening best practices such as the Block Captain model.

- *HACLA and LAPD* should make every effort to support the on-going development of the WGTF (including the on-going efforts to develop Latino leadership) and should seek strategies that can support all other intentional efforts to engage with community around violence reduction and community wide safety efforts.
- *HACLA* should develop enhanced marketing and formal referral protocols to increase access to information and services for residents and community members, making sure to reach every unit within the development.

Resident Leadership Support

- *HACLA* should support (without interference) and fund resident organizing and joint African American and English and Spanish speaking Latino leadership development to better ensure that residents can fully and equally participate in any formal or informal community proceedings as well as in aspects of the CSP program, which will help ensure that the CSP program is accountable to residents.
 - *HACLA and LAPD* CSP officers should work to develop resident leadership, through the intentional investment of resources, training and support as well as strategic outreach to identify leadership.
 - *HACLA and LAPD* should develop and support resident training/leadership/engagement/incentive programs with the goals of employing, organizing, education, training and supporting resident-driven solutions.
 - *HACLA* should hire and support the training of formal gang intervention capacity to support other community engagement and outreach efforts to build peace in the developments.
- *LAPD* should partner with *HACLA* to coordinate resident participation in Community Safety Academies – or *LAPD*'s Citizenship Academy training that is adapted for housing development residents, to train residents on their constitutional rights, how to interact with police and assist them in providing safety services, and the policies and procedures of *LAPD* officers.

Resources

Based on the data gathered through the assessment and to strengthen the efficacy of the recommendations made here, below are potential areas requiring additional resources from a variety of sources including public sector entities and philanthropy.

- *HACLA and LAPD* should actively approach philanthropy for additional resources for the CSP program

- *HACLA and LAPD* should compensate or otherwise provide incentives for housing residents who will be participating in the site based Community Safety Teams.
 - *HACLA and LAPD* must invest in skilled facilitation and leadership development for residents/resident leaders and other community stakeholders, specifically those participating in the Community Safety Teams.
- *HACLA and LAPD* should expend majority of the \$1.2 million in CSP funding during the first 18 months of the project to support visible and tangible community based prevention/intervention projects such as safe passages, summer youth employment (similar to GRYD SNL youth squad), and community wide events.
 - *HACLA and LAPD* should allocate some of the dollars towards supporting coordination of gang intervention, prevention, housing personnel and community law enforcement, through GRYD or other such site-based coordination.
 - *HACLA* should hire formal gang intervention capacity to provide hard core gang intervention services and to support other intervention and prevention strategies. Gang intervention workers and agencies must be compensated for their time and their efforts in responding to ad hoc requests.

Coordination/Data/Planning

- *HACLA and LAPD* should ensure that all strategies and efforts that are developed through CSP are intentionally coordinated across program sites and that they are not conflicting with or duplicative of existing efforts.
 - *LAPD* should ensure coordination between existing suppression efforts (gang injunctions, LASD) to maximize community-policing impact.
 - *CSP collaborative participants* should prioritize the implementation of those strategies that seek to integrate the development site with efforts that are a part of the greater Watts community (such as a Safe Passage initiative to each of the developments and Markham Middle School.)
- LAPD CSP officers and the HACLA safety lead should be responsible for coordinating communication with and organizing outreach efforts (such as Safe Passages) to parents, students, and local school administrators and staff.

Accountability

- *HACLA and LAPD* should develop an Outreach Strategy and Workplan for intentional outreach to the community, including planning of high profile community events with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for HACLA and LAPD personnel.
- *HACLA* should demonstrate visible and vocal leadership of and support for the CSP implementation efforts within the developments, for staff, residents and officers, to signal its long-term commitment for the CSP project.

