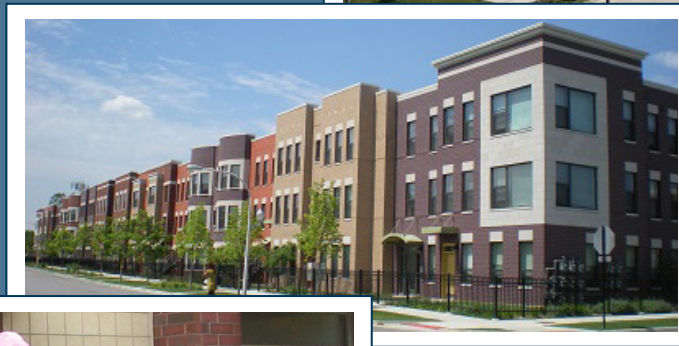
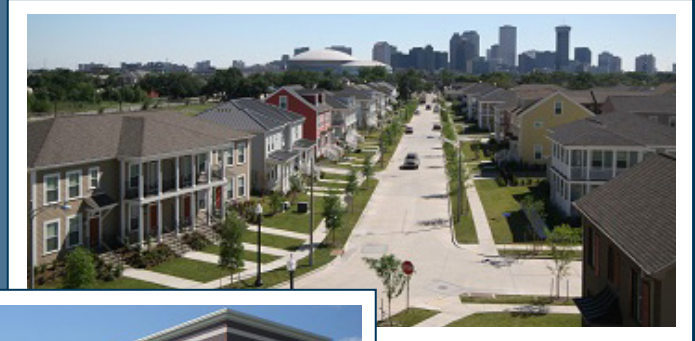


STATE OF THE FIELD SCAN #1

Social Dynamics in Mixed-Income Developments

November 2013



***National Initiative on
Mixed-Income Communities***



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The **National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities** (NIMC) is a new resource for research and information about mixed-income communities. The mission of the NIMC is to help reduce urban poverty and promote successful mixed-income communities by facilitating high-quality research and making information and evidence easily available to policymakers and practitioners. NIMC will promote more effective policy and practice for building successful mixed-income communities by 1) conducting and supporting research and evaluation, 2) providing technical assistance and consultation, 3) building a national research network and convening seminars and other workshops, and 4) centralizing information on mixed-income developments in an online data repository.

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I. Introduction

Across the U.S., local governments and private developers are increasingly turning to mixed-income development as an approach to deconcentrate poverty and revitalize urban neighborhoods. With the Choice Neighborhoods initiative, the federal government has extended its commitment to supporting the mixed-income approach to public housing transformation, which was first broadly implemented through the HOPE VI initiative in the mid-1990s.

A growing research and evaluation literature suggests that the experience and outcomes of mixed-income development have been mixed (see, for example, recent *Cityscape* special issue¹). On the positive side, many deteriorating, crime-ridden developments have been successfully transformed



into high quality complexes with safer, more stable environments. These development transformations have had positive impacts on their surrounding neighborhoods. On the more challenging side, the return rates of original public housing residents to the new developments has often been very low and managing social relations among residents of such different backgrounds and lifestyles has proven difficult. Beyond improving physical quality of life, there has been less success changing the social and economic outlook for low-income residents. There remain important questions about the long-term economic and social sustainability of these developments (see for example Chaskin and Joseph, 2012; Graves, 2010; Joseph, 2008; Joseph and Chaskin, 2010, 2012; Abravenal, Levy and McFarland, 2009; McCormick, Joseph and Chaskin, 2012; Tach, 2009).

Much of the existing knowledge about mixed-income developments comes from studies that focus on a single development or a small subgroup of developments. This report, the first "State of the Field Scan" from the newly launched National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities at Case Western Reserve University (NIMC), is the first effort to conduct a data collection effort across a broad set of mixed-income developments nationwide.

1 Available at <http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/cityscpe/vol15num2/index.html>

The goals of these State of the Field Scans are to:

1. generate a comparative description of the landscape of the mixed-income development field,
2. collect and analyze perceptions, experiences and insights from mixed-income practitioners on specific topics of pressing interest to the field, and
3. make contact and build relationships with a network of mixed-income developments and practitioners across the field.

This scan, and the early information compilation work of the NIMC, is supported primarily by a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Why focus on “social dynamics”?

We have chosen to focus this first state of the field scan on the topic of “social dynamics” in mixed-income developments. By our definition, social dynamics includes several issues relevant to relations among residents²:

1) Social interaction

The extent and nature of social interaction among residents at the development and in the surrounding neighborhood including social relations, social networks, stigma, and issues of race and class.

2) Community building

Intentional efforts to promote connections among residents and a collective sense of responsibility for the development, including community and social activities and events, activities to promote effective neighboring, leadership development, conflict resolution, and relationship brokering.

3) Social control

Formal and informal efforts to manage resident behavior and the use of public space, including rules, norms, expectations, monitoring, and sanctions.

4) Governance

Resident engagement in decision-making about life in the development, including issues of participation, inclusion, decision-making, and representation in resident associations.

The emerging literature on mixed-income developments suggests that while there has been much success on the physical redevelopment side, the social development and community building sides have remained far more challenging. It is well-established

² Our framing of the issue of “social dynamics” in mixed-income developments builds from our collaborative seven-year mixed-income study with colleagues at the University of Chicago. In particular, we acknowledge co-principal investigator Robert Chaskin and research directors Amy Khare and Sara Voelker. More information about that study and research briefs on social interaction, community building, social control, governance and other topics can be found at nimc.case.edu and at <http://ssascholars.uchicago.edu/mixed-income-development-study/>.

that social interaction among residents of different backgrounds in mixed-income developments does not occur naturally, and, in fact, if left unmanaged can result in social friction and ultimately more problematic tensions among residents. While low levels of social interaction may be the norm in most U.S. neighborhoods, it can be argued that mixed-income developments, with the broad range of residents and the clear potential for issues of turf and norms to emerge, require a higher level of attention to community building. The goals and priorities for building community within the new developments often vary greatly among stakeholders in a particular development, and it is typically unclear whose responsibility it is to address this dimension of the redevelopment. Case studies of mixed-income developments suggest that property management staff can sometimes exacerbate a sense of alienation and stigma among residents, rather than promoting community building. Establishing shared norms and expectations for behavior is often difficult and particular issues like noise, "loitering," and unsupervised children are often key flash points. Many developments have segregated associational mechanisms—condo associations, renters meetings—with differential decision-making power and access to stakeholders. In sum, arguably, failure to address the social dynamics of mixed-income developments could make the redevelopment efforts less sustainable as comfortable, desirable mixed environments over the long term.

This scan of the field is an initial, and limited, effort to take the pulse of how a broad set of mixed-income developments across the country are approaching these issues.

Guiding questions

Several questions framed our study:

Assessment of current social dynamics

- What types of relationships exist in general between neighbors?
- Are there challenges around shared social norms and expectations?

