



The Barrio Logan Partnership

A Case Study

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Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model: Case Studies of Six Partnerships Used to Address Environmental Justice Issues in Communities (EPA/100-R-03-002)

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Barrio Logan Partnership

[This effort has] gotten people from these agencies talking and getting to know each other which is critical.

We're talking about safety, housing, trucks, and all the things that are important to the community.

Previous enemies are working together to figure out what they can do to fix the problem instead of fighting.

I saw this partnership as an opportunity to break the cycle that had been going on for the last 30-40 years.

— Interviewees, Barrio Logan Partnership

*Community History*¹

The City of San Diego is located on the southern California coast, less than fifteen miles from the northern border of Mexico. Home to a diverse population of approximately 1.2 million people¹², the City was named the most efficiently run city in California in February 2002.² The Mayor's Office is currently engaged in efforts to improve overall quality of life for San Diegans, focused on such goals as reducing traffic congestion, cleaning the area's bays and beaches and enhancing San Diego's neighborhoods.³ Through San Diego's "City of Villages" initiative the City hopes to help its historically and culturally distinct communities thrive by working with them to address and integrate commercial, employment, housing, transit, and civic use needs.⁴

One San Diego community, where residents have been working for many years to strengthen its neighborhoods and boost overall quality of life for residents, can be found near the City's downtown area. Barrio Logan is a predominantly Latino community located on the border of the industrialized portion of the San Diego Bay.⁵ Between 1910 and 1920, this area saw a large influx of immigrants from Mexico wanting to escape Mexico's poor economy and political turmoil.⁶ Following this migration, Barrio Logan transformed into one of the largest Mexican-American communities in California⁷ and came to be known as "the historical and symbolic center of the San Diego Chicano Community."⁸ As San Diego's downtown grew, and both the state and the city began to modernize, however, Barrio Logan began experiencing a series of fundamental changes.⁹ First, the revision of city zoning laws in the 1950s led to industrial growth in the community and brought a series of junkyards sited near schools and homes¹⁰ as well as other industries, including plating, furniture, woodworking, auto body, and welding shops,¹¹ tanneries and canneries.¹² Second, U.S. Interstate 5 was built in the early 1960s, which "physically divided the community and resulted in forced relocation of residents."¹³ Finally, in 1969, the Coronado Bay Bridge was constructed, leading to more displacement of

¹ Interviews for this case study were conducted primarily during the week of October 8, 2001. One additional interview was conducted in late October. Twelve separate interviews were conducted and a total of fourteen persons participated. Interviews were conducted with representatives of community organizations, federal, state, and local government agencies, local business, and industry.

² The current population total of the City of San Diego equals 1,223,400.

residents and further community resentment.¹⁴ By 1979, Barrio Logan's population had fallen from 20,000 to only 5,000.

Today, roughly 6,000 people reside in Barrio Logan, of which approximately 85 percent are Hispanic.¹⁵ The community consists of a tightly concentrated mixture of homes, commercial buildings, and industrial facilities, including a waterfront industrial and naval complex.¹⁶ Despite a heavy concentration of industry, unemployment is significantly greater than the city average,¹⁷ and 40 percent of households earn incomes below the state's poverty level.¹⁸ Moreover, Barrio Logan residents struggle with antiquated, inadequate and poorly maintained housing, overburdened schools, and insufficient health care and social services.¹⁹ In addition, Barrio Logan residents are faced with a myriad of environmental health issues. Today, nearly 3,000,000 pounds of toxic pollutants are emitted from facilities in the community, children exhibit an incidence of asthma at over twice the rate of the national average,²⁰ and the region's respiratory health hazard index is 100-200 times above acceptable standards.²¹ In addition, residents are faced with pollutants from a high volume of commuter and truck traffic.

Despite its many obstacles, Barrio Logan residents have kept a strong sense of community and continue to push for improvements. This is perhaps best symbolized by an event in 1970 in which Barrio Logan residents resisted efforts by the California Highway Patrol to build a parking lot on land underneath the Coronado Bay Bridge that had previously been designated by the City to become a community park.²² Born out of many years of negative relations between the community and the City,²³ these actions eventually resulted in the establishment of Chicano Park, which became famous for its collection of murals,²⁴ and other programs and initiatives including the Chicano Community Clinic and the Chicano Park Steering Committee.²⁵

By the mid-1970s, residents, along with businesses and the City had begun to work together in an effort to boost the quality of life in the community.²⁶ An example of such an effort was the development of Barrio Logan/Harbor 101 Community Plan, adopted by the City Council, which called for a series of improvements in the community, including zoning and land use changes.²⁷ Despite activity within the community and the plan's call for new zoning in the community, change has not come quickly. For instance, the new redevelopment zone recommended in the Barrio Logan/Harbor 101 Community Plan was not established until 1991²⁸ and only included a portion of Barrio Logan.²⁹ Moreover, neither the new zone nor subsequent zoning amendments eliminated the mixed industrial-residential land use pattern in Barrio Logan.³⁰ Nevertheless, residents and different organizations continued to move forward on numerous fronts to improve Barrio Logan's quality of life and reduce the threat from air pollution. For instance, in another effort to stop incompatible land uses, community residents and a local environmental justice organization active in the Barrio Logan area, the Environmental Health Coalition, pressured the City of San Diego Land Use and Housing Committee to pass a measure in 1994 calling for the relocation of the chrome plating shops and chemical distribution facilities from Barrio Logan.³¹ Similarly, in 1996, the City of San Diego along with the Barrio Logan Livable Neighborhoods Team developed the Barrio Logan Revitalization Action Plan, which, among several other action items, suggested that the City relocate existing polluting facilities to areas where they would not pose a risk to sizeable populations.³² Despite these actions by the City, not one of the polluting facilities has yet been relocated from the area.³³

Another initiative was an effort by the California Air Resources Board to do extensive testing for air pollution and health effects in partnership with several stakeholders in the community.³⁴ Others include a major multi-year study being conducted in cooperation with the University of Southern California, the Environmental Health Coalition, and a local health clinic to

assess how air pollution in Barrio Logan may be linked to certain illnesses; and an effort sponsored by the local American Lung Association chapter to reduce incidences of asthma among asthmatic children in schools.³⁵

Partnership Background

Although these and other initiatives were underway in the late 1990s to address different concerns of the community, and Barrio Logan's sister community of Logan Heights, most operated independently of each other. Project organizers did not regularly consult with one another to complement efforts, share lessons learned, and avoid project duplication. Further, despite the many efforts, community concerns were not being fully addressed. For example, some residents wanted neighborhood truck traffic, which passes by a local elementary school, rerouted, or speed limits lowered, to better ensure the safety of their children as they walked to and from school. Others were concerned about Barrio Logan's many vacant and abandoned properties. Based upon these observations, a senior advisor working out of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Border Office in San Diego, who has since retired, sought an opportunity to help meld the many positive Barrio Logan initiatives into a more comprehensive community development approach.