- *HACLA* should aim to model a transparent and collaborative, resident engaged approach.
- *HACLA and LAPD* should develop communication protocols between the different law enforcement agencies (LAPD, LAUSD School Police and LA Sherriff) and internal entities (such as *HACLA* residents staff, Redevelopment Staff and community-based resident organizations and gang intervention) to coordinate deployment strategies.
- *HACLA* must reexamine all policies and reconsider those policies within *HACLA*'s control that decrease safety and seek to adjust these policies where a different interpretation is permissible.
 - *HACLA* should communicate clearly to residents all policies that increase safety and improve health through an outreach/education campaign.
- *HACLA and LAPD* should support and advocate for higher quality services and accountability from County and City agencies as well as support efforts to hold these public sector agencies more accountable to residents.
- *HACLA* staff must participate in a formal accountability infrastructure that can respond to resident concerns/grievances; if such process already exists, it must be clearly communicated and publicized to the community residents in their own language and staff must be re-trained to provide timely, appropriate and accurate support to residents engaging in the process.
- *LAPD* should seek to provide 24-hour monitoring of the security cameras in all three developments.
- *LAPD* CSP officers should ensure that all police reports filed in developments receive proper and necessary follow-up to the satisfaction of residents.
- *LAPD* CSP officers should spend sufficient time on foot patrol and participating and organizing community functions to take a long-term approach to developing community partnership and slowly build relationships and gain community trust.

Programming/ Service Delivery

- *HACLA and LAPD* CSP officers should facilitate a comprehensive Safe Passages program to and from schools, particularly at Jordan High School and Markham Middle School, for youth in the three housing developments by partnering with GRYD, LAPD, local businesses, and surrounding schools' safety personnel and safety administrators, including principals, school police and community intervention. Work with Principals, Sherri Williams from Jordan High School and Paul Hernandez from Markham Middle in the Safe Passages efforts.
 - Mike Cummings serves as off-campus security for Jordan High, in partnership with Inga Garrett, a campus aide and Dean Washington, who leads security on site. All efforts should be coordinated through the administration office.

- *HACLA and LAPD* should seek to develop and implement programming to engage resident youth and families.
 - *HACLA and LAPD* should jointly develop strategies that intentionally target the Latino and newly arrived community residents to engage them in violence reduction and safety efforts.
 - *HACLA and LAPD* should seek to assist in developing or providing resources for extracurricular youth activities within the development site, such as creating an LAPD EXPLORERS chapter at each development site.
 - *HACLA and LAPD* CSP programming must ensure adequate child care and afterschool activities for children and youth, and that any CSP programs provide safe transportation as youth and families navigate rival gang territories.
 - *LAPD* should seek to reinstate and expand the “Honor and Strength” community re-entry and rehabilitation program and formalize the administration of its multi-jurisdictional collaboration model within and immediately outside the housing development to begin offering services to more high risk ex-offenders.
- *HACLA and LAPD* CSP officers should partner with local schools and gym personnel, and other community efforts to develop and expand free or low-cost and safe youth programming, recreation activities, mentoring and trades (e.g., Scouts, arts and crafts, music, sports, junior achievement) afterschool and on weekends, targeted for middle and high school youth at and ensure coordinated programming, maximization of resources and community outreach.
- *HACLA and LAPD* CSP officers should work together to create a Resident Welcoming Committee that includes participation from the variety of community based organizations and stakeholders in each of the developments and problem solves any initial barriers and problems the new families may face in the first six months of their move in to a new housing development.
- *HACLA and LAPD* CSP officers must make every effort necessary to reach all physical areas and cultural groups of the development to engage and provide timely information.
- *HACLA* should extend facilities’ hours at the Recreation Center at each development site until 9 pm and ensure staff coverage, programming and adequate adult supervision until closing.
- *HACLA* should increase lighting and supervision around the common areas, playgrounds, streets and buildings at each development site.