Strategies for managing social dynamics

- What strategies are used for promoting and managing interaction among residents?
- What opportunities are there for resident input and decision-making about the development?
- How does the design of the development promote or challenge social dynamics?
- What are the roles of key actors on site in managing dynamics on site?

Insights, lessons learned and future outlook

- What methods are most successful in managing and improving the social relations of mixed-income developments?
- What is most challenging about managing the social dynamics?
- What other approaches could improve social relations in mixed-income developments?
- What resources are needed?

II. Methods

Our scan used two methods for collecting data from a sample of mixed-income developments: an online survey and a follow-up interview. We call it a “scan” because it was a relatively quick turnaround approach to collect a limited set of information from a single respondent at each of a broad set of sites. So for this investigation we prioritized breadth over depth. Our intention is to use this broad preliminary information to identify future issues, developers, and sites for more in-depth, rigorous investigation.

The 31 developments ultimately included in the scan represent a convenience sample from a broader pool of about 100 developments we have been able to identify nationwide and in Canada. The convenience sample was selected from the larger pool according to three criteria: size, income mix and length of occupancy. To be included in the sample, developments had to have

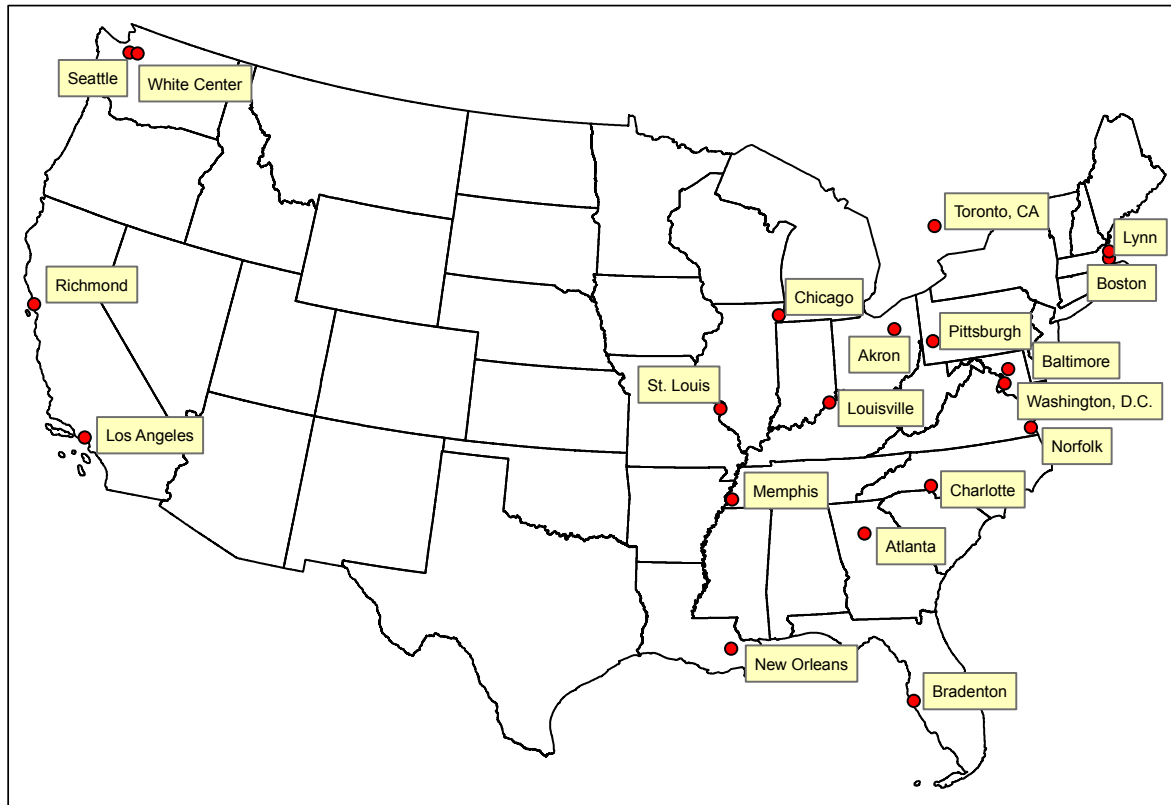


at least 200 units, an intended mix of public housing, affordable and market-rate units and have been occupied for at least two years. The larger pool of almost 100 developments was determined through information from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, internet and literature searches, as well as recommendations from research partners, mixed-income developers, and nonprofit organizations in the field.

Invitations to participate were sent via email to staff members at 56 mixed-income developments that met the three criteria across 31 cities in the U.S. and Canada to attempt to recruit a targeted sample of 30 mixed-income developments.

The final sample consists of 31 mixed-income developments across 20 cities in the U.S. and Canada (*see the map on page 5*).

All of the developments offer rental housing and some offer homeownership opportunities. The developments range in planned size from 201 units to 5,700 units. The sample includes 43 developers; some developments have up to three developers and there is a variety of for-profit developers, nonprofit developers, and housing authorities across the sample (a list of all developments and developers in the scan sample is included in the Appendix).



The size of the developments ranges from 7.5 to 144 acres with an average of 46 acres and a median of 40 acres. Developments have been up and running between 3 and 36 years with 7 years as the most common number of years in operation. Sixty percent of the sites are fully completed. The average current total units across sites is 536 with a median of 409 units. The occupancy rate ranges from 80 to 100 percent occupied with an average of 96 percent and median of 97 percent. The turnover rate ranges from 2 to 40 percent.

The single respondent providing information and perspectives at each site was most often the property manager, but in some cases the survey and interview were completed by a social service director, a representative of the development company, a researcher who had studied the site, or a local community member who is closely involved with the site. The respondents' length of engagement in the mixed-income field ranged broadly from being new to the field to 29 years with a median length of time of 12 years. The majority of the sample is female (71 percent). The racial composition is 54 percent African-American, 40 percent Caucasian, 2 percent Latino, 2 percent Asian and 2 percent Middle Eastern.

After agreeing to participate in the scan of the field on social relations, participants were sent an online survey using the secure survey software Survey Monkey. Surveys were completed between November 2012 and February 2013. When participants completed the survey they were then scheduled for a follow-up phone interview. Interviews were completed with 30 respondents between December and April 2013. Detailed notes were taken during interviews along with an audio recording. Close-ended data from the surveys was analyzed with SPSS software. Open-ended data was coded and analyzed using Atlas Ti software. Survey and interview instruments are available upon request.

Limitations

There are some important limitations to be noted about our methodology here. This scan uses a small sample created through convenience sampling and therefore is not necessarily fully representative of the field. Of the 20 cities represented, 11 are in the East, 6 are in the Midwest and 3 are in the West. There are obvious significant limitations to only surveying and interviewing a single representative staff member at each mixed-income development. The respondents, particularly being mainly staff representatives with a responsibility for marketing and sustaining the development, each have their own biases and subjective points of view about life at the development, had a wide variety of lengths of exposure to the development, and were privy to a circumscribed set of information and experiences at the development. Given the small sample size and single respondent per site, we were limited in the extent of statistical analysis that could be conducted. In addition to basic descriptive analysis, we conducted some limited correlational and cross-tabulation analyses to compare subgroups of sites and to explore relationships between certain site characteristics and key social relations ratings.



For these reasons, it is important to interpret the findings in this report as suggestive and exploratory, which provide an initial scan of information and perspectives to be delved into with greater rigor and precision through further studies.

III. Findings

Summary of Findings

Despite its limitations, this scan of the field provides an intriguing picture of the landscape of mixed-income developments and sheds new light on the emerging findings in the mixed-income literature, confirming some aspects of existing knowledge and raising questions about others.

A few key conclusions emerge:

- In general, respondents assert that mixed-income developments can successfully be made to function as relatively stable, comfortable places to live.
- Though the developments were considered generally stable, most respondents acknowledged that long-term sustainability would require ongoing vigilance and high quality management.
- Respondents generally agreed that the issue of social dynamics was of high importance for the success of the development.
- Respondents generally rated overall neighboring relationships as good, but indicated that the strongest relationships are among residents of the same social and economic background and among those that live in public housing units. The weakest relationships are between renters and owners.
- While many respondents initially did not rate “us vs. them dynamics” as a major issue in the online survey, the follow-up phone interviews consistently revealed a range of on-site social frictions generated by differences in resident backgrounds, lifestyle choices and mindsets.
- Most respondents agreed that intentional planning for social relations in development design, staffing and activities is important to the successful functioning of mixed-income developments and provided insight into their own emerging strategies.
- Many respondents expressed concerns that sufficient resources, capacity and time were not available to effectively promote strong social relations.

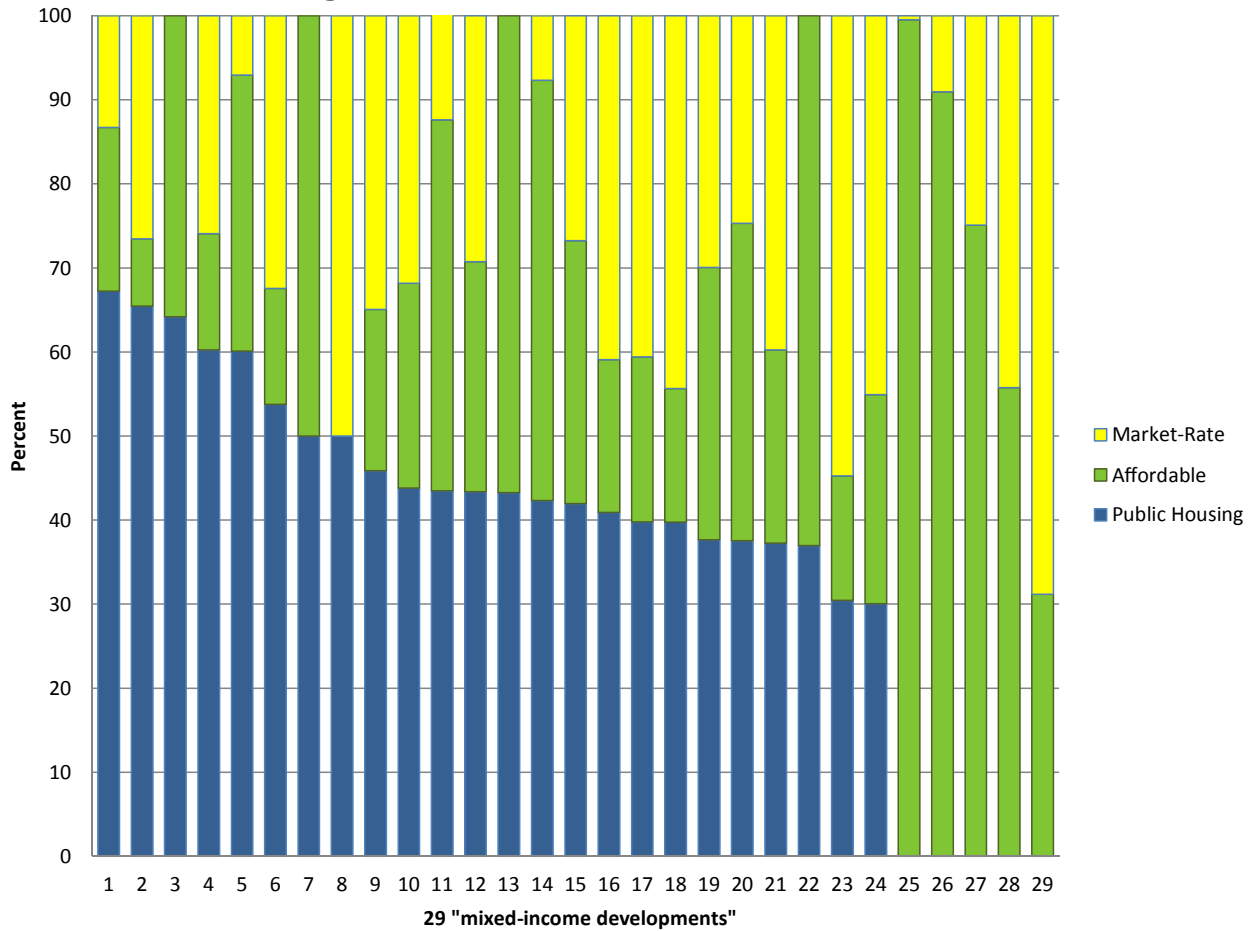


Defining “mixed-income development”

Mixed-income is a very broad term that encompasses a wide range of degrees of mix. In general, it simply means the intentional financing, design and construction of a development in order to attract residents with a range of income levels (Brophy and Smith,

1997). Our scan demonstrated just how fluid this definition is in operation on the ground. Figure 1 below shows the broad distribution of levels of mix by income level across the developments in the scan. Of the 31 developments surveyed, 29 provided information about unit mix (see Appendix to identify each development). Public housing is defined as units that receive ACC funding subsidy from the federal government, affordable housing has some form of subsidy, often low-income housing tax credit financing, and market-rate units are unrestricted in term of household income qualifications.

Figure 1: Income Mix Across Developments



While the notion of intentional design, financing and construction as a mixed-income development is central to our definition of mixed-income, it turns out that this alone is not sufficient to ensure a mix. We learned from a few respondents that units which they had originally intended as market-rate units are currently occupied by residents with housing choice vouchers. We also learned of for-sale housing that is currently occupied by renters. And there are sites that have altered their original site plans given economic circumstances and shifts in the market, including those that never completed intended for-sale housing. All of these factors alter the intended mix on site. Most of the mixed-income developments in our sample, 19, have a broad mix of public housing, affordable, and market-rate units. There are a few outliers: one site has no affordable housing (just public and market-rate housing), three sites have no market-rate housing, and five sites have no public housing.

Twenty sites are rental-only complexes and nine of the developments in the sample reported having for-sale housing on site (it is possible that may be an undercount due to some sites that have for-sale components but, though contiguous, they were considered by the respondent to be a separate development from the rental portion).

There is also a wide range of types of structures represented among the developments, including midrise apartment buildings, two or three story walk-ups, duplexes, townhomes and single family homes (*see Table 1 to the right*).

Table 2 (*below right*) shows the percentage of communities with specific design components. Most sites have common rooms, green space, playgrounds, as well as a public school or community center on or next to the development.

Assessment of social relations

Respondents were asked to assess the social relations at their mixed-income development. Three particular issues were explored in detail: overall neighboring relationships at the site, any “us versus them” dynamics among subgroups of residents, and adherence to shared norms and expectations. In general, our respondents reported a moderately positive outlook across sites: with a sense that while social relations could be considerably better, they were relatively good and stable.

Neighboring relationships

We defined “neighboring relationships” among residents as the ways that neighbors interact and work together to address issues. We instructed respondents that “very strong” neighboring relationships (what we also refer to as “effective neighboring”) would mean that “residents are very comfortable with each other, have identified common ground as neighbors in the same development, and can work together constructively to resolve differences and solve community problems.” Respondents rated their level of agreement with that characterization of their site on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high). We created three categories of agreement: low (1-3), medium (4-7) and high (8-10) and also calculated an average rating (*see Table 3 on the next page and Figure 2 on page 11*).

Table 1: Types of Building Structures

Building Type	Percent of sites
Townhomes	80%
Two-three story walk-up buildings	73%
Midrise apartment buildings	47%
Duplex units	33%
Single family homes	33%

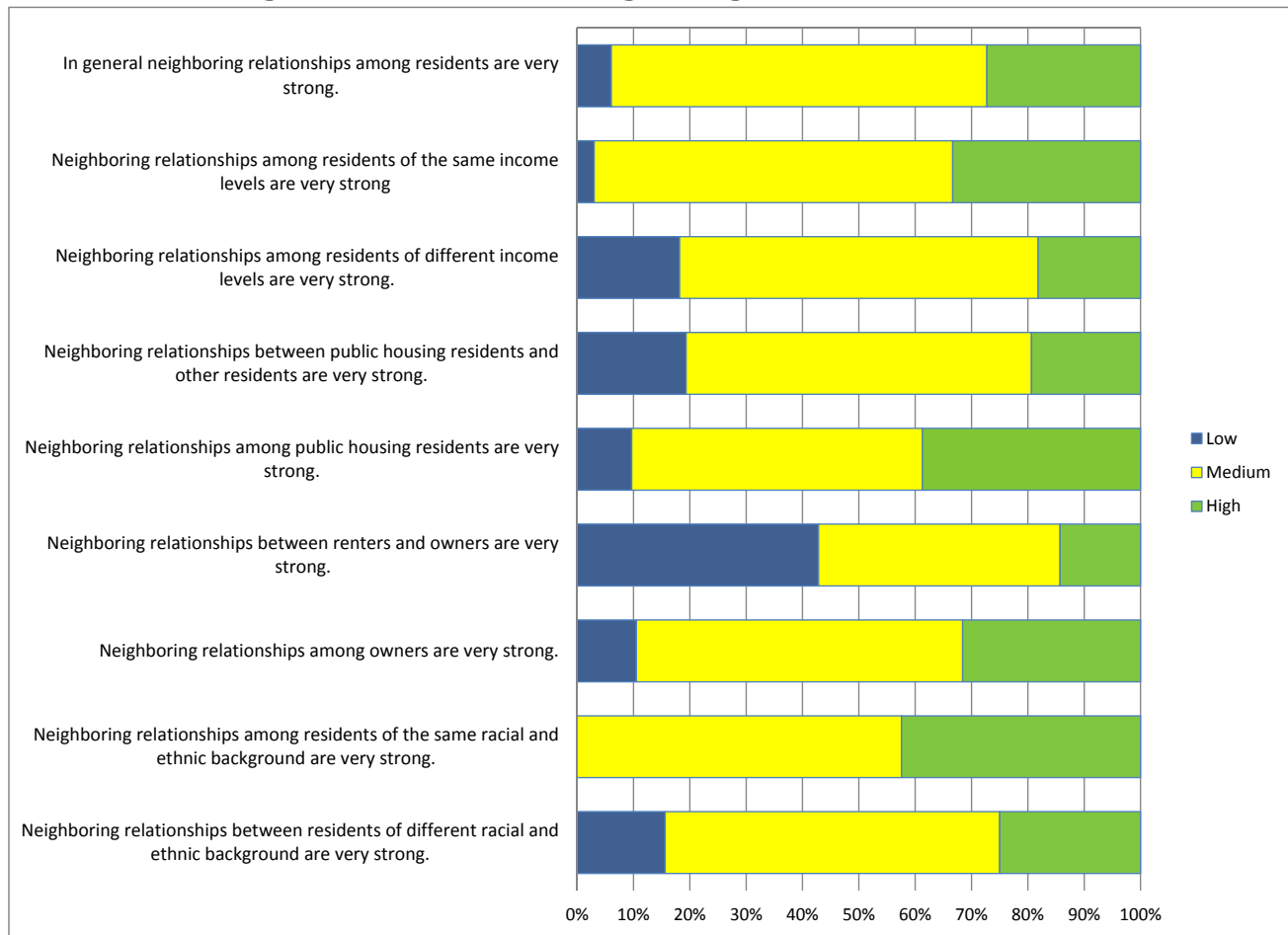
Table 2: Design Components

Design Component	Percent of sites
Common rooms	86%
Green space	86%
Playground	83%
Public school on or next to site	76%
Community center on or next to site	73%

Table 3: Assessment of Neighboring Relationships

<i>Neighboring Relationships</i>	<i>Level of Agreement</i>			<i>Average Rating (1-10)</i>
	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>	
In general neighboring relationships among residents are very strong.	6%	67%	27%	6.12
Neighboring relationships among residents of the same income levels are very strong	3%	64%	33%	6.58
Neighboring relationships among residents of different income levels are very strong.	18%	64%	18%	5.55
Neighboring relationships between public housing residents and other residents are very strong.	19%	61%	19%	5.45
Neighboring relationships among public housing residents are very strong.	10%	52%	39%	6.65
Neighboring relationships between renters and owners are very strong.	43%	43%	14%	4.43
Neighboring relationships among owners are very strong.	11%	58%	32%	6.37
Neighboring relationships among residents of the same racial and ethnic background are very strong.	0%	58%	42%	6.76
Neighboring relationships between residents of different racial and ethnic background are very strong.	16%	59%	25%	5.84

Figure 2: Assessment of Neighboring Relationships



Respondents gave overall neighboring relationships an average rating of 6.12. Residents of the same income level were rated as having strong relationships (6.58) while for those of different income levels the average rating dropped to 5.55. The strongest rated neighboring relationships were those among residents of the same racial and ethnic background (6.76) and among public housing residents (6.65). Neighboring relationships between public housing residents and others was rated low in comparison at 5.45. Neighboring relationships were rated the weakest between renters and owners with an average rating of 4.43. As one respondent summed it up in their follow-up interview:

If people have something in common then they mingle or mix, but otherwise they don't.

Survey responses suggest that the extent of the mix of residents might be related to the strength of neighboring relationships. Developments that had ownership and rental units as well as a mix of public housing, affordable and market rate units had stronger relationships among residents of the same income level and stronger relationships among public housing residents than other developments in the sample. This could suggest that the more mixed a development, the more that residents build ties with others like them.

“Us vs. Them” Dynamics

As the results from the ratings of neighbor relations demonstrates, the major social challenge in mixed-income developments is how to promote comfortable and effective relations among different subgroups of residents. The literature has shown that often what is referred to as “us versus them” dynamics can emerge on site, with social friction emerging based on group differences. We explored this issue with respondents in the survey and in follow-up interviews.

Table 4: “Us vs. Them” Dynamics

There are challenging “us vs. them” dynamics at this development^{*3}			
Level of Agreement			
Low	Medium	High	Average Rating (1-10)
15.6%	40.6%	43.8%	6.4

In their survey responses, respondents generally indicated that while there may be some us versus them dynamics at their site, there was medium to high agreement that it was not a major problem (average 6.4) (see Table 4 left).

Additional analysis of the survey data suggests that us versus them issues are more challenging at the sites that have a homeownership component and where there is a midrise building.

In their follow-up interviews, respondents provided much more detail about the nature of the us versus them dynamics that they were observing at their sites. It appears that while these issues are not a major problem at most sites, these social tensions do exist and lead to a sense of separation among residents of different subgroups. Almost sixty percent of respondents described some form of us vs. them dynamic on site in our follow-up interview. Respondents described us versus them dynamics between renters and owners, public housing residents and other residents, market-rate and subsidized renters, and between racial and ethnic groups.

Homeowners vs. renters: Respondents report that, overall, homeowners and renters (particularly subsidized renters) have different expectations of their housing experience and homeowners become frustrated when their expectations are not met. Property managers said that they tend to get more complaints from homeowners. There is a sense (and often, as we shall discuss below, a reality) that homeowners have a vote and “get to decide everything,” as one respondent put it. Renters can often feel like they don’t have a say in the community.

The main issue is between public housing residents and homeowners, an issue that existed before the new development and still does today.

Generally social challenges play out in the condominium households

³ In tables throughout this report, a * indicates the question was phrased and rated in the opposite direction in the original survey but has been changed for alignment with other scales in this report where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, in a positive direction.

and renter households. For the condominium owners it's okay if children hang out in front of the building, but entirely different if renters and subsidized residents hang out in front of the building. [Homeowners have been] organizing against rental in favor of homeownership. They have been organizing and communicating around their desire not to have more rental phases built. They've been developing relationships because of this issue. Now they feel engaged and now have relationships. It was definitely us versus them for awhile, due to lack of understanding and frustration that the investment they made went awry, you see certain kinds of insensitive public comments made about renters and low-income renters, that's where the us vs. them comes up.

Also, homeowners get to enjoy certain privileges that come with owning a home that don't come with renting, for example fewer or no constraints around pets, they are allowed to make modifications to the residence, and they are allowed to have barbeque grills.

There are some differences between what the homeowners and renters can do, homeowners have balconies where the renters have fire escapes that cannot be used as balconies because of the liability. . .people feel they don't have the same advantages.

And often renters have to go through different kinds of screening and monitoring than homeowners.

Depending on the site design, sometimes when homeownership units are clustered or separated from the others, this can add to the sense of difference. On some sites, the homeownership units are landscaped differently than the rental units and in some cases there are different property management companies for each. As a result, some respondents explained, there are real and perceived differences in power and influence on site which cause tensions. One third of respondents described tensions on site between homeowners and renters.

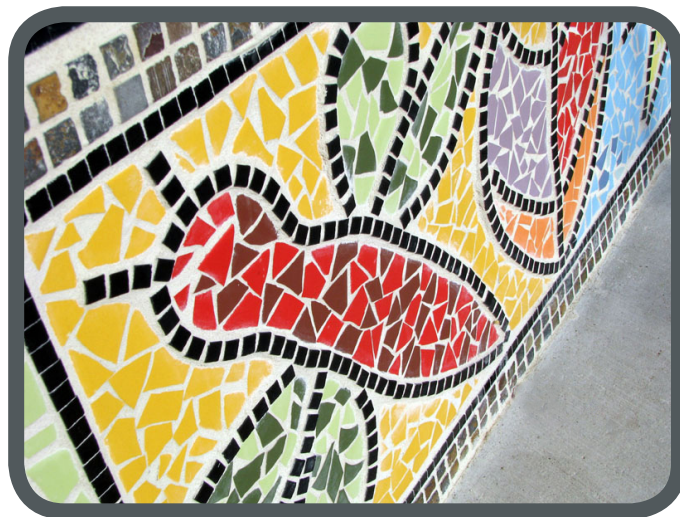
Public housing residents vs. others: In addition to having strong relationships within their group, respondents reported that public housing residents often distinguish between themselves and others onsite. These residents may have known each other before the redevelopment and continue these social connections and friendships on the new site.

A lot of residents have lived here previously when it was the public housing site, have better rapport or longer rapport with one another, they still relate to one another.

There is often a sense of turf that is strongly held among public housing residents who formerly lived at the original site or in the vicinity and they share a sense that other residents are the newcomers. We also heard that some public housing residents feel that

other residents do not have the same long-term stake in the community that they do. This solidarity among public housing residents can feed into a sense of separation from the broader new mixed-income population. Our analysis of the survey data suggests that the more mixed a development is (with public housing, affordable, market-rate rental as well as affordable and market-rate for sale units), the stronger the relationships among public housing residents.

Market rate vs. subsidized: While residents in a mixed-income development are not supposed to know who is receiving a subsidy and who is not, most are aware that there are considerable differences in what residents are paying. And even though units may be externally indistinguishable, certainly through appearances and behavior residents tend to make assumptions about who is who. Respondents reported that some of the us versus them frictions emerge due to market-rate renters being resentful about the level of rent they pay relative to others.



People realize that some people are paying much less than they are and then resort to using phrases like “those people”, differences in rent only becomes an issue when something else is going wrong.

Some market rate residents have been here a long time. They feel they are better...But we can't treat people differently. There is still a lot of stereotyping.

Much of “what goes wrong” as referenced in the respondent quote above can be described as tensions over lifestyle and behavioral issues – noise levels, littering, visitor behavior, and where to hang out in the development.

There is also a different sense of orientation to the housing complex and the broader city. As one respondent described it, market-rate residents tend to associate outside of the community while subsidized residents associate within the community. In many sites, the market-rate rental population also tends to be much more short-term and transient thus invests less in engaging in the community and establishing local relationships.

Racial and ethnic tensions: Another important form of difference is across racial and ethnic lines. Many of the mixed-income developments in our sample are home to a variety of ethnicities, races, and immigrant groups and we heard about some tensions related to those differences. One-third of our respondents discussed some dimension of conflict between racial or ethnic groups. Respondents asserted that people stick within their own ethnicity, and in some cases inter-ethnic grudges or tensions were carried over from

the old public housing site into the new mixed-income development. Language barriers sometimes presented a challenge building connections with and among immigrant groups. The developments on the West Coast had the greatest variety of races and ethnicities which generated more opportunities for these types of tensions.

Conflict often arises between people of different races and age, rather than income because people are relatively close in income. Racial mix is primarily African American, Asian . . . and Latino.

Generational: One final form of us versus them tensions that we heard mentioned was between middle-aged families and younger families. There are concerns expressed that younger families are not as respectful of their neighbors.

Different people have shifted in and out, different clientele now, older crowd and new crowd, a lot of younger single mothers, other residents feel like they aren't parenting correctly.

Norms and Expectations

We also asked specifically about whether residents had a shared sense of norms and expectations on site (*see Table 5 below*). Most respondents rating the presence of shared norms and expectations in the medium to high range, with an average rating of 6.82.

Table 5: Norms and Expectations

Norms and Expectations	Level of Agreement			Average Rating (1-10)
	Low	Medium	High	
In general, residents have a shared sense of norms and expectations.	6%	52%	42%	6.82
Residents of different backgrounds have a shared sense of norms and expectations.	12%	48%	39%	6.36
There are not challenges in the development about the appropriate use of public space.*	21%	42%	33%	6.03
There are not challenges in the development with unsupervised children.*	48%	36%	15%	4.03

While not very high on a 1 to 10 scale, this is higher than might be expected. Although it should be noted that respondents reported that the sense of shared norms and expectations was slightly lower among residents of different backgrounds. Also surprising, given findings in the literature, there was only a moderate level of agreement that issues of public space were problematic at the site. While twenty percent of respondents strongly agreed that this was an issue, most only moderately agreed.

Our results do confirm another issue that has emerged from the literature in terms of the challenges of unsupervised children (see for example Chaskin, Sichling and Joseph, 2013). Respondents generally agree that there are challenges at their site with unsupervised children, with almost half strongly agreeing that this is an issue. Two-thirds of respondents raised this as an important issue in our follow-up interviews. We heard that children often do not have enough places to play and thus become an annoyance to some and that teens hanging out in the development can be perceived as intimidating to seniors and other adults.

Rules and guidelines are followed in the community but there are issues with kids and following the guidelines is part of educating the residents on what is appropriate behavior.

Respondents indicated that the core challenge is that residents have varying standards for the supervision of children and tolerance for children hanging out onsite.

Some issues with youth on site, not everyone is tolerant of groups of youth hanging out, but the management is fine with it and just tries to help others feel comfortable with it because the youth aren't doing anything wrong.

Rules

One means of promoting shared norms and expectations is through the establishment and enforcement of rules and expectations. According to respondents, in general residents adhere to rules and expectations – the average rating was 7.15 with almost half strongly agreeing (*see Table 6 on page 17*). Furthermore, we did not find support from respondents for a finding from the literature that residents often complain of double standards in treatment by staff, though it is certainly likely that staff do not perceive this issue in the same way that residents do. But at least they are reporting that, if it exists, it has largely not been brought to their attention. Some respondents pointed out that rather than simply handing out the list of rules on an individual basis, it is constructive to create an opportunity for discussion of the rules with residents as a collective.

Strategies for managing social relations

We learned that there are a wide variety of approaches to managing social relations across the developments. Only four of the respondents reported that they take a very hands-off

Table 6: Rules and Expectations

Rules and Expectations	Level of Agreement			Average Rating (1-10)
	Low	Medium	High	
Residents generally adhere to a shared set of formal rules and expectations about living at this development.	0%	52%	48%	7.15
Residents have not expressed concerns about double standards in the application of formal rules and expectations for residents of different income levels at this development.*	9%	24%	67%	7.81

approach and believe that any social issues on site should be dealt with by residents and over time residents themselves would work out ways of dealing with this. In most cases, respondents reported taking a much more hands-on approach, with a number of activities and processes intentionally developed to manage resident dynamics on site. And in a few cases, respondents described a broad-based approach that involved multiple staff members and support from all levels of their development organization.

[This work] is more than buildings, it is changing lives and building community.

Social dynamics are imperative to the success of the property, these jobs would be easy if it was just maintaining the property, they are really there to help residents make it a functioning place to live...Best way to create a positive environment is to focus on the people not the property.

There has to be staff intervention, there has to be a focused deliberate creation of programs and resources that are intergenerational and encourage people to come out of their apartments...It doesn't happen by itself. Must be coordinated by staff and resident leadership.

If we are going to improve what we are doing we have to improve the attitude and mindset of management. They must shape the experience of residents. If management continues to just be the collector of rent and not the builder of relationships and facilitator of community, we won't have the type of success we're talking about, that the advocates and visionaries are considering.

One critical strategy, according to several respondents, is to focus on the issues of mixed-income community building as early and explicitly as possible. Some suggested

even marketing the development more transparently as a community that will require a different level of engagement and tolerance from its residents. “Mixed-income is not for everyone,” one asserted. It was suggested that up-front orientations for all residents have been useful in order to clarify “house rules” as well as facilitate more up front discussion about the community and the “social compact” that is needed. We need “high expectations for people and higher expectations for the community.”

Eighty-eight percent of respondents described various strategies in place to intentionally promote social interaction between residents through a variety of methods including meetings, events, and other community building activities.

Gathering Residents

Meetings are a primary form across the developments of disseminating information to residents and helping residents understand what is expected of them. Meetings also allow residents to provide input and articulate concerns. Managers discussed meetings as a good way for staff to communicate with residents and for residents to get to know their neighbors.

Everyone is invited to events and are drawn by the food, people are learning more about each other than they did in the past.

Meetings are informative and let us know what we need to work on and there is also an open door policy where staff will meet with anyone and residents feel comfortable with their listening ear.



Engagement through programming

Besides residents meetings, programming on site was the next most frequent mode of engaging residents and promoting some degree of engagement. Programs range from social activities to education, training and support activities intended to help promote greater self-sufficiency among residents.

There are a series of programs available onsite that encourage engagement and give help to the residents who have come from public housing.

More about promoting a shared activity, there is a community garden and information is posted about that, it's been a big hit on site and brought different types of people together.

Holiday party, meet and greets, lobbies in different buildings, initially very useful, had ice breaker type things, some people could start talking to each other, parties hosted at (at nearby church), had owners helping us plan those events, strategy to help improve communication.

Programming is planned for children and for adults, with afterschool programming and childcare for children and programs such as workforce education, job skills training, and financial literacy for adults. It appears that most programming opportunities were more focused on informal socializing rather than specially-designed community building efforts with the intention of promoting substantive discussion and exchange among residents of different backgrounds. Examples of intentional community building activities including a "barber shop men's discussion group," a parent café, and a seniors discussion group.

Several respondents indicated that there were not enough activities for youth, particularly those in the 12 – 16 age range. One respondent complained "we have 400 youth and no green space or playgrounds."

Some respondents pointed out the importance of explicitly designing programs and activities to attract "both sides," residents of all income levels. Often programs are geared to low-income residents. Some suggested that it was key to make the activities feel more like "amenities" and less like "services."

Need to change people's perceptions, resident expectations, by making it feel like a private market property. People don't want to feel that they are engaging in an experiment, if a developer [rather than a social service agency] leads the process it eliminates the feel of experimentation, people want to feel they are living in any other neighborhood not the footprint of public housing. They don't want the same stigma.

Resident input and decision making

Research suggests that promoting resident input and decision making is complicated in a mixed-income setting (see for example Chaskin, Khare and Joseph, 2011). In public housing developments, the federal government requires the establishment of resident-elected Local Advisory Councils to represent tenants, but there are no such stipulations in mixed-income developments. Despite this, two-thirds of respondents said there is some form of formal opportunities for resident input and decision making in their development. Where there are actual resident associations, 43 percent reported condo associations or homeowner associations (another indication of a higher presence of homeowners in the vicinity than reported on the survey), 30 percent have associations that are for renters

only, and 10 percent have associations that are just for public housing residents. Of the developments that reported having homeowners, only one has an association that includes both renters and owners. It is notable that associations for homeowners are the most prevalent, and, even more striking, so few developments have taken the step of creating mixed-tenure governance structures, despite (or perhaps contributing to) the predominant challenges of tensions between owners and renters.



For the most part resident associations are formal but non-incorporated entities led by residents with some staff involvement in a liaison role to communicate changes onsite and to accept suggestions and requests for improvement of management practices at the development. These entities “help to keep the lines of communication open.” One site has a well-organized youth council that is supported by the larger resident association. Several property management companies choose not to support resident associations in order to avoid the tensions and power struggles that can often be generated by tenant associations, instead these companies support informal resident input through periodic meetings led by staff.

Resident associations can sometimes be hard to sustain and respondents pointed out that residents require training and support to learn to manage meetings and the work of an association.

The role of staff

Respondents acknowledged the high importance of staff experience and capacity to effectively manage and support the mixed-income development. Sixty percent of developments have a dedicated staff besides a property manager to work on social supports and sometimes community building. Respondents rated the relationships between staff and residents quite highly but, interestingly, rated the relationship with

Table 7: Staff-Resident Relationships

Staff-Resident Relationships	Level of Agreement			Average Rating (1-10)
	Low	Medium	High	
In general, staff and residents have strong relationships at this development.	3%	42%	55%	7.30
Property management staff and residents have strong relationships at this development.	9%	48%	42%	7.00
Community life/social service staff and residents have strong relationships at this development.	12%	30%	55%	7.19

property managers slightly lower than with “community life/social service” staff (see Table 7 on above). It is important to keep in mind that these are mostly ratings from the perspectives of staff themselves.

Although most developments have a staff role dedicated to the social side of managing the site, the majority of developments have a resident services coordinator (to focus mainly on individual residents needs and issues, along with some programming) and not someone charged with community building among residents and across resident subgroups. Those property managers who did not have a resident services staffer saw the need for that and explained that they end up getting drawn into addressing social issues themselves.

Having resident service is key to the work of a mixed-income site, helpful for managers.

It would be helpful if all staff had some background in social worker, I’m not a social worker so have had to learn about people and not having that degree has been a big challenge.

Need to help residents if they didn’t know things needed to help people transition. The key to having a successful property is you need education, have to have program geared toward teaching people about living in different circumstances.

Having this type of person is rare and really helps manage individual issues in the community and bring the community together.

Site design and social dynamics

Respondents indicated that the site design has a major influence on the nature of social relations among residents. As one told us:

The design has a huge impact on social dynamics. Our block courtyard design promotes a sense of smaller blocks instead of one big property. It makes it a lot more intimate.

Our survey analysis suggests that building types may have an influence on neighboring relations. As mentioned earlier, sites with a midrise building were reported to have more challenging us versus them issues and also weaker neighboring relations and weaker owner-renter relations. The data suggests that sites with walk-up buildings may have stronger relationships among residents of different income levels, between public housing residents and other residents, and between owners and renters. Respondents appeared more confident that staff could manage social relations effectively at sites with walk-up buildings.



A wide variety of features that create potential spaces for social interaction have been established at developments, including community rooms, community centers, club houses, gathering halls, enrichment centers, pools, exercise rooms, outdoor space, parks, community walking trails, computer labs, outdoor grills, coffee shops and community gardens.

For example, a respondent described the particularly extensive array of these opportunities at one site:

We have a large community gathering hall that we use for community functions and also rent out for weddings, etc. We also used new urban design guidelines such as low 3 foot and 4 foot “neighboring” fences so neighbors can chat with each other. There are front porches and back porches, small pocket parks, and trails throughout the development. There are common mailbox banks at the end of the block where

neighbors chat. The local library branch is a common community interaction spot. We also have a dedicated “community living room” social multi-purpose area in the central campus where all of the services are located.

Although, on the survey, respondents generally did not report major challenges with public space and green space, in the follow-up interviews we learned more about the influence of communal space on social relations.

Developments with less space designated for gathering tended to struggle--particularly with issues of children and teenagers. Respondents discussed the consequence of a lack of public space or features that facilitate gathering.

The development does not have a lot of green space, social spaces are limited and conflict does occur more as a result.

If social relations is meant to be a focus of the property it needs to happen in the planning. There is no community facility on site, we have to do activities in the trailer next door. People can't sit or hang out on site, there are no benches. People were under the impression that the escape stairs were porches, but they are not, structurally, the site is not set up for gathering.

About a quarter of the respondents described ways that design features on their sites inhibit interactions. Features that prevent social interaction include distance between buildings, in particular different tenure buildings, lack of space in community rooms, lack of a community building, type of building (multiple stories versus townhome style buildings), private backyards, and lack of recreation facility. One respondent described features of the development that are a barrier to interaction:

In some parts of the development the homeowner units and the rental units are far apart...The development is along a hill, so folks at the bottom of the hill would not naturally see people . . . at the top of the hill. There is also a major arterial road going through the development that makes it difficult for families on the south side down the hill to participate in all of the gatherings and programs that happen at the community campus on the north side up the hill.

Relevance and outlook of social relations

Respondents were generally optimistic about the status and outlook for mixed-income communities, but mostly agreed that the issue of social relations is critical to their long-term success (see Table 8 on the next page). There is strong agreement that social relations at mixed-income developments are a high priority and cannot be well-managed without intervention from staff. Respondents expressed confidence in their ability to

Table 8: Perspectives on Social Relations

<i>Perspective on social relations</i>	<i>Level of Agreement</i>			<i>Average Rating (1-10)</i>
	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>	
I think that, given time, the social relations at this development will take care of themselves with no intervention from staff.	48%	45%	6%	3.73
I think that managing social relations should be a high priority for staff and residents here.	15%	42%	42%	6.79
I am highly confident that the staff and residents at this development can figure out how to effectively manage the social relations at this development.	6%	30%	64%	7.61
Effectively managing the social relations is the most important issue for the long-term future of this development.	24%	48%	27%	5.64
Effectively managing the social relations is an important issue for the long-term future of this development.	0%	39%	61%	7.97

work with residents to determine how to effectively manage social relations, though they appeared more confident in sites with walk-up buildings and less confident in sites with a greater degree of resident income and tenure mix, and, interestingly, in sites with a resident association.

IV. Conclusions

This scan of 31 mixed-income developments in the U.S. and Canada provides a limited but informative look at the variety of approaches to mixed-income design and varying perspectives on the issue of social dynamics. Despite the wide range of levels of “income mix” across sites, we learned of some shared issues and challenges across sites in terms of promoting and sustaining strong social relations among the mix of residents. While there is consensus among respondents that managing social relations is a critical component of the long-term success of mixed-income developments, most do not feel that they yet have the full strategies or resources to be most effective. Those sites that benefit from a planned site design that facilitates various forms of interaction, dedicated efforts to program and manage communal facilities and public space, and active mechanisms for engaging residents in community building, seem to hold more promise of sustained effective neighboring.

Most respondents shared a positive outlook on the relative stability of their development but agreed that generating stronger and less divisive relations across the various lines of difference among residents will require more creative and strategic attention to managing social dynamics.



V. Implications for Practice

Based on this limited scan of the field, we can suggest several practice implications for consideration:

- Development professionals responsible for a mixed-income site, including developers, property managers, and service providers, should take time to establish a **clear understanding** of their **social goals** for the mixed-income community beyond the basic management and operations of the property. Given the realities of regular staff turnover, this conversation should be revisited periodically.
- The development team and local partners should clarify **expectations** for lead and supportive **roles** regarding the management of social dynamics on site.
- The implementation of strategies to promote effective neighboring should **start early**, be **proactive** rather than reactive and extremely **intentional** in making sure that all facets of the development—design, property management, residents services, amenities, resident governance—facilitate rather than impede constructive relationships among residents. Development staff should consider up-front orientations for residents of all income levels about the opportunities and challenges of living in a mixed-income setting.
- There should be **clarity** among all residents about **norms and expectations** in the development, where possible, residents could be engaged in collective discussions about ground rules. Staff should anticipate that sensitive issues of race, class, culture and lifestyle will emerge in these conversations and should seek assistance in structuring and facilitating constructive conversations about these difficult issues. Given resident turnover, these conversations should be repeated periodically.
- Where there are homeowners on site, development staff should pay particular attention to supporting **constructive relationships** among **owners and renters**. Ensuring that all residents feel a stake in promoting a high quality of life in the development and all have a say seems important. Where there are differential rules for owners and renters, this should be openly acknowledged and explained.
- On sites with **midrise buildings**, development staff should anticipate a greater possibility of social frictions and act proactively and consistently to establish constructive relationships and effective processes for idea-sharing and problem-solving among residents.

- Development staff should agree upon **structured ways of engaging residents** in providing feedback and input about life on the site whether that be organized resident associations or other less formal opportunities. Where there are formal governance bodies, training should be provided to give residents the skills and knowledge in how to effectively lead and participate in such groups.
- To facilitate social mixing among residents, **outdoor and indoor space** for gathering should be designed into the development, but it is critical that the space be well-managed with clear ground rules for its use and maintenance.
- Development staff should anticipate the common challenge of **unsupervised children** and develop a comprehensive strategy to address this including dedicated space and structured activities for children and youth, clear roles among staff and resident volunteers for managing activities and clear ground rules communicated to families.
- **Social activities** on site should be carefully designed to **appeal to residents of all incomes** and staff and residents should be intentional about marketing and outreach to make sure that all are invited to participate.

VI. Acknowledgments

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**Appendix
Developments Included in the Scan**

Development	City	State	Developer(s)	Figure 1 Number
Albemarle Square	Baltimore	Maryland	The Integral Group	18
Bradenton Village	Bradenton	Florida	Telesis Corporation	22
Broadcreek	Norfolk	Virginia	Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority , The Community Builders, Inc.	2
Capitol Gateway	Washington, D.C.		A&R Development, Harkins Builders	
Cascade Village	Akron	Ohio	The Community Builders, Inc.	10
Centennial Place Apartments	Atlanta	Georgia	McCormack Baron Salazar, The Integral Group, Atlanta Housing Authority	16
City View Park	Louisville	Kentucky	Telesis Corporation	26
Crawford Square Apartments	Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	McCormack Baron Salazar	28
Greenbridge	Unincorporated King County	Washington	King County Housing Authority	13
Harbor Point Apartments	Boston	Massachusetts	Corcoran Jennison Companies and Harbor Point Task Force	29
Harmony Oaks Apartments	New Orleans	Louisiana	Goldman Sachs(UGI) , McCormack Baron Salazar , U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Housing Authority of New Orleans and Louisiana Housing Finance Agency	15
King's Lynne Apartments	Lynn	Massachusetts	Corcoran Mullens Jennison Inc. & King's Lynne Resident Council. Inc.	19
Murphy Park Apartments	Saint Louis	Missouri	McCormack Baron Salazar and Vaughn Associates, L.P.	6
NewHolly	Seattle	Washington	Seattle Housing Authority	21
Oakwood Shores	Chicago	Illinois	The Community Builders, Inc.	
Orchard Commons	Boston	Massachusetts	Cruz Development Inc.	14
Orchard Gardens Estates	Boston	Massachusetts	Boston Housing Authority	11
Paradise at Parkside	Washington, D.C.	District of Columbia	Telesis Corporation	25
Park Boulevard	Chicago	Illinois	Stateway Associates, LLC	5

Development	City	State	Developer(s)	Figure 1 Number
Parkside of Old Town	Chicago	Illinois	Holsten Development Corporation, Kimball-Hill Urban Centers	24
Pueblo del Sol Apartments	Los Angeles	California	McCormack Baron Salazar, Housing Authority of Los Angeles Related Companies	3
Regent Park	Toronto	Ontario, Canada	Daniels Corporation	23
Renaissance Place at Grand	Saint Louis	Missouri	McCormack Baron Salazar	17
Richmond Village	Richmond	California	McCormack Baron Salazar, EM Johnson Interest, the Richmond Housing Authority, East Bay Neighborhood Housing Services and Community Housing Development Corporation	1
Roosevelt Square	Chicago	Illinois	Related Midwest, Heartland Housing, Quest Development Group	12
Seigle Point Apartment Homes	Charlotte	North Carolina	Charlotte Housing Authority , TCG	7
Tent City Apartments	Boston	Massachusetts	Tent City Corporation and The Community Builders, Inc.	27
The Villages of East Lake	Atlanta	Georgia	East Lake Foundation	8
The Villages of Park DuValle	Louisville	Kentucky	Louisville Metro Housing Authority & The Community Builders, Inc.	4
University Place	Memphis	Tennessee	Memphis Housing Authority	20
Westhaven Park	Chicago	Illinois	Michaels Development Company, Brinshore Development Company, Chicago Housing Authority	9