In early 2000, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) official applied to have Barrio Logan designated as a national Environmental Justice Pilot Project, sponsored by the federal Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Environmental Justice, hoping that this effort would provide a forum for all the efforts underway in Barrio Logan to come together and bring additional resources and national attention to the community. In May 2000, the IWG selected Barrio Logan to be one of the fifteen national pilot projects. Following this, the EPA official asked the Environmental Health Coalition (EHC), an organization with a strong tradition of working with the Barrio Logan community, to serve with EPA as the project co-lead. EHC, however, was not quick to accept, concerned that participation in such a collaborative approach would curtail the organization's ability to participate in certain activities, such as community demonstrations, and ultimately limit its authority to advocate for the Barrio Logan community. Despite these reservations, EHC determined that the pilot project's potential to bring additional resources to the community outweighed the organization's initial concerns.

After agreeing to share leadership roles, EPA and EHC began developing a strategy to bring the organizations such as local industries, businesses, government agencies and community groups together and build a collaborative partnership. The pre-planning team realized that this would be a difficult endeavor since several potential members would find it difficult to work in concert due to past or present disputes, some involving litigation. For instance, several organizations, agencies, and industries have differing perspectives regarding the validity of data collected from local air monitoring stations and whether those results suggest that the local population suffers from disproportionately greater exposure to air emissions than other comparable groups. Recognizing the difficulties, EPA and EHC made the decision to hire a professional facilitator to help guide the collaborative process.³ One was selected with prior experience working in the Barrio Logan community, and over the next several months, EPA, EHC and the facilitator began framing the focus of the partnership and determining how best to build an effective partnership.

In November 2000, EPA and EHC held the kick-off session for the Barrio Logan Demonstration Project. Several organizations already working on projects in the area, whom

³ The facilitator, funded by EPA, represents the company of Katz and Associates.

the pre-planning team had previously identified, attended the session. During the meeting, the pre-planning team emphasized that the project would last two-years, be results-oriented, and would “focus on addressing incompatible land use practices, unacceptable air quality, and associate health impacts for the residents of Barrio Logan.”³⁶ Due to the interest expressed by organizations in attendance, the pre-planning team chose to continue the partnership building process and formally request that all interested organizations apply to join the Barrio Logan Demonstration Project,³⁷ even those previously identified. No organization would be guaranteed acceptance into the partnership. In January 2001, EPA and EHC made this request in a letter sent to potential partners. An excerpt is included in the box below:

Excerpt from EHC & EPA Letter Asking Potential Partners to Consider Joining the Barrio Logan Demonstration Project
<p>This letter is to solicit your organization’s interest in being a partner in this Demonstration Project and to outline the criteria for being invited as a partner. We are looking for a diverse group of partners, including federal, state, and local governments, business and industry, academic institutions, social justice groups, health promotion and community-based organizations. Based on the interest expressed at the first meeting and since then, we have set forth a process for selection of partners that will ensure that the group is as inclusive as possible and is committed to achieving common goals. We need to emphasize that the Demonstration Project is not an advisory group nor a discussion group, it is a working partnership with people committed to solving problems in Barrio Logan.</p>

Figure 1. Excerpt from EHC & EPA Letter Asking Potential Partners to Consider Joining the Barrio Logan Demonstration Project

Included in the letter were four questions designed to enable the pre-planning team to better determine whether interested recipients would be asked to participate in a partnering session to be held at the end of January. The questions are listed below.³⁸

Excerpt from EHC & EPA Letter Asking Potential Partners to Justify Why They Would Make an Effective Partner
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does your organization agree with the problem and goal statements on the attached sheet? (All project partners must fundamentally agree with these statements in order to participate in the project) 2. What is your organization’s primary interest and/or priority for this project? 3. What value (resources or technical assistance) will your organization add to this effort? 4. Who will serve as your organization’s representative? Please provide his/her name and contact information.

Figure 2. Excerpt from EHC & EPA Letter Asking Potential Partners to Justify Why They Would Make an Effective Partner

After receiving application letters and making decisions about who should be asked to participate, the partnering session, hosted by the Mercado Tenants Association in Barrio Logan, was held. The Association provided meeting space, language translation, and information to Barrio Logan residents affected by the demonstration project. The “One-Day Partnering Workshop” focused on outlining roles, responsibilities, partnership obligations and planned and

potential partnership activities.³⁹ Furthermore, the workshop gave potential partners an opportunity to shape the Partnering Agreement, a draft document crafted by the pre-planning team that was designed to create an arena of respect where partners could communicate and work together as equals.

Specifically, the Partnering Agreement provided background on the project and outlined key problem and goal statements for the project, and roles for both the project leads and project partners necessary to achieve project goals. The key problem and goal statements are included in the table below.⁴⁰

Key Problem and Goal Statements Outlined in the Barrio Logan Partnering Agreement	
<i>Problem</i>	<i>Goal</i>
Emissions of air pollution and toxins from local industries, small businesses, automobiles, and diesel vehicles in Barrio Logan and Logan Heights pose unacceptable health risks to local residents.	Reduce exposure of residents to air pollution.
Incompatible land use in zoning in Barrio Logan and Logan Heights exposes residents to increased risks of hazardous materials accidents and health impacts from air toxic emissions.	Reduce incompatible land uses in Barrio Logan and Logan Heights.
Children's health is a concern for local residents due to ambient environmental factors as well as risks within the home and schools such as lead-based paint and other sources of indoor air pollutants.	Improve children's health by improving the ambient environment, as well as reducing exposure of children to health risks within the home, schools, and the community.