Mid- to Long-term Actions

Target Outcomes: 1) Increase program availability, equal access and improve outreach to families and youth and to underserved populations and at-risk/high-risk families and youth; 2) Increase enrichment and educational activities for youth; and 3) Improve quality of youth development programming (e.g., adequate supervision, structured activities)

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the Community Safety Partnership:

Personnel

- Hire, assign from existing staff, or develop through joint staff-resident capacity, a permanent CSP Site Safety Coordinator who would be responsible for coordinating outreach efforts with public and private stakeholders, community partners and the GRYD.
 - Establish periodic staff trainings and implement quality assurance measures with resident input to ensure that all staff remain accountable to residents.
 - Community Safety Partnership coordinator(s) should receive a series of trainings to support their responsibilities as a condition of employment (including community engagement, cultural competency, etc.).
 - Community Safety Partnership coordinator(s), to the extent possible, should be familiar with the specific development site and the surrounding community.
 - Community Safety Partnership coordinator(s), must demonstrate objectivity and impartiality as well as an ability to address the needs of all residents and must be able to exercise strict confidentiality rules for information received from residents.
 - Community Safety Partnership coordinator(s) job performance should be linked to specific metrics that promote safety, developed with community input.

Programming/ Service Delivery

- HACLA and LAPD should provide comprehensive safe passage for youth residents to and from all prevention-based program activities and consider providing transportation vouchers and discounted fares for afterschool activities and programs.
- HACLA and LAPD CSP officers should expand and broaden community events that maximize utilization of public spaces, including parks and schools, while ensuring adequate safety.
 - Ensure access to the events for all members of the community (e.g., location, bilingual outreach, weekends and evening hours, culturally competent activities, etc.).

- Streamline existing targeted prevention resources in the housing development and prioritize family oriented, culturally competent service delivery models that serve parents and their children. Prioritize establishing service capacity for:
 - Life skills training, HACLA-based job training and apprenticeships, job placement, and follow-up support services to support every resident family;
 - Parent education and support services targeting single parents and young parents;
 - Youth leadership and development activities during out of school time, particularly during the evening hours and summer months; and
 - Mental health services and substance abuse treatment with particular focus on youth and family counseling and bringing on site services at each development site in the form of clinical services, educational classes and support groups.
- Prioritize programs that seek to facilitate residents (specifically high risk families) consistently and meaningfully participating in onsite nutrition, parent education, human/child development and skills development classes.
- Partner with community organizations in the area to increase parent education resources onsite.
- Plan and implement regular outreach fairs onsite at each development to inform parents and residents about new and on-going policies, programs and opportunities for youth, parents and families and to engage families to increase their awareness about prevention resources.

Watts Regional Efforts:

The safety conditions and violence dynamics found in each of the housing developments have existed for decades. Any effort to secure long term violence reduction outcomes in Watts, therefore, would require a sustained and substantial long term effort by community stakeholders, including the public sector, private sector, community based organizations, religious and academic institutions and philanthropy. The following recommendations are offered in support of those broader efforts:

Target Outcomes: 1) Decrease gang-related and violent incidents in and around school; 2) Increase parent engagement; 3) Decrease school suspension and expulsion, and opportunity transfers; and 4) Increase safe & maintained public spaces, including community parks.

Services and Resources

- HACLA should continue to look for ways to provide and encourage service providers and programs onsite.
- HACLA and LAPD should assign a site coordinator or a CSP officer to be a School Liaison, and this officer should:
 - Work with local schools, service providers and HACLA to establish, as alternatives to out-of-school suspension, school based programs that keep students in school and provide them with counseling and academics.
 - Establish an out-of-school learning environment in the developments to ensure suspended students receive uninterrupted school instruction; counseling and conflict resolution training during their days out-of-school due to disciplinary action; or when students are otherwise restricted access to campus (lack of uniform, etc.)
 - Encourage schools to develop, implement and train teachers on an intervention protocol, conflict resolution and peer-to-peer mediation training.
 - Coordinate all outreach to parents and youth with local schools administrators, attendance personnel, Healthy Start Coordinators, Parent Centers Directors, Counselors and Clinic personnel to encourage efforts that increase parent engagement in local school efforts.
- Partner local schools and gym personnel, and other community efforts to develop and expand free or low-cost meaningful youth programming, recreation activities, mentoring and trades (e.g., Scouts, arts and crafts, music, sports, junior achievement) afterschool and on weekends, targeted for middle and high school youth and ensure coordinated programming, maximization of resources and community outreach.
- Partner with GRYD to determine existing prevention and intervention service capacities in the area, particularly noting opportunities to create referral and collaboration linkages between providers and co-location of onsite services for residents.