

**The People or the Place?: Revitalization / Gentrification
in San Francisco's Bayview Hunters Point**

by

Saara Nafici

B.S. in Conservation and Resource Studies
University of California, Berkeley (2001)

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
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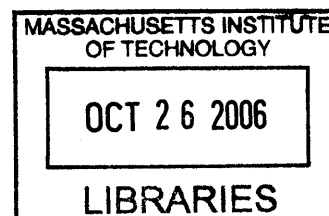
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
May 25, 2006

Certified by: _____

Professor J. Phillip Thompson
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Thesis Advisor

Accepted by: _____

Professor Langley Keyes
Chair, MCP Committee
Department of Urban Studies and Planning



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Abstract

The long-neglected minority neighborhoods of Bayview and Hunters Point, San Francisco, are facing the prospect of an uncertain future. The next few years will bring to the neighborhood intense private and public investment in largely market-rate residential developments, large-scale commercial development, new transit service, and massive environmental remediation of abandoned toxic sites. With this renewed interest in the area comes the potential for speculation, rising property values, and the likely displacement of the predominantly low-income, African-American neighborhood residents. With the specter of gentrification looming over these new projects, how can the community ensure that benefits arising from ecological clean-up and neighborhood reinvestment are borne by them, and not gentrifying newcomers? This thesis explores the process of community planning and examines proposed future community benefits of redevelopment projects in Bayview Hunters Point. Drawing inspiration from struggles and innovative programs in other cities, community members, faith-based coalitions, union leaders, organizers, and others can work towards equitable development without resident displacement – revitalization for and by the community of Bayview Hunters Point. This thesis intends to explore those paths in the unique context of Bayview Hunters Point.

Key words: gentrification, displacement, redevelopment, process, community organizing, economic development

For Birjinder Anant, 1974-2005
My brother, where there is struggle, there is hope.
My friend, you are missed.

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I'd like to first and foremost thank the people (and place) of Bayview and Hunters Point, San Francisco, for sharing with me their stories and thoughts about their neighborhoods. Likewise, I am grateful to the representatives from the various city agencies at the City of San Francisco who took the time to help me pursue this thesis.

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An extra extra special thank you goes out to my dear Natasha Myers, who graciously gave me crucial advice, support, and feedback. With perfectly-timed confidence boosts, her invaluable comments and marinated tofu helped me develop a richer thesis, for which I am eternally grateful. I'd also like to thank the infamous orange chill chair, for obvious reasons.

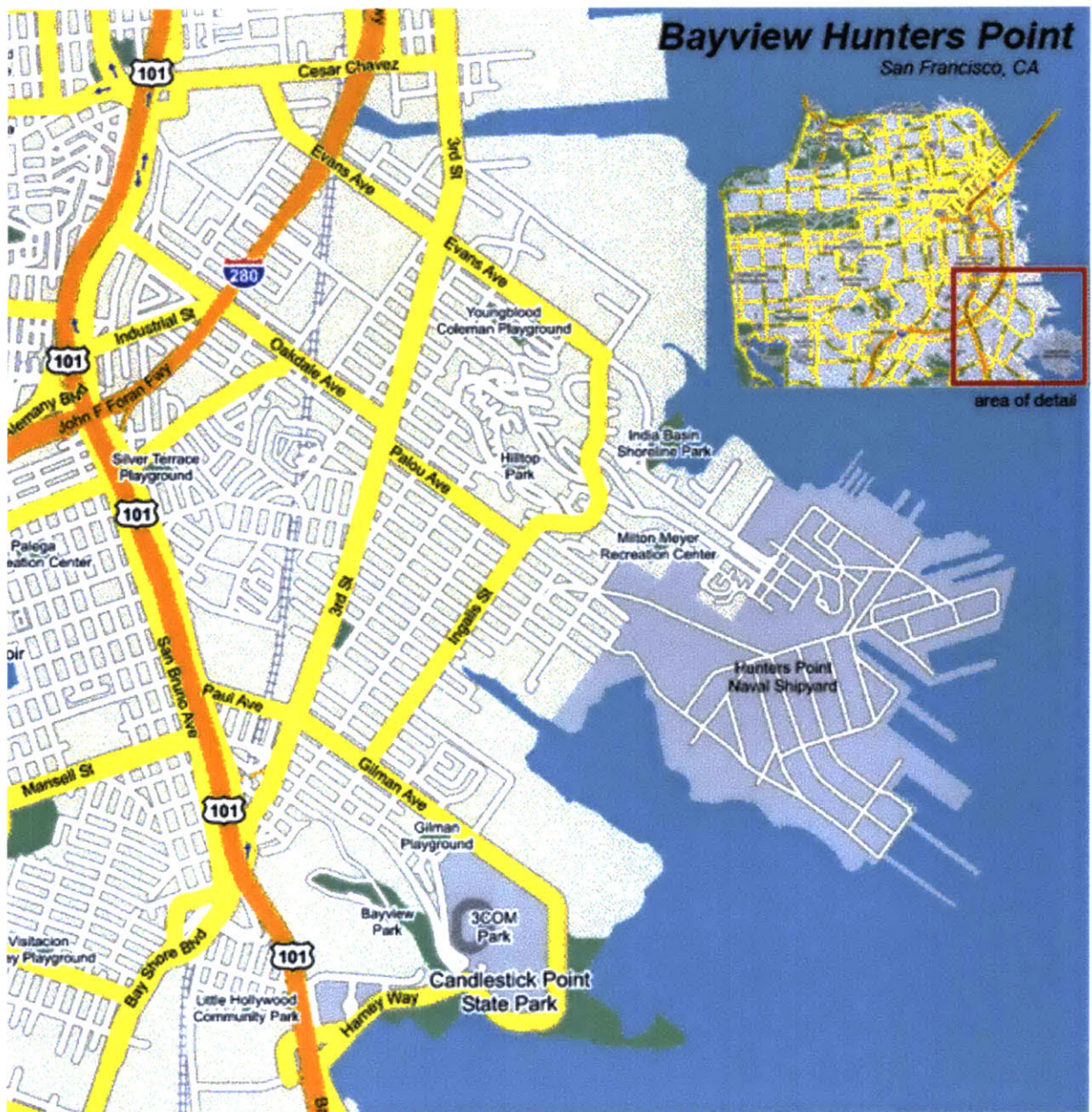
On a more personal note, my family immigrated to the United States from Iran during the Iranian Revolution in 1979 – I was born 2 months after we arrived. As the long and devastating war between Iran and Iraq began soon thereafter, our plans to return were indefinitely shelved. My childhood was marked with a confusion over home, which later evolved into an obsession. I see an entire diaspora generation struggling at the same time with deep root shock, blind assimilation, and fierce nationalism. I look at struggles over place, over definitions, over identity, over a single neighborhood, as an extension of this obsession with home, and my own homeland. I write this thesis with the hope that justice and peace will prevail.