Figure 3. Key Problem and Goal Statements Outlined in the Barrio Logan Partnering Agreement

Roles of the project leads, as outlined in the Partnering Agreement, included (1) providing meeting notes; (2) maintaining the project web site; (3) complying with evaluation and reporting requirements of the demonstration project; (4) coordinating funding requests; and (5) preparing meeting summaries. Some of the roles of the partners included (1) staying committed to project success; (2) sharing data and information to assist partners and help the overall project meet its goals; (3) coordinating activities that could potentially complement or conflict with each other; (4) identifying obstacles to achieving project goals and developing solutions to overcome them; and (5) thinking creatively about how partners can collaboratively make a difference in the health and wellbeing of the Barrio Logan community.⁴¹ In addition to describing the goals and roles, the Partnering Agreement also outlined several steps that would be taken in the event of disagreements between partners. The section describing these steps is included in the box below.⁴²

Excerpt from the Barrio Logan Partnering Agreement describing the Partnership's Conflict Resolution Process

In the course of partnership activities, disagreements will inevitably arise regarding whether a course of action should or should not be taken. The Partners agree to work in a collaborative fashion and to facilitate consensus on these issues whenever possible. If consensus cannot be reached, the Partners agree to use mediation to attempt to reach a resolution. Further, the Partners agree they will attempt to resolve the disagreement expeditiously and constructively to benefit Project goals. In the event of an impasse, the co-leads shall be the final decision makers, carefully weighing the consequences of any decision to take action where there is a lack of consensus. If the co-leads cannot agree, then the action in question would not be taken. In any event, individual Partners cannot be compelled to participate in an action to which they do not agree. Individual Partners may also abstain from participation in a decision when they believe it would be inappropriate for them to do so.

Figure 4. Excerpt from the Barrio Logan Partnering Agreement describing the Partnership's Conflict Resolution Process

Following the partnering workshop, each potential partner was required, as a condition of participation in the partnership, to agree to statements put forth in the Partnering Agreement. By signing the document, partners were expected to show that they could look beyond the past, and "work together to demonstrate how agencies and communities working in concert can achieve meaningful improvements in public health for communities such as Barrio Logan."⁴³ A diverse collection of partners ultimately signed the agreement. These included eighteen representatives from the city, county state, and federal government, community-based organizations, industry, a business association, environmental and public health groups, and the San Diego Port District. Several organizations decided they could not agree with or sign the Partnering Agreement. Representatives of these groups, however, were allowed to attend subsequent meetings and participate as observers. These included representatives from a local college, the San Diego School District, and offices of local and U.S. politicians. The list of organizations is included in Figure 10.

Active

American Lung Association

California Air Resources Board
California Department of Transportation
California Environmental Protection Agency
City of San Diego-Traffic Division
Environmental Health Coalition
Inner City Business Association
Katz and Associates
MAAC Project
National Steel and Shipbuilding Company
Mercado Tenant's Association
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
San Diego City Attorney's Office
San Diego Housing Commission
San Diego Unified Port District
South West Marine, Inc.
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Observers

Barrio Logan College Institute
City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency
Congressman's Bob Filner's Office
County of San Diego
County of San Diego Health and Human Services
Mayor Dick Murphy's Office
Private Citizen
San Diego City Councilmember Inzunza's Office
San Diego Air Pollution Control District
San Diego Unified School District
Supervisor Greg Cox's Office

Figure 5. Barrio Logan Partnership's Partners and Observers

Regular partnership working sessions began in March 2001. Sessions were held approximately once per month on a weekday and typically lasted around three hours. Sessions included (1) presentations by non-partners on various local initiatives that could impact Barrio Logan and partnership activities, (2) facilitated discussions between partners about different activities already underway in Barrio Logan and existing resources partners could provide that could benefit Barrio Logan, and (3) opportunities for partnership work groups to strategize and report out to the larger group their progress. As described in the Partnering Agreement, the Partnership decision making process was based upon consensus. In addition, to ensure that all would be heard, the facilitator typically tried to bring both majority and minority opinions into the discussion. Very few topics discussed provoked strong disagreement across parties.

At the close of the March 2001 meeting, partners agreed to develop three work groups that would each focus on one of the goals identified in the Partnership Agreement⁴⁴. During the next meeting, partners organized themselves into three work groups: Land Use, Children's Health, and Air Quality. The organizations participating in each work group are listed in the figure below.⁴⁵

Initial Barrio Logan Partnership Work Groups and Participating Organizations		
<p><u>Air Quality Work Group</u></p> <p>National Steel and Shipbuilding Company San Diego Air Pollution Control District San Diego City Attorney's Office California Air Resources Board California Department of Transportation San Diego Unified Port District California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment Environmental Health Coalition</p>	<p><u>Children's Health Work Group</u></p> <p>American Lung Association San Diego Housing Commission San Diego Vacant Properties Coordinator Mercado Apartments San Diego County Department of Environmental Health California Air Resources Board</p>	
	<p><u>Land Use Work Group</u></p> <p>Cal/EPA Dept of Toxic Substances Control Cal/EPA Environmental Justice Program Inner City Business Association Environmental Health Coalition</p>	

Figure 6. Initial Barrio Logan Partnering Work Groups and Participating Organizations

Each work group was then asked to discuss among participants three main questions that would help organize them. The questions are listed in the box below:⁴⁶

Organizing Questions for the Barrio Logan Partnership Work Groups	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Given the goal statement of your work group, brainstorm what an ideal wellness state would be for the community of Barrio Logan. What will success look like after achieving improvements in air quality/children's health/or land use planning? 2. Looking at current and future resources/programs identified for Barrio Logan, where do you see gaps? 3. What kind of initiatives or programs that currently do not exist, might begin to address the gaps identified above?

Figure 7. Organizing Questions for the Barrio Logan Partnership Work Groups

Each work group developed a series of responses for each question that was recorded on flip sheets. The facilitator then used these responses as a discussion point to help direct the work groups towards specific tasks they could work on. A representative from EHC then agreed to help combine the discussions of each work group into one matrix that would enable them to further identify priority action items and collaborative opportunities. This matrix was then discussed at the following May 2001 meeting. A sample of this matrix is presented below.⁴⁷

Barrio Logan Environmental Justice Demonstration Project Goals, Objectives and Solutions Matrix (Sample)			
GOALS	REDUCE AIR POLLUTION	IMPROVE CHILDREN'S HEALTH	REDUCE INCOMPATIBLE LAND USES
OBJECTIVES	Fuller compliance with air regs	No exposure to indoor pollutants and lead	No polluters near resident
SOLUTIONS			
Political Will			
Community Power			
Stronger Regs & Enforcement			
Revise community plan & zoning			
Pollution Prevention			
Public Awareness			
Transportation System			
Low interest loans & tax incentives			
Healthy Homes Program			
Research & Data Collection			

Figure 8. Barrio Logan Environmental Justice Demonstration Project Goals, Objectives and Solutions Matrix (Sample)

Although the process was straightforward, partners experienced difficulties in prioritizing actions. Several factors may have slowed this process, including lack of partnership funding,

lack of an effective partnership model about the most appropriate actions to take, lack of commitment from individual partners, and the inability of some participants to speak on behalf of their respective organizations. In addition, the partnership co-lead representing EPA retired in the summer of 2001, creating temporary uncertainty for the other partners about EPA's leadership commitment while the agency secured a replacement. Nevertheless, the facilitator and partnership leaders worked to keep everyone on track. By May 2001, a spirit of collaboration had developed between the different parties and a foundation for partnering had been built, evidenced by the sharing of meals during regular meetings.^{4,48} The partners have since continued to meet. An initiative that grew out of cooperation between two very distinct organizations starting in the late spring of 2000 had transformed into a genuine partnership representing several organizations by the spring of 2001. Some factors that may have contributed to this initial success may have included use of an effective partnership design, use of a skilled facilitator, leadership displayed by several organizations, a continued belief that the issues identified needed to be addressed, mutual recognition of the benefits of regular information sharing, and a shared belief that the partnership was moving in the right direction. The evolution of the Barrio Logan partnership is depicted in the graphic below.

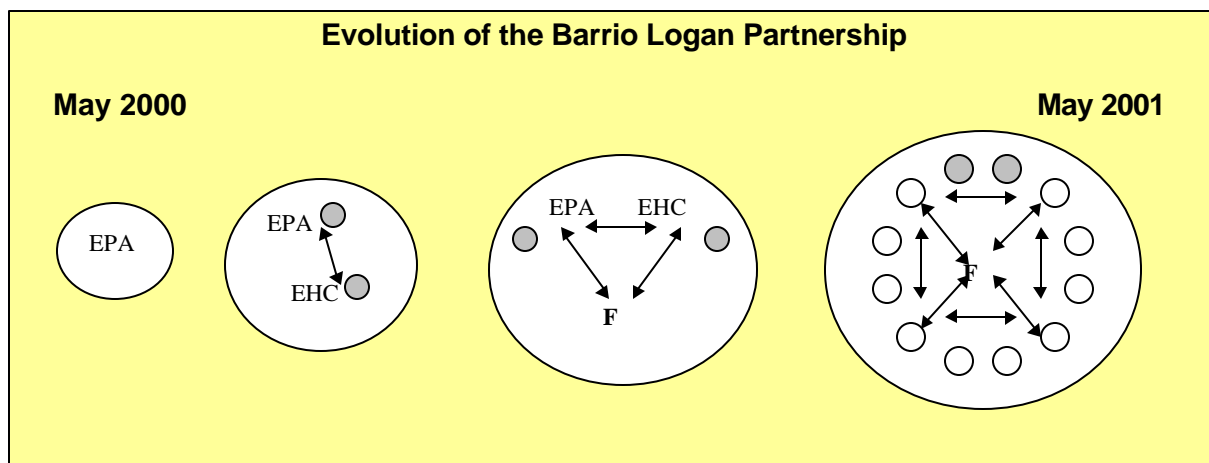


Figure 9. EPA Representation of the Evolution of the Barrio Logan Partnership

Partnership Activities

By October 2001, the partnership was still undergoing a process of determining which actions should be taken to help the partnership reach the three main goals. Nonetheless, even to this point, the partnership had engaged in activities that would help the partnership members realize their goals. For example, the partnership had identified partners that many in the partnership had not previously known, including the Inner City Business Association and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).⁴⁹ Second, several partners had been actively involved in the solicitation of resources to benefit Barrio Logan residents. For instance, as of May 2001, four partners (EHC, the City of San Diego, MAAC Project, and HUD), were working together to obtain a Lead Hazard Control Grant that would provide Barrio Logan with \$1 million to remedy lead-contaminated soil and dust in homes.⁵⁰ In addition to securing funding through grants, several persons were contributing varying portions of their staff or volunteering to support the project.

⁴ Meetings are held at The Mercado or at the Logan Heights Police Department. Meetings are generally held during the day; however, as of October 2001, the partnership was considering changing the meeting time to boost participation from community residents.

The following sections primarily describe interviewees' responses to questions gathered from interviews conducted by EPA's Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation during the week of October 8-12, 2001. The sections focus on interviewees' impressions regarding measuring partnership success, identifying successes and challenges, recommendations for improving the partnership, overall value of the partnership, and the value of federal involvement in the partnership.

Measuring Partnership Success

As of October 2001, the partnership had not developed a framework for measuring the overall success of the partnership in meeting the three goals. However, the three goals agreed upon by the partners should serve as a critical basis from which the partnership can begin assessing partnership progress and success once activities are decided upon and implemented. Further, when asked how the partners might determine success, the fourteen interviewees addressing this topic had several suggestions—some focusing on general measurement considerations, and others focusing on specific indicators to measure. Regarding general considerations, three interviewees urged the need to be specific about what gets measured. For instance, one remarked that any measurement must focus on what the partnership can accomplish. Regarding the type of data that should be collected—quantitative or qualitative—one interviewee recommended that quantitative data be collected – through pre- and post-tests. Another, however, cautioned the use of quantitative data, suggesting that it may result in harmful disputes between partners.

Specific indicators recommended for measurement focused on such topics as public health improvement, community improvement (e.g., quality of life), and community empowerment. Suggestions for public health indicators included the extent to which schools in the area participate in the Open Airways and Tools for Schools programs and the extent to which trucks are re-routed or some people are relocated away from truck routes. However, another interviewee recommended that the rerouting of trucks not be considered an indicator of project success. Suggestions for community improvement indicators centered mainly on the extent to which the partnership results in a better quality of life for the community. Suggestions for community empowerment indicators included the extent to which the community becomes part of partnership solutions, the number of community plans adopted by the city government, and the extent to which community residents take ownership over the partnership.

Partnership Successes

When asked if partners were satisfied with their ability to participate in the project decision-making process, twelve of the twelve interviewees who addressed the question responded positively. One noted that the process has given everyone a voice, and another remarked that she/he actually looks forward to the meetings. Three interviewees, however, qualified their remarks. Two noted that no major decisions had been made yet, and another remarked that while the process has been fine so far, it was still too early on in the process to genuinely judge.

Regarding whether interviewees were satisfied to the extent issues most important to them and their organizations were being addressed by the partnership, most indicated they were satisfied; however several qualified their remarks. Five out the eleven who addressed the question said yes, without providing any qualifying remarks. For instance, one mentioned that the partners "are talking about safety, housing, trucks, and all the things that are important to

the community.” Two additional interviewees indicated that their issues were being addressed, but only to a limited extent. For example, one remarked that the zoning issues were not being addressed to the extent they should be. Two interviewees were less satisfied—one noting it was too early to tell, and another stating that his/her issues had not yet been addressed. Another flatly stated that his/her issues were not being addressed. Finally, one interviewee remarked that his/her organization did not join the process to address a particular issue, rather, they joined to “participate in the process...[and] do [their] share.”

When asked about the outcomes, or results, of the partner activities for addressing the main issues of the affected community, not surprisingly seven of the ten addressing this question remarked that it was too early to tell.⁵ For instance, one interviewee remarked that the partnership was still identifying problems. However, four interviewees indicated that the partnership is already having a positive impact for the affected community. These include: agencies becoming more familiar with each other; enhancement of community pride; community empowerment; the highlighting of important health issues in the affected community; and a more coordinated community development. Even some who indicated it was too early to judge the outcomes of the partnership activities, later noted some positive outcomes. For example, one noted that bringing these organizations together has resulted in a greater rate of accomplishment.

When asked whether interviewees were satisfied with the outcomes of partner activities, nine of the eleven addressing this question indicated that they were satisfied. One indicated that she/he was very, very satisfied. Another indicated that the partnership had produced positive dialogue and relationship building. Two indicated they were satisfied but would like to see more tangible efforts being made to assist the community. Two others who were satisfied also explained that the process was slow, with one noting that this was to be expected. The one interviewee who was unsatisfied remarked that the process was moving too slowly. A final interviewee provided an ambiguous response.

When asked what has been their greatest success thus far, nine of the fourteen interviewees addressing this question referenced the partnership itself. For instance, one interviewee stressed that the partnership had brought diverse groups of people together, including some who were previously adversaries. When asked what had been the key factors contributing to the partnership’s development, interviewees cited the Partnering Agreement, the facilitator, and EHC’s and EPA’s leadership roles. Specifically, one noted that both organizations were able to get involved without being accusatory. Another also remarked that the two organizations’ outreach to potential partners had been important for the partnership’s development. This same interviewee also suggested that another key factor was the willingness of different groups to participate in the process.

Another interviewee explained “the fact that people have been able to set aside what goes on outside the partnership and still participate in good faith to bring results to Barrio Logan” was a critical success. Reasons for this success include obtaining partnership agreement on the goals, the partnering session, the Partnering Agreement, and the absence of participants that could harm the process. Finally, one interviewee cited the partnership’s ability to keep the partnership’s diverse members interested and talking with one another as the

⁵ During the interview process, interviewees were asked questions about both the outcomes of partner activities, and the impact of activities for the affected communities. From the responses, it was clear that most interviewees viewed the partnership activities in terms of outcomes, not impact. Therefore, the term outcome is used throughout this discussion.

partnership's greatest success. In addition, three remarked that it was still too early to tell what the partnership's greatest success was.

Interviewees were also asked whether the organizational styles and procedures of the different partner organizations limited effective collaboration between partners. Participants rarely pointed to specific problematic organizational styles. Instead interviewees commented primarily on inter-group dynamics. Three interviewees explained that there seemed to be a strong willingness to work together within the partnership. For instance one stated that "everybody adopted the can-do attitude and they knew that they had different opinions and tried not to let this interfere with how these groups approached [the partnership]." Two additional interviewees indicated, however, that, despite a willingness to work together, some barriers still existed. For example, one explained that industry participants have a different decision-making style than EHC, whose style is more "community inclusive."⁶ Two others mentioned that potential partners that would have found it difficult to participate chose not to sign the Partnering Agreement. However, one of these same interviewees indicated that it was too early to truly tell if barriers between partners would arise. Similarly, another remarked that conflict might certainly occur in the future, as does with all large groups; however, she/he further indicated that this could be constructive. In addition, two interviewees were concerned about the motives behind some groups' participation, and one was concerned about not being able to enroll the Air Pollution Control District as a partner.

Nine of the fourteen interviewees who addressed existing organizational barriers between partners referenced the facilitator as a main reason for enabling partnership members to work together. One interviewee noted that the facilitator fostered a "let's work together" spirit amongst the partners. Another noted that "without [the facilitator] this group would not be able to exist." Of the four not referencing the facilitator, three specifically referenced the Partnering Agreement as an important tool for enabling the different organizations to work together. One interviewee did remark, however, that to improve collaboration, a more active facilitator was needed.

Partnership Challenges

When asked about the greatest challenges facing the partnership, interviewees produced a variety of responses. Four of the fourteen who addressed the question indicated that agreeing to and then implementing actions to address the goals is the partnership's most significant challenge. Similarly, one interviewee noted that the biggest obstacle is simply accomplishing a tangible activity. She/he went on to say that the partnership "was trying to jump too far", instead of taking calculated steps. Further, the interviewee expressed frustration at the partnership's desire to address issues that she/he felt could not be accomplished in a short term such as the re-routing of trucks. A set of interviewees cited the partnership's slow nature as a major obstacle. For instance, one noted this presented a problem since partners must answer to their organizations, which represent different goals and interests, and justify their time committed to the partnership. Another cited the partnership's lack of a mandate or enforcement authority as an obstacle. To overcome this, she/he suggested getting the Mayor and city government more involved in the process. Other difficulties cited included: "synchronizing" participants so that they share a common base of understanding about the issues of concern; deciding how to relocate businesses away from residences and businesses; keeping key decision makers involved in the partnership; ensuring greater community

⁶ This interviewee did note, however, that the facilitator developed a decision-making process that addressed these concerns.

engagement in partnership planning and implementation; a need for funding, especially for mailing, coordination, and translation activities; trust issues; and developing and implementing initiatives through a group consisting of volunteers.

Interviewee's Recommendations for Improving the Partnership

When interviewees were asked how the partnership could be improved, six of the twelve addressing the question recommended that the community be more involved in partnership activities. Some interviewees were not convinced that the residents have enough information about the partnership and what the partnership is trying to accomplish. Further, although these interviewees believed they were working to improve the quality of life for the residents of Barrio Logan, they felt that residents should be more involved in how that happens. One interviewee remarked that "the community is not involved as much because they have not been asked. However, if asked, they will help." To obtain greater participation, one interviewee suggested hosting partnership meetings at churches and the Barrio College, and at times when residents can more easily attend. Another interviewee recommended that partnership members go out into the community, visiting residents and companies in order to better understand what their concerns are. She/he concluded by stating that "sometimes [the partnership's] views are different from the people that live here." Directly related to community involvement, another interviewee recommended that the partnership make greater use of simultaneous translation in partnership meetings, because without it, some residents are excluded.

Four interviewees stressed the need to engage in activities that will produce real results. For instance, one urged the partnership to "pick a goal that will lead to tangible change." Closely associated with this recommendation, one interviewee recommended that the partnership develop a workplan. Closely related to this recommendation, another urged that the partnership meet more frequently to ensure that partnership initiatives are planned.

A group of comments related to organizational structure and representation. Three interviewees recommended that the partnership be divided into sub-groups to improve partnership efficiency. Another recommended that partners be re-evaluated, particularly to better understand those that are active. Further, she/he added that the partnership should identify a clear leader, noting that "you can play a football game without a lineman, but you can't play football without a quarterback." In addition, two argued that the partnership needed the support of the City, and another added that the partnership needed members "with the authority to participate." Additional recommendations included: using a more aggressive facilitator; obtaining a letter from U.S. EPA's Administrator recognizing the Barrio Logan partners for their work in the area; encouraging partners to make more resources and educational opportunities available to the community; hosting a community health fair; and securing more funding for the partnership.

Interviewee's Recommendations for Other Communities

Twelve interviewees offered suggestions for other communities interested in using collaborative partnerships to address environmental justice issues. One set of comments focused on building the partnership. Four comments encouraged partnership builders to focus on community involvement in the partnership's formative stages. Specifically, two recommended that the community should be brought into join the partnership first. One of these recommended that the community be allowed to define the problems and be involved in decision making. Four additional comments recommended locating potential partners who are

leaders and/or action oriented, with one directly urging partnerships to screen out those potential partners who are not inclined to participate. As stated by one interviewee:

Get as many people to the table as possible – the key players. Do whatever it takes to get the key players. Have some public notices. Let them know there's a group out there and they are looking for input. Get the elected representatives at the table—the council, the city planning [department], the state and city representatives. Getting these folks in and partnering. You need the political will. Need power to make changes. Get as many interested partners as possible—people that can actually do something.

Other recommendations regarding this topic included identifying partners that would be affected; ensuring that a full spectrum of stakeholders are involved; and encouraging as many organizations as possible to participate.

A second set of comments focused on how to create a genuine collaborative process. Two interviewees recommended using a partnering agreement. According to one, a partnering agreement helps to remove conflict. Similarly, one recommended making sure that all partners start from the “same page” and another recommended obtaining “buy-in” from all partners. Related, another interviewee recommended that a facilitator skilled in conflict resolution be brought in to guide the process after a thorough community assessment has been performed to help define the problems the partnership will address. Further, one interviewee stressed the need to “get people involved in a positive way from the beginning” and avoid bringing up history.

Once a partnership has been brought together, one interviewee stressed that it is important to obtain specific commitments from partners. Another recommended that partners develop realistic expectations about what each of the participating organizations can do, noting explicitly that “resources these groups may bring may not be funding.” Other recommendations included having patience, focusing on achievable goals since it is very important to see identifiable change in community, and providing resources for translation.

A final set of comments stressed the need for partnerships to incorporate a mechanism that will truly empower them. One interviewee remarked that partnerships such as Barrio Logan's lack power. To boost the power of a partnership, one recommended building alliances with local planning bodies, noting that local officials don't often go against the wishes of local planning bodies. A second suggested that for partnerships to have genuine power, they may need to be built using a top-down approach.

Value of the Collaborative Partnership

When asked about the value of the collaborative process used by the partnership, of the fourteen addressing the question, nine remarked that the collaborative process had added value, three indicated that it was too early to tell, and one remarked that she/he could not speak on behalf of the community. Five interviewees explicitly referenced information sharing. The information shared by the partners is not only seen as a resource, as in the sharing of expertise, it also enables more effective partnership planning. For instance, one remarked that involvement in the partnership has required agencies to reveal where they stand publicly on different issues. Further, another interviewee suggested that the partnership allows the partners and the community to understand what each agency can and cannot do, to see their areas of expertise and their limitations. Additionally, she/he added that many of the agencies, such as

the planning department, the air district, and CALTRAN, seem to be natural partners, and sitting at the same table allows them to see how they can work together. The process of seeing how different groups can work together, “leaves the participants empowered.”

Two interviewees noted that having the representatives from the different organizations leave their offices to physically view this community and understand the needs of the residents has been very valuable. According to one, this would not have happened without the partnership. Further, this same interviewee added that this process of interacting with different groups in the community would result in the breakdown of negative stereotypes surrounding small businesses.

Two other interviewees cited the ability of the partnership to create change as its main value. One stated that the value has come from the partnership’s ability to engage those that have the ability and authority to make changes to benefit the Barrio Logan community. Another indicated that although she/he can’t prove it yet,

the value [of the partnership] is we’ve set the stage and foundation of synergizing for addressing the community issues. [The partnership] in a position to affect some changes with the city or city council that will have some long-range impacts in the community. Some resources have come the communities’ way and if they can focus their energies they could get more. They can leverage this partnership to get more.

Additional value of the partnership cited by some interviewees includes: the securing of some additional resources for the community; the potential to leverage more resources; and a reduction in duplication of resources.

When asked if they thought the Barrio Logan community could use this same collaborative process to address similar problems in the future, seven of the thirteen addressing the question said yes, two said no, and four said they didn’t know. For those responding yes, four remarked that strong leadership would be needed to make the process work, particularly local leadership. For those responding that they did not know, one interviewee remarked that the partnership might leave a core group in place. Another remarked that this type of process would only be used in the future if the Barrio Logan partnership produces tangible results. For those responding no, one interviewee voiced a concern that the current partnership would end if EPA and EHC were to leave the process. Further, she/he indicated that it would be very hard to pull a community coalition together. The other interviewee indicated that this process would not be used again because the community has not been effectively involved. However, she/he qualified her remark noting that if the community was brought into this process, the partnership could become an important conduit for change.

When asked whether the main issues affecting Barrio Logan would have been addressed without the use of a collaborative approach, responses were very mixed. Of the ten who addressed the question, two indicated yes, two indicated somewhat, two indicated probably not, three indicated unclear, and one indicated no. Of those indicating yes, one remarked that different agencies would address the issues; the other mentioned, similarly, that the issues would be dealt with through a piecemeal approach. The interviewee noting that the issues *probably* would not have been dealt with mentioned that the issues would have either been addressed contentiously or not at all. The interviewee indicating that issues would not have been dealt with remarked that any attempt to address them would have been too fragmented and resulted in too many disputes.

Value of Federal Involvement In the Partnership

When asked what was the effect of having federal partners participate in the partnership, eleven of the fourteen interviewees addressing the question indicated that federal involvement did, indeed, add value; two were unclear; and one indicated that federal partners did not provide value, except for name recognition. Of the eleven indicating value, five interviewees stated that federal partners brought credibility/legitimacy to the project. For instance, one remarked that federal partners make “local entities feel more accountable, like someone outside San Diego is looking at what they are doing.” Four indicated that the federal partners have brought much needed resources to the project, including the sharing of information. One non-federal interviewee remarked that “the [federal government] brings a lot of resources. The federal government is a very large resource. It’s up to us to utilize those resources.” Two mentioned that federal involvement has brought a sharp focus to the environmental justice issues in the area, with one noting that federal involvement encouraged state and local governments to acknowledge the environmental justice issues in the area. Two additional interviewees remarked that the personal skills EPA’s former senior advisor brought to the project were critical for project success. In addition, one remarked that the fact that the partnership had federal partners was essential to one company’s participation. Interviewees also indicated that involvement of federal partners would result in the partnership having a larger impact and higher status. Finally, one interviewee stated that having federal partners involved was very important.

Concerns regarding federal involvement were also raised. Two interviewees remarked that federal agency involvement in the partnership discouraged some potential partners from joining. Another remarked that along with federal involvement might come expectations that cannot be met. A non-federal interviewee noted that EPA’s reputation could be damaged if the project fails. Another interviewee remarked that federal partners have not interacted with the community, and the community feels that it has little say regarding federal agency activities. In addition, one noted that, although, she/he is excited by federal participation, the federal partners may be difficult to work with because of their bureaucracies. Finally, another interviewee noted that the community might not regularly distinguish between federal and state partners.

When interviewees were asked what they thought the federal agencies gained from the partnership, seven of the fourteen addressing the question stated that it gave them a better sense of how, when, and where agencies are able to participate in communities. For instance, one interviewee noted that “[b]eing there, seeing the problems these communities face, the struggles they endure—they can see firsthand how they can be a resource to solving local problems.” Further, another noted that by working in the community, federal partners could be more effective in how they perform their work. Two interviewees stated that partnership has provided an opportunity to build relationships and be more strategic. For instance, one noted that

Most federal agencies are looking to say ‘we are partnering.’ They want to be part of coalitions, joint efforts, leveraging resources, making communities aware of how to apply for resources. Clearly they want to be a part of things like this if they have staff time to do it.

Another noted that the partnership has enabled relationships to develop between EPA, HUD, and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). She/he stated that HUD may not have become involved in Barrio Logan without the demonstration project, and further, it

is unlikely that HUD would have encouraged the City to apply for the lead grant. Additional benefits of participating in the Barrio Logan partnership cited by interviewees included opportunities to: better understand environmental justice issues; show that federal partners are doing work to address these issues; share lessons learned with other communities; learn a combination of skills—both technical and social; and influence action. For the last comment, the non-federal interviewee remarked that “EPA can influence action because people listen to them.”

When asked whether federal agencies have been able to better coordinate their activities as a result of their involvement in the Barrio Logan partnership, of the thirteen addressing the question, nine didn’t know, two said yes, and two said no. Of those that didn’t know, one interviewee remarked that the federal partners were probably sharing information. One didn’t see any coordination. One indicated that the federal partners had kept the partnership informed. And finally, one suggested that HUD, EPA, and NIEHS needed to coordinate better. For those responding yes, that federal partners were coordinating more effectively, one federal interviewee remarked that coordination is especially improving in the Barrio Logan project. For those responding no, one interviewee remarked that she/he has not seen the federal partners contribute substantively to the partnership.

Interviewees were also asked if participating federal partners had identified conflicting requirements in their statutes or regulations that have been barriers to the success of the Barrio Logan partnership. Nine of the thirteen interviewees addressing this question indicated that none had been identified. One interviewee remarked that in the partnership’s case, having federal agencies participate actually led to a larger collaboration since federal policies typically require a broad range of public involvement. Another remarked that although conflicting requirements had not been identified, working with federal bureaucracies could be burdensome. Two indicated that some policies or approaches could limit effective collaboration. One noted, for instance, that one federal partner’s ability to participate is limited by its mission. Another remarked that one federal agency had an important philosophical difference with another federal agency about participating in the partnership. She/he added that originally, this agency did not want to participate, but the agency’s regulations did not prevent the agency from participating. The agency ultimately chose to participate and now benefits from information sharing.

Finally interviewees were asked what they would recommend federal agencies do to best tailor their roles to participate in collaborative processes. Eight of the fourteen addressing this question stated that federal partners should provide funding. Directly related to funding, four suggested that federal partners should require that an evaluation component be built in to collaborative efforts. Three interviewees recommended that federal partners should provide collaborative efforts with facilitation services. However, one did suggest that requirements should be built into to allow for facilitators to be removed. Still related to funding, one interviewee suggested that federal agencies provide administrative support for such items as issue follow-up, the production of overheads, and organization of tours. Another added that translation services should be federally supported. Also on the topic of funding, one federal interviewee stated that most agencies have little or very few resources and limited funding; but added that they can provide resources by way of staff time and staff expertise.

Five interviewees urged federal agencies to enable communities to play key roles in the development and/or implementation of community-based partnerships. For instance, one recommended that partnerships/IWG demonstration projects be developed simultaneously with the community—defining goals and identifying problems. Three interviewees recommended that federal agencies allow certain partners—either a single partner, a single federal partner, or a

group of partners—to take a stronger leadership role in these efforts. Two interviewees suggested that federal partners better focus their resources to support collaborative efforts. For example, one suggested that federal partners should better coordinate and plan with each other before going into potential partnership communities.

Interviewees also recommended that, in order to best participate in collaborative efforts, federal agencies should: develop a mix of both social and technical skills; maintain a federal representative in the partnership location; keep federal partnership staff consistent; use influence to encourage support for these efforts at the local level; initiate a partnership through local government channels; be patient; be active; and send high-ranking, personable staff to participate.

Key Findings (as of October 2001)

- Overall the participants were satisfied with the partnership and their ability to participate in it. However, several were concerned that the partnership may lose momentum if it cannot produce tangible outputs in the very near future.
- Many of the participants would like to see greater attention placed on involving Barrio Logan residents in the partnership to a level the residents feel comfortable with. Several are concerned that the issues of powerful organizations will override residents' issues and concerns.
- Most participants agree with the decision to use a facilitator and a Partnering Agreement. They feel that these have been critical resources, and without them, it would be difficult to engage in genuine, productive partnering.
- Several participants agree that use of the collaborative process has, or will, greatly assist the Barrio Logan community. Without this process, it is doubtful that critical issues would be addressed to the extent they would without the partnership.
- It is clear that the Barrio Logan partnership is quite passionate about its mission. The many and diverse partners have been able to overcome several obstacles just to be able to sit in the same room and discuss issues. If the partnership can maintain resources and momentum, the partners should achieve their goals and leave Barrio Logan with better air, housing, and overall quality of life.

Afterword

After interviewees had the opportunity to review the first draft of this case study, the Barrio Logan Partnership submitted an update regarding partnership activities occurring between October 2001 and June 2002. Since October 2001, partnership members have formed three task forces, or subcommittees of the larger group, to work on specified projects in furtherance of the partnership goals. The *Truck Traffic and Diesel Reduction Task Force* is identifying both short- and long-term strategies for truck traffic and diesel emissions reduction in the community. The *Regulatory Enforcement and Pollution Prevention Task Force* is targeting the automobile repair and auto body industry for pollution prevention education and regulatory enforcement. Finally, the *Community Planning Task Force* plans to produce a “how to” manual to assist residents in organizing a community planning group or similar body that can address land use and zoning issues.⁵¹

The Barrio Logan Partnership also provided comments that were developed at the Partnership's April 3, 2002 meeting, at which partners were asked about the value of the Demonstration Project so far. The comments are listed below:

- The partnership has served as a catalyst for getting elected officials more involved in both contamination and land use planning issues.
- The regular opportunity for communication among the Partners has deepened each other's understanding of the issues and problems.
- The California Air Resources Board agreed that it stayed in the community longer than would have been the case if the partnership had not heightened their concern. The San Diego Air Pollution Control District also agreed that participation in the partnership had focused their attention on Barrio Logan and led them to do more outreach, such as the newsletter.
- The National Steel and Shipbuilding Company indicated that participation in the partnership had led to its engagement in several projects in Barrio Logan that it likely would have not gotten involved in otherwise.
- Overall, the group agreed that the Demonstration Project was very valuable, that positive things were occurring that would not have otherwise, and that in terms of the three work plans, they wanted to stay the course.⁵²

Finally, the Barrio Logan Partnership explained that the City of San Diego has started the process of revising the zoning and community plan for Barrio Logan. On June 12, 2002, the Land Use and Housing Committee of the City Council considered whether to develop a workplan for revision of the zoning, community and redevelopment plans for the area. The partnership sent a letter to Councilmember Ralph Inzunza, the Councilmember for the area, in support of the elimination of incompatible land uses in Barrio Logan. Four partners provided testimony at the hearing. The matter passed unanimously.⁵³

List of Interviewees

Don Ames~	California Air Resources Board
Norma Chavez	Metropolitan Area Advisory Council on Anti-Poverty Project
Susana Concha-Garcia~	American Lung Association of San Diego & Imperial Counties
Paula Forbis	Environmental Health Coalition
Clarice Gaylord	formerly with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Steven Gold	San Diego Attorney's Office
James Justus	Inner City Business Association
Jerry Martin~	California Air Resources Board
Lane McVey	National Steel and Shipbuilding Company
David Merk	Unified Port District
Lewis Michaelson	Katz and Associates
Frank Riley	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Sonia Rodriguez~	Mercado Tenants Association
Charles "Muggs" Stoll	California Department of Transportation

~Denotes that individual participated in a group interview.

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Endnotes

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