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Abbreviations and Context Map

BVHP:	Bayview Hunters Point
BVHP – PAC:	Bayview Hunters Point Project Area Committee
CAC:	Hunters Point Shipyard Citizen’s Advisory Committee
COO:	Communities of Opportunity
MOCD:	Mayor’s Office of Community Development
MOED:	Mayor’s Office of Economic (and Workforce) Development
RAB:	Hunters Point Shipyard Restoration Advisory Board
SFHA:	San Francisco Housing Authority
SFPD:	San Francisco Police Department
SFRA:	San Francisco Redevelopment Agency



Chapter One: Introduction

The importance of gentrification is that it clearly demonstrates that low-income people, and the neighborhoods they live in, suffer not from a lack of capital but from a lack of power and control over even the most basic components of life – that is, the places called home.

– James DeFilippis, 2004¹

I. Introduction and Goals

From New York City to Atlanta to New Orleans, cities across the United States are hemorrhaging their African American populations.² Behind this exodus is a complex story of the increasing attractiveness (and subsequent gentrification³) of city living, continuing black middle-class flight to the suburbs, and arguably, a new wave of massive city-led redevelopment projects in historically black neighborhoods. Assuming honest intentions, the fine line between revitalization and gentrification is tread by city planners, economic development practitioners, and community advocates who pursue neighborhood redevelopment. However, *urban renewal*, *revitalization*, and *redevelopment* are often masked terms for a process which potentially leads to the same end for the most vulnerable populations: displacement. The dilemma faced by low-income communities is that efforts to improve their neighborhoods may in fact be inherently gentrifying in their results. Moreover, the efforts of city planners may in fact be gentrifying by intention, wherein the purpose of intervention is focused on the betterment of the *place*, rather than the *people*. This distinction may seem subtle at first, but in practice can make all the difference. Communities of color in the United States have been under- or de-valued explicitly for centuries, and implicitly for decades. The struggle to ensure equitable development, without displacing the resident population, rests on what decision-makers value at the outset: the people, or the place?

¹ DeFilippis, James. *Unmaking Goliath: Community Control in the Face of Capital Mobility*. Routledge Press, 2004.

² Dewan, Sheila. "Gentrification Changing Face of New Atlanta – Historic Black Share of Population Declines." *The New York Times*, March 11, 2006. See also Roberts, Sam. "New York City Losing Blacks, Census Shows," *The New York Times*, April 3, 2006.

³ CUNY Geographer Neil Smith defines gentrification as "the process by which poor and working-class neighborhoods in the inner city are refurbished by an influx of private capital and middle-class homebuyers and renters." (1996) Maureen Kennedy and Paul Leonard elaborate further by focusing on the people, drawing out the more cultural, intangible effects of gentrification on an area: "the process by which higher income households displace lower income residents of a neighborhood, changing the essential character and flavor of that neighborhood." (2001) Gentrification also gets played out in the commercial sphere, as stores and services which cater to the lower-income residents get priced-out as well. (Hartman, 2002; Thrash, 2001; Alejandrino, 2000) Finally, a racial element is often infused in gentrification; Cameron Yee and Julie Quiroz-Martinez's definition encompasses all these elements: "the process by which poor and working-class residents and businesses are displaced from neighborhoods by rising costs and other forces directly related to an influx of new, wealthier, and often white residents." (1999)

The literature on gentrification and displacement puts forth a multitude of mitigating strategies from the grassroots – community land trusts, housing trust funds, affordable housing – but none of these studies return to neighborhoods that adopt these strategies to see which ones actually produce significant positive results in stemming displacement. Moreover, these strategies again focus on the securing of the place, but not empowering the people. A truly effective strategy needs to meet both the needs of the place, with land trusts and limited-equity coops, and the people, with employment and education opportunities. In the people/place dichotomy, I am challenging the treatment of ‘place’ as a commodity. For the residents of a particular neighborhood, the notion of ‘place’ often is synonymous with ‘home.’ When this connection is stripped of its value, place becomes a commodity to be replanned, redeveloped, repeopled. By learning from the hard lessons and sacrifices people in gentrified neighborhoods have had to make can at-risk or already gentrifying communities successfully struggle to protect their right to claim home, while at the same time improving the conditions of their neighborhood.

The goal of this thesis is first to understand the unique dynamics of redevelopment and community planning in San Francisco’s Bayview Hunters Point⁴ neighborhood, and second to offer positive examples from other communities struggling with similar issues of poverty and institutional disinvestment. Bayview Hunters Point offers one story of City-led redevelopment, framed by the specter of gentrification, and the bitter memory of not-so-distant Urban Renewal in the Fillmore neighborhood. How the City⁵ and neighborhood residents negotiate the control and use of resources will dictate the direction of development – towards revitalization for the people or towards gentrification of the place. This mixed-bag of upcoming public and private initiatives include:

⁴ The neighborhoods of Bayview and Hunters Point are in fact two distinct, but neighboring, areas. However, they are typically referred to together as Bayview Hunters Point by residents and non-residents alike, often even shortened to just ‘the Bayview.’ I will follow this convention throughout the thesis; Chapter 4 will explore these dynamics further.

⁵ When city is capitalized, I’m referring to the city government of San Francisco.

- Near-completion of the MUNI Third Street Light Rail line⁶ which will connect Bayview Hunters Point to downtown San Francisco as well as to the regional commuter rail system;
- Recent commencement of environmental remediation and conveyance of a 75-acre parcel by the Navy to the City from the decommissioned, 500-acre Hunters Point Naval Shipyard for mixed-income housing and other uses. More parcels will be cleaned and conveyed in the coming years. Private developer Lennar has been selected to develop the site. \$36 million in expected revenue is earmarked for Bayview Hunters Point community reinvestment;
- Formal adoption of the Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan (May 2006)⁷ which places essentially the entire neighborhood under the purview of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency;
- Demolition and redevelopment of the 267-unit Hunters View public housing project by the San Francisco Housing Authority using HOPE VI funds. To be replaced with a 442-unit mixed-income development;
- New private sector investment in the conversion of abandoned industrial buildings to mostly market-rate luxury condominiums;
- The redevelopment of 303-acre Mission Bay, just north of Bayview Hunters Point, into a center for biotech, medical, and other research facilities. Served by the new light-rail line, housing, hotels, and open space development are also in progress on-site.

The story of Bayview Hunters Point is not a new one, but rather one which repeats in cities the world over. Without deliberate consideration and action towards preventing it, displacement will likely coincide with these development activities in Bayview Hunters Point. In pursuing this topic, this thesis intends to address what it would take to avoid displacement of current residents, given the larger context of a tight housing market, new transit service, and major public and private investment in the area.

II. Methodology & Overview of Thesis

The thesis will first trace the critical moments in the history of the neighborhood, from the initial migration of African Americans from the South to the present-day landscape of community politics. Material is drawn from published historical literature, as well as interviews with residents. Understanding this history is crucial to understanding the current city/neighborhood as well as

⁶ See Appendix I: Maps.

⁷ *ibid.*

intra-neighborhood dynamics, and in fact still has a palpable influence on residents' worldviews generations later.

The multiple projects put forth by various city agencies are then examined to tease out the implicit assumptions and goals of each project, while exploring whether the projects are complementary to one other, or if in fact one undermines the efforts of another. In essence, I evaluate the real community benefits offered by each of the proposals. To understand these dynamics, I draw from interviews with officials⁸ from the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA), the Mayor's Office of Economic Development (MOED), and the Mayor's Office of Community Development (MOCD). Furthermore, copies of the redevelopment proposals and supporting documents themselves are reviewed. In searching for these unstated goals and assumptions, I mean to flesh out the question of people versus place. Does each plan (and thus their planners) value the place over the people, or are both seen as crucial to the betterment of the community?

Next, the reactions to these projects by various neighborhood groups and individuals are compared to understand the community's role in the planning process, both historically as well as at present. To begin to understand the many voices emerging from the neighborhood, I draw from a variety of sources including personal interviews with neighborhood residents,⁹ local newspaper articles and editorials, hearing minutes, published public comments, internet postings to blogs,¹⁰ and community news sites. I recognize there is a long and complex history of intertwining relationships in Bayview and Hunters Point, and acknowledge that these interviews and my analysis here barely scratch the surface of neighborhood dynamics. Despite my familiarity with Bay Area politics, I am an outsider to this community and its struggles. However, my intention is

⁸ Profiles of each of the interviewees can be found in the Interviewee Profiles section.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ A 'blog' is a web log, or an online journal that is open to be read by the public. Bloggers post articles, commentary, and other writings which are then archived chronologically.

to use this perspective to shed light on opportunities for advancing the well-being of residents in collaboration with the various city agencies already working in Bayview and Hunters Point.

Finally, promising examples of economic development and community organizing from around the country are put forth as inspiration for opportunities in Bayview Hunters Point. The neighborhood and the City have \$36 million to invest in community economic development, a small sum that could nonetheless initiate creative and innovative projects in the neighborhood. I examine examples from nationwide Empowerment Zone reports, the National League of Cities database, the National Governors Association best practices database, academia, and other networks of knowledge. By exploring the process as well as the results, I can point to ways in which the City and the Bayview Hunters Point community, with the \$36 million jumpstart, can pursue their dreams of a socially, economically, and environmentally healthy and rooted Bayview Hunters Point.

III. Why Bayview Hunters Point?

One of the reasons why the outcomes for kids and families in Bayview are the way they are is because the city is allowed to not feel it. That you could live in this city and never go to Bayview. Never step foot in the areas where the crime is occurring, where the kids are not performing in school, where the housing is dilapidated, where there is mold and mildew in the homes, where there is raw sewage in the street. That happens right now. You can be a citizen of San Francisco, be as progressive as you want to be, and not have to see or witness that.

– Fred Blackwell, Mayor’s Office of Community Development¹¹

San Francisco is widely considered to be the most liberal, politically-left city in the United States. San Franciscans pride themselves on their tolerant and accepting attitude towards all races, religions, sexualities, and cultures. Behind this rainbow façade however, lies the ugly and persistent reality of racism, classism, and money-driven politics. For many, the continuing story of Bayview Hunters Point represents the confluence of these three dynamics. By almost every

¹¹ Fred Blackwell, personal interview, March 2006.

measure – poverty, unemployment, income, education – Bayview Hunters Point lies in stark contrast to the rest of San Francisco. Table 1.1 below illustrates some of these statistics¹²:

Demographic Comparison of San Francisco and Bayview Hunters Point

	San Francisco	Bayview Hunters Point
Population	776,733	33,170
Race		
<i>White</i>	49.7%	9.6%
<i>Black</i>	7.8%	48%
<i>Latino</i>	14.1%	16.7%
<i>Asian / Pacific Islander</i>	31.3%	27.9%
<i>Mixed Race</i>	4.3%	4.1%
<i>Other</i>	6.5%	10%
Per-capita income	\$34,556	\$14,200
Percent of families with children in poverty	12%	27%
Unemployment	5%	10%
Percent of population over 25 with:		
<i>high school diploma</i>	81%	64%
<i>college degree</i>	45%	11%
Percent of residents paying 35 percent or more of income for housing	51%	62%
Median monthly rent	\$928	\$554

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Demographic Fact Sheets for San Francisco and zip code 94124.

While New Orleans grapples with the challenges facing the return home of its black residents after Hurricane Katrina, San Francisco has lost 35,563 black residents between the 1970 and 1990 censuses. More disturbing still is the dearth of public awareness, concern, or debate about this growing exodus. As San Francisco’s largest remaining black community, the future of Bayview Hunters Point is a test of the true nature of San Francisco’s liberal politics and commitment to racial equality and class solidarity. The situation also allows for reflection on how far community participation and redevelopment planning have evolved over the decades in one

¹² All demographic statistics used in this thesis are from the 2000 U.S. Census, unless otherwise noted.

city. As families and the middle-class¹³ join this black out-migration from San Francisco, we much ask ourselves: is there a place for the poor, working class, or even middle class in San Francisco?

Low-income, immigrant, and minority neighborhoods in other parts of San Francisco have felt similarly powerful gentrification pressures in recent years. The uprooting of poor residents in the Mission District, Hayes Valley, and South of Market illustrates the potentially devastating effects of displacement on the social fabric of a neighborhood. By looking at the case of Bayview Hunters Point, the role of the City in the process of gentrification and displacement can be reexamined. Over the decades this role has been direct – as in the cases of the neighborhoods of the Fillmore, Yerba Buena (SoMa), and Hayes Valley (Octavia), or more tacit and indirect, as in the Mission District.¹⁴ Since the City then is a major force in shaping the market and its affects on the future of people and their neighborhoods, the City-led redevelopment process in Bayview Hunters Point has broader implications which resonate across the city, and across cities in general: Who is redevelopment for? Who is the future of San Francisco?

This thesis hinges on the assertion that gentrification-fueled displacement¹⁵ has overwhelmingly negative outcomes – social, economic, physical – for those induced to move as a result of affordability pressures. The reasons are at the same time scientifically researched and centered on the intangible. First, studies from the 1980’s have shown that the majority of outmovers scatter and resettle into lower-quality, yet more expensive, housing.¹⁶ Recent reports on displacement in San Francisco anecdotally indicate that many households are doubling-up or

¹³ Only 14.5% of the city’s population is under 18 – the lowest proportion for any major American city. See: Timothy Egan’s article “Vibrant Cities Find One Thing Missing: Children.” *New York Times*, March 24, 2005.

¹⁴ Hartman, Chester. *City for Sale: The Transformation of San Francisco*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002. See also Alejandrino, Simon Velasquez. “Gentrification in San Francisco’s Mission District: Indicators and Policy Recommendations.” San Francisco: Mission Economic Development Association, 2000.

¹⁵ Displacement is typically characterized as *direct* - due to eviction, owner move-ins, harassment, or intimidation - and *indirect* - households that can’t afford rent increases or those who move because they no longer feel welcome in the neighborhood.

¹⁶ LeGates, Richard T. and Chester Hartman. “The Anatomy of Displacement in the United States,” in *Gentrification of the City*. Neil Smith and Peter Williams (eds.), Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1986.

moving out of the city as a way to find affordable housing options.¹⁷ Thus the argument that households “move to opportunity” is seriously undermined; the idea that market filtering enables a fair and beneficial redistribution of housing fails those most vulnerable to displacement. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of more recent studies which actually track displaced; this invisibility in research speaks not only to the difficulty of studying a group which by definition, is no longer there, but also to the larger absence of importance placed on this population in policy and politics.

Second, the process of displacement has been found to trigger serious trauma in not only the individual household obligated to move, but also the larger community hemorrhaging its people. This trauma, referred to as “root shock,” has been shown to have not only adverse emotional effects, but also health effects that persist generationally.¹⁸ Once displaced, low-income households lose the support networks that enabled them to survive and feel a connection to home. Children and youth feel this disruption acutely; as the new kids on the block, they are disproportionately subject to bullying and even violence – the difficulties faced by Katrina-displaced youth entering schools in Houston illustrate this unanticipated dynamic.¹⁹ One recent displacee of the Mission neighborhood in San Francisco eloquently describes the situation felt by young and old alike: “I’ve been displaced from everything I knew...It’s not that the Mission was my utopia, but it was my home.”²⁰

Finally, ripple effects of displacement prompt secondary displacement of businesses, social services, cultural institutions, and other neighborhood anchors, thereby forever altering the face of the community. In addition to providing tailored services, there is pride in local businesses and

¹⁷ Hartman, 2002, and Alejandrino, 2000. See also Yee, Cameron Y. and Julie Quiroz-Martinez. “There Goes the Neighborhood: A Regional Analysis of Gentrification and Community Stability in San Francisco.” Oakland, CA: Urban Habitat Program, 1999.

¹⁸ Fullilove, Mindy Thompson. Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It. New York: One World/Ballantine Books, 2004.

¹⁹ Spencer Jason, and Jennifer Radcliffe. “Katrina’s Aftermath; as the reality of their situation sinks in, displaced students – and their teachers – struggle with the trauma’s effects; Learning to cope with stress.” *The Houston Chronicle*, October 18, 2005. See also Radcliffe, Jennifer. “Hurricane Aftermath: HISD suffering ‘compassion fatigue’; Fights, arrests and suspensions mark attempts to absorb more than 20,000 evacuees.” *The Houston Chronicle*, December 25, 2005.

²⁰ Quoted in Hartman, 2002.

cultural institutions, and in the distinct flavor and character they create. However, the situation in Bayview Hunters Point is not without hope. Due to its low density and the availability of developable land, the neighborhood may be in a unique position to absorb thousands of new residents without displacing current ones. Over the course of the next few years, the policies and practices which guide these changes are crucial to whether development will in fact displace the indigenous black population, or preserve one of the last remaining African American communities in San Francisco.

Chapter Two: Background – a history of movement, upheaval, and organizing

They talk about the South. The South is not half as bad as San Francisco. The white man, he's not taking advantage of you in public like they're doing down in Birmingham, but he's killing you with the pencil and paper, brother. This city is a somewhat better place to lie about is all it really comes to.

– James Baldwin, writer, 1964.

San Franciscans would have sworn on the Golden Gate Bridge that racism was missing from the heart of their air-conditioned city. But they would have been sadly mistaken.

– Maya Angelou, writer and poet, 1970.²²

The history of African Americans in San Francisco is markedly different than that of northern cities like New York and Chicago. Migration from the South to the West occurred decades later than the Great Migration to the North, Jim Crow was not officially on the books, and civil rights organizing focused on economic rights, rather than for social and political integration into society. This very specific history produced the very specific consequences visible in San Francisco today; tracing the pivotal moments allows a deeper understanding of the current physical, social, economic, and political landscape in black neighborhoods like Bayview and Hunters Point.

I. WWII Migrations from the South

While the Great Migration was drawing African Americans from all over the South to northern cities through family and friend networks, the “grapevine” of relationships was rare across the coasts.²³ Railroads charged by the mile, and stories of job opportunities and social freedoms didn't travel back to encourage East-West migration. Thus before World War II, San Francisco's black population totaled less than 5000.²⁴ However, with the boom to industry after the United States entered World War II, blacks from across the country were heavily recruited to fill industry jobs, particularly in the shipyards of San Francisco, Oakland, and Richmond, which supplied the Pacific Theater. In the period between 1940-1945, 27,155 African Americans moved to the city of

²¹ “Baldwin's TV Tour of S.F. Negroes,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 28, 1964.

²² Angelou, Maya. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. New York: Bantam, 1970. pg 181.

²³ Broussard, Albert. *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993, pg 141.

²⁴ Broussard, pg 133. Broussard's figures come from a special census conducted in 1945 in San Francisco, by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

857,400, to establish a total population of over 32,000 Afro-San Franciscans.²⁵ San Francisco's shipyard, located in Hunters Point, employed 24,000 new workers, many of whom settled nearby. The majority of newcomers came in family units, and a significant proportion was skilled in various industrial trades.²⁶

The reception from whites and the small native black population was mixed. Native blacks, who typically worked in the service industry and felt they were more "cultured" and "refined," tended to look down on the southern accents and customs of the newcomers.²⁷ Furthermore, several historians contend that the sudden influx of blacks to the area brought to the fore a latent racism from local whites. Prior to WWII, the Chinese and Japanese, whose numbers greatly exceeded that of the small and dispersed native black population, bore the brunt of often violent and vicious racism.²⁸ For African Americans however, public or overt displays of racism were uncommon in San Francisco; a black person could sit alongside a white person on the bus, for example. Nevertheless, African Americans were still subject to systematic discrimination, particularly in the areas of employment and housing.

While the shipyards hired a large number of blacks – 26% of the 1945 black workforce²⁹ – other industries remain closed to skilled and unskilled newcomers alike. In fact, 90% of black workers in San Francisco were employed by only 10% of all industries.³⁰ Through organizing, persistence, and in some cases white-solidarity, blacks were slowly able to gain entry into new sectors such as transportation, clerical work, schools, and hospitals. National organizations like the NAACP and the Fair Employment Practices Committee, as well as local organizations like the Bay Areas Council against Discrimination, worked tirelessly to pressure local employers as well as

²⁵ Broussard, Albert. Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993, pg 135.

²⁶ Daniels, Douglas Henry. Pioneer Urbanites: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980, pg 167.

²⁷ Daniels, pg 102-103. See also Broussard, pg 167.

²⁸ Daniels, pg 104.

²⁹ Broussard, 1993, pg 145.

³⁰ *ibid*, pg 150.

local unions to end not only discriminatory hiring practices, but also racial bias in promotions and types of jobs available. Despite union gains in strength and numbers as San Francisco's shipyards and related industries hired thousands of new workers, most of the locals either completely excluded African Americans from membership, or set up black auxiliaries largely for show. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union was a notable exception; over one-third of the San Francisco rank-and-file was black.³¹ Thus discrimination led to a concentration of black employment in the shipyards and related industries, establishing a dependent relationship that later would prove devastating to the Bayview and Hunters Point community when the shipyards closed.

The narrow choices afforded to Afro-San Franciscans in employment were mirrored in their limited housing options. Much like the concentration of the San Franciscan Chinese to Chinatown, restrictive covenants as well as unwritten agreements among landlords and realtors resulted in the concentration of blacks in the Fillmore area of the city.³² In fact, the Fillmore district, just prior to black settlement, was largely a Japanese neighborhood. As Japanese residents were detained and later interned in camps during WWII xenophobic hysteria, African Americans took over those homes and businesses. Writer and poet Maya Angelou, in the story of her childhood, writes:

In the early months of World War II, San Francisco's Fillmore District, or the Western Addition, experienced a visible revolution...The Yakamoto Sea Food Market quietly became Sammy's Shoe Shine Parlor and Smoke Shop. Yashigira's Hardware metamorphed into La Salon de Beauté owned by Miss Clorinda Jackson. The Japanese Shops which sold to Nisei customers were taken over by enterprising Negro businessmen, and in less than a year became permanent homes away from home for the newly arrived Southern Blacks...The Japanese area became San Francisco's Harlem in a matter of months. ³³

³¹ Broussard, pg 156. See also Larry S. Solomon's Roots of Justice: Stories of Organizing in Communities of Color. San Francisco: Jossy-Bass, 1998.

³² Broussard, pg 167.

³³ Angelou, Maya. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings. New York: Bantam, 1970, pg 177.

The quiet turnover of the neighborhood lies in sharp contrast to the dramatic changes that would come a few decades later under Urban Renewal. The co-existence of blacks and Asians, both considered low-status ethnic groups at the time, is an interesting parallel to current racial dynamics in Bayview Hunters Point today.³⁴ A growing proportion of the neighborhood is Asian – Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, and Samoan – yet their presence is rarely politically acknowledged, their voice rarely politically counted, much like their Japanese predecessors.

Besides moving to the Fillmore, other black newcomers settled in temporary housing erected by the Navy, on the hill above the Shipyard. After the war, the Navy conveyed the property to the San Francisco Housing Authority, allowing many of the black shipyard workers and their families to remain in what was now public housing.³⁵ The current nickname for Hunters Point, “the Hill,” originated from this early wartime housing development. After more than 6 decades of use, Hunters View subsidized housing is slated for HOPE VI demolition and redevelopment as early as next year. The descendants of the original shipyard workers still live in the neighborhood, as well as the subsidized housing. Moreover, many of those who remained employed after wartime manufacturing ceased were able to purchase homes in Hunters Point as well as Bayview. As a result, to this day Bayview Hunters Point has the highest proportion of homeownership – 51% – in all of San Francisco.³⁶

The World War II period lays the foundation of Bayview Hunters Point today. The spatial and sectoral concentration of work as well as the centrality of the Shipyards to the economic well-being of the community plays a major role in the evolution of the neighborhood. Furthermore, the early focus on organizing around economic gains, versus socially discriminatory practices, foreshadows the civil rights-era campaigns in San Francisco and highlights the specific challenges

³⁴ See Chapter 4 for more on neighborhood racial dynamics.

³⁵ Hippler, Arthur E. *Hunter's Point: A Black Ghetto*. New York: Basic Books, 1974.

³⁶ San Francisco's overall homeownership rate is 35%, 2000 U.S. Census.

of blacks in San Francisco. The first major shock to the young black community would come decades later, under the federally-sponsored program of Urban Renewal.

II. Fillmore Urban Renewal

Many San Franciscans recognize that the time is more than ripe for a planned attack on the problem of blight. A living city must renew itself just as the human body continuously renews itself, replacing old cells with new ones. In the Western Addition District the people of San Francisco can begin remaking the city, can literally clear away the mistakes of the past and build better than they ever built before, guided by foresight.

– report to the San Francisco Planning Commission, 1947³⁷

In the post-war era, more blacks flocked to, or were steered towards, the Fillmore district to live, work, and shop. The elegant Victorian homes for which San Francisco is now famous were common in the neighborhood, and typically subdivided to accommodate boarders and extended family. A commercial corridor thrived along Fillmore Street, which included a variety of services such as grocery stores, barber shops, clothing stores, a bowling alley as well as jazz clubs and juke joints.³⁸ In the mid-1950's, however, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency designated the Fillmore District, or Western Addition as a blighted area, which opened the door to Urban Renewal funding. The work was conducted in two phased projects, referred to as Western Addition A-1 and A-2 renewal plans. Under the A-1 plan, Geary Street was widened into an eight-lane boulevard, while a trade center, luxury housing, medical facilities, and a new cathedral were built. A-1, which began in the mid-1950's, was alone responsible for the displacement of over 4000 families, for upwards of 13,500 individuals.³⁹ The later A-2 plan, which commenced in 1996, was responsible for the construction of several public housing projects, in addition to market-rate housing and commercial redevelopment. While some Japanese residents who had moved back to the area were also affected, the vast majority of those evicted were African American. Given vouchers to return, few could afford the higher rents associated with the new

³⁷ Scott, Mcl. Western Addition Redevelopment Study: An Exploration of Replanning and Rebuilding one of San Francisco's Largest Blighted Districts under the California Community Redevelopment Act of 1945. Report to San Francisco Planning Commission, November 1947.

³⁸ Mollenkopf, John H. The Contested City. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, pg 182. See also Fullilove, pg 16.

³⁹ Hartman, Chester. City for Sale: The Transformation of San Francisco. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002, pg 25 and 63.

housing, and years passed before such an opportunity became available. Many families moved from the Fillmore to Bayview and Hunters Point, as there was an established black population already there, which facilitated the transition.

Only one generation has passed since the Fillmore was bulldozed, and many Bayview Hunters Point residents today remember the trauma caused by the neighborhood upheaval. Marie Harrison, a lifelong resident of Bayview whose family relocated from the Fillmore, recounts how her mother still has the voucher allowing the Harrisons to return.⁴⁰ Her nine-child family did not have sufficient credit history to qualify them for traditional financing, and attempts to secure a loan to return purchase a home in the Fillmore failed. In addition to the residential displacement, the vibrant business district and the renowned jazz culture were irretrievable. Ironically, a current initiative of the Redevelopment Agency is the “Fillmore Jazz District Revitalization Project,” which aims to build a state-of-the-art facility for the New York-based Blue Note Club, a 2500 seat movie theater, and a 450 space parking garage.⁴¹ Without dwelling on the fundamental racism and injustice of the renewal projects, it’s important to note that today, not a single hearing, public forum, or community meeting transpires without the mention of Urban Renewal in the Fillmore. It strikes at the very core of the fears and anger of a community burned by the City.

As many parallels as differences can be drawn from the Fillmore era to today’s redevelopment climate. Private real estate speculation and preying on elderly property owners were rampant during the A-1 redevelopment;⁴² Bayview Hunters Point residents anecdotally report a similar phenomenon today. Planners and city officials now carefully talk about the racially-mixed neighborhood in positive terms, while planners of the 1950’s lamented the seemingly chaotic mixture of ethnicities, building uses, and commercial establishments found in the Western

⁴⁰ Marie Harrison, personal interview, March 2006.

⁴¹ San Francisco Redevelopment Agency project summaries: www.sfgov.org/site/sfra_page.asp?id=5607.

⁴² Mollenkopf, John H. *The Contested City*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, pg 153.

Addition.⁴³ However, 'colored district' and 'blight' seem almost as synonymous back then as it does in today's language. Much like Bayview Hunters Point, Fillmore was located in close proximity to downtown; on the cusp of the fog zone, it too enjoyed sunny weather; and as an ethnically-mixed and low-income area, it carried low-status among the city's neighborhoods. Essentially, with a different class of citizen and more public and private investment, the real estate of the Fillmore as well as Bayview Hunters Point would be considerably more valuable. What is vastly different is the process by which these redevelopment projects occur. This aspect is explored more fully in Chapters 3 and 4 as the community and City engage in a negotiations process unavailable to those displaced from the Fillmore.

III. Hunters Point Riot

Tanks rumbled down Third Street, cops fired into the beloved Opera House and still residents stood their ground. In 1966, one life lost in Hunters Point at the hands of SFPD was too many. HP wasn't having it!
– Ebony Colbert, 2006⁴⁴

A seminal moment in the history of the neighborhood occurred in 1966, known as the Hunters Point Riot. Arthur Hippler, in *Hunters Point: A Black Ghetto*, offers the most detailed and researched account of the incident, drawn from police reports and interviews with civilians and police officers.⁴⁵ A white San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) officer, patrolman Alvin Johnson, shot and killed 16-year-old Matthew Johnson on September 27, 1966 as the youth fled from a suspected stolen car. Johnson was fatally shot in the back. Outraged over the shooting death, and emboldened by the preceding year's riots in Watts, Los Angeles, Hunters Point residents poured into the streets, demanding that Officer Johnson be tried for murder. The City hurriedly assembled its Human Rights Commission to respond to the mounting crisis, yet the middle-class African Americans on the Commission made little impression on the young, mainly

⁴³ Scott, Mel. Western Addition Redevelopment Study: An Exploration of Replanning and Rebuilding one of San Francisco's Largest Blighted Districts under the California Community Redevelopment Act of 1945. Report to San Francisco Planning Commission, November 1947, pg 6.

⁴⁴ Colbert, Ebony. "Remember '66 – the police do." *SF Bayview*, April 19, 2006.

⁴⁵ Hippler, Arthur E. Hunter's Point: A Black Ghetto. New York: Basic Books, 1974.

poor protesters; pleas from community elders for calm were ignored. The belief by the City that black leaders could influence the protesters was seen not only as a tactical error, but also as a fundamental lack of understanding of neighborhood dynamics, a generational divide, and class differences.

When the riot⁴⁶ continued into a second day, the SFPD called in the National Guard as well as the Highway Patrol. As the police show of force intensified, a second catalytic incident occurred which demonstrated to many the overwhelming “anti-black” attitude of the police, and by extension, the larger white community of San Francisco.⁴⁷ In response to alleged gunfire originating from the Bayview Community Center and Opera House, SFPD riddled the center and surrounding buildings with gunfire. After the barrage ended, no weapons or gunmen were found in the building – only terrified children. While some contend that the torrent of bullets was released in panic, other reports indicate that the police “engaged in willful property destruction.”⁴⁸ The attack on the community center broke the “holiday mood” and the riot became a straightforward race confrontation. The community began to assume that the police were trying to kill them, with rumors circulating that the police were herding protesters up Hunters Hill so that the Navy could bomb them. Indeed this tactic of herding and isolation was how the police had until the early sixties dealt with black youth from Hunters Point. Hippler quotes one SFPD officer as saying, “Get back up on the hill where you belong, nigger. If I see your black ass down here again, I’ll shoot it off.”⁴⁹

Following the uprising, extensive interviews with community members showed a trend towards greater community disintegration, rather than buoyed solidarity as some had hoped.⁵⁰ One month after the riot a consortium of business leaders promised 2000 jobs to alleviate the

⁴⁶ The ‘riot’ consisted mainly of brick-throwing from a distance at cops, breaking windows, and sporadic looting. Less than half a dozen physical assaults were reported over the 5 day period of unrest.

⁴⁷ Hippler, Arthur E. Hunter’s Point: A Black Ghetto. New York: Basic Books, 1974, pg 204.

⁴⁸ *ibid*, pg 208.

⁴⁹ *ibid*, pg 211.

⁵⁰ *ibid*, pg 212.

youth unemployment in Hunters Point, however only 19 jobs actually materialized. A staff worker at the Youth Opportunity Center explained the general sentiment after the riot:

It is no longer possible to get kids here to be enthusiastic about going for jobs – or waiting for all those jobs to come through. They just don't believe it will happen. They are right! After the first big rush of kids coming here after the riots, when no jobs happened, they just stopped coming. It's just as well, we don't have anything for them.⁵¹

Although the comment was made in 1967, almost identical comments were made by the community residents I interviewed almost four decades later. The demoralization of the community, and its disgust and distrust of the City, the police department, and the wider white establishment were sharpened by this five-day uprising and its aftermath. The death of Matthew Johnson, the incident at the Opera House, and the phalanx of heavily-armed police forces led to the opinion that there was actually a 'police riot' in Hunters Point in 1966. The Riot not only deepened the adversarial relationship between Bayview Hunters Point residents and the police, but also instilled a gnawing sense of fear that African Americans are unwelcome residents of the City by the Bay. The Hunters Point Riot also sets the stage for simmering class divisions within the Bayview Hunters Point black community that is evident in redevelopment debates today.

IV. Hunters Point Naval Shipyard Closure

And then the Shipyard closed in 1974, and the rug was pulled out from under the Bayview.

– Michael Cohen, Mayor's Office of Economic Development⁵²

With the Shipyard as the anchor, Bayview Hunters Point was a solid blue-collar and middle class neighborhood for several decades. African Americans owned homes and businesses, but much like a small company town, the neighborhood was almost entirely dependent on the U.S. Navy's Hunters Point Shipyard for its economic sustenance. The Shipyard itself was the result of a 1941 land seizure of a commercial shipyard and the surrounding properties, thereby

⁵¹ Quoted in Hippler, Arthur E. Hunter's Point: A Black Ghetto. New York: Basic Books, 1974, pg 213.

⁵² Michael Cohen, personal interview, March 2006.

displacing over 100 families, most of whom were Chinese.⁵³ When the Navy decommissioned the Shipyard in 1974, 8,500 civilian workers lost their jobs. The impact of the closure on the neighborhood was devastating. By some counts, unemployment in the neighborhood reached 20-30% after the base closed.⁵⁴ While the United States Postal Service did open a distribution center in Bayview in the mid-1970's, no major industry moved in to fill the void created when the Shipyard closed.

To add insult to injury, the site was later declared a federal Superfund site due to the disposal of radioactive and other hazardous materials handled in research facilities on site. While an artist's community until recently leased space on a small, non-contaminated parcel, the Shipyard site largely remained vacant for the past 30 years. The contamination was too widespread and serious, requiring hundreds of millions in funds for environmental remediation. Formerly the focus of economic activity for Bayview Hunters Point, the Shipyard is now the focus of environmental activism and City redevelopment initiatives, while spurring public and private investment in the surrounding community.

V. Decades of Environmental Injustice

These guys knew more about radiation, and the effects of radiation, than anybody else in the world. And when they left, they left the Shipyard dirty. They left it contaminated. So if they knew more about it, and they knew more about the cause and effects, what were they saying to the community? Were they saying we *believe* in the community? We *like* the community? We *respect* the community? I don't think so.

– Maurice Campbell, Bayview resident⁵⁵

No singular historical event exists to highlight the significance of environmental racism⁵⁶ in Bayview Hunters Point, however, the adverse health effects and the community organizing for

⁵³ "100 Hunters Point Families Out." *The San Francisco News*, March 10, 1942. See also Bayview Hunters Point Project Area Committee, pg 13.

⁵⁴ Federation of American Scientists website, "Hunters Point Naval Shipyard": www.fas.org/man/company/shipyard/hunters_point.htm.

⁵⁵ Maurice Campbell, personal interview, March 2006.

⁵⁶ Wikipedia defines environmental racism as "an extension of racism in housing, land use, employment, and education policies, and therefore as part of the larger web of institutionalized racism. Specifically, environmental racism is racial discrimination in environmental policy-making; race-based differential enforcement of environmental rules and regulations; the intentional or unintentional targeting of minority communities for toxic waste disposal and transfer and for the siting of polluting industries; and the exclusion of people of color from public and private boards, commissions, regulatory bodies, and environmental non-profit organizations. This concern for the racist effects of environmental decisions and the decision-making provided the impetus for the new environmental justice movement." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_racism

change have continued to build over the last 15 years. With over half of San Francisco's industrially-zoned land located in Bayview Hunters Point, residents have had to endure decades of air, water, and soil contamination from the disproportionate siting of toxic uses in their neighborhood. Its six square miles hosts over 325 toxic sites, including one federal Superfund site (the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard), the PG&E Hunters Point Power Plant, a sewage treatment plant that handles 80% of San Francisco's solid wastes, 187 underground fuel tanks, and 124 hazardous waste handlers regulated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.⁵⁷ Furthermore, per capita Bayview Hunters Point has ten times as many contaminated water dischargers as the rest of San Francisco, four times as many polluted air dischargers, five times as many facilities storing acutely hazardous materials, three times as many underground storage tanks, and four times as many contaminated industrial sites.⁵⁸ The health effects on Bayview Hunters Point residents of this concentration of pollution are immense:

- 20% childhood asthma rate;
- Prevalence of chronic illness four times the statewide average;
- Cervical and breast cancer rates double that of the greater Bay Area region;
- Hospitalization rates for congestive heart failure, hypertension, and emphysema three times the statewide average;
- More than half of all infant mortality in San Francisco, (including the bordering neighborhood of Potrero Hill).⁵⁹

The most visible sources of the pollution – the Shipyard and the power plant – have been the focus of intense community organizing. Essentially an enormous brownfield, the Shipyard has drawn the ire of community residents as the Navy has dragged its feet on remediation. A large coalition of community groups, along with the City of San Francisco, actually sued the Navy in 1994 over the lack of movement on environmental remediation, which paved the way for the phased conveyance agreement between the City and the Navy, discussed in Chapter 3. In

⁵⁷ Greenaction website, "Why the People are Taking Action to Close PG&E's Hunters Point power plant": www.greenaction.org/hunterspoint/factsheet120804.shtml.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ Literacy for Environmental Justice website, "Environmental Justice and Southeast San Francisco": www.lejyouth.org/about_lej.php4#bayview and Greenaction.

addition, a long campaign to close the aging PG&E plant has been the focus of a number of community-based groups including Literacy for Environmental Justice and Greenaction. The PG&E plant is the largest stationary source of air pollution in Bayview Hunters Point, releasing nearly 600 tons of pollutants into the air over southeast San Francisco each year.⁶⁰ Located just down the hill from Hunters View housing (the housing originally built by the Navy), the tops of the smokestacks from the plant are literally level with Hunters View homes. Hunters View residents have not failed to notice that every day they directly breathe in pollution from the plant.⁶¹ The plant is slated to be shut down as early as June of 2006. This victory, however, is bittersweet. Some question whether the community campaign was responsible for the closure, or instead the recognition that as redevelopment draws wealthier – and whiter – residents to the neighborhood, the presence of an active and polluting power plant would be unacceptable.⁶²

Thus it can be argued that an indigenous culture of community activism exists in Bayview Hunters Point, largely in response to gross hazards to the health and safety of neighborhood residents. Redevelopment will now take over where the community left off – plans are underway for the reuse of the Naval Shipyard, and discussion has begun around the redevelopment of the power plant site, as well as other abandoned formerly industrial properties. These industries, which originally drew African Americans to California, San Francisco, and Bayview Hunters Point, over time poisoned those very same people, and have the potential to either push them out of the neighborhood entirely, or provide the kinds of benefits like quality housing, job opportunities, and clean and safe open space that the long-neglected community had been seeking for decades. The multiple overlapping and divergent plans put forth by the City, with varying degrees of community input, will lay the groundwork for the how the future unfolds for Bayview Hunters Point residents.

⁶⁰ Literacy for Environmental Justice website, “Environmental Justice and Southeast San Francisco”: www.lejyouth.org/about_lej.php4#bayview and Greenaction..

⁶¹ Marie Harrison, Maurice Campbell, personal interviews, March 2006.

⁶² Marie Harrison, Maurice Campbell, Tessie Ester, personal interviews, March 2006.

Chapter Three: The City and its Plans – *too many cooks?*

There are these disparate efforts [in the community] to organize something without really sitting down and coordinating. And the City is just as guilty. One department in the City will start something which another is already working on and after the fact let the other department know...and that's part of why it takes so long to create a redevelopment plan.

– Stan Muraoka, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency⁶³

I describe San Francisco sometimes as 14th-century Italy, little city-states. Which makes it both sort of a rich environment for the interplay of ideas, but hard to keep the trains running on time, to quote Mussolini.

– Michael Cohen, Mayor's Office of Economic Development⁶⁴

When we show up, we're the City. We're the folks who have over-promised and under-delivered for years.

– Fred Blackwell, Mayor's Office of Community Development⁶⁵

In this chapter I examine the real community benefits offered by three of the most significant City initiatives affecting Bayview and Hunters Point: the Hunters Point Shipyard Redevelopment Plan, the Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan, and Communities of Opportunity. Created by different City agencies, these plans are the result of years of community meetings, forums, town halls, hearings, visioning sessions, and outreach. Protest and debate have waxed and waned over the years, but as redevelopment activities have become a reality, opposition to redevelopment has mounted. Layered on top of one another, the three initiatives present a view of the fragmented and non-cohesive City's agenda for redevelopment and revitalization in Bayview Hunters Point. Interviews with city officials responsible for the implementation of these plans offer overlapping but often also contradictory views of the community, as well as of each other. As the planners of change, I find that their personal views of the future of the neighborhood are often more telling than the rhetoric of the plans themselves.

I. The Hunters Point Shipyard Redevelopment Plan

The Shipyard, as discussed in Chapter 2, has been the focal point of community anger, organizing, and opportunity since its closure in 1974. With an agreement finally reached between

⁶³ Stan Muraoka, personal interview, March 2006.

⁶⁴ Michael Cohen, personal interview, March 2006.

⁶⁵ Fred Blackwell, personal interview, March 2006.

the City of San Francisco and the Navy, construction work has recently begun on Parcel A, a 75-acre site conveyed to the City in January of 2005. The City, in turn, passed the parcel on to Lennar, a Florida-based nationwide homebuilder, for site preparation and infrastructure construction. Lennar will then subdivide the parcel and sell off pieces to its subsidiaries for housing development.⁶⁶ 1600 units of housing are scheduled for development on this parcel by 2008-2009. Of those, 512 units will be affordable, using the neighborhood median income to determine affordability. The remaining Shipyard parcels have a longer timeline for conveyance and redevelopment, due to the higher significance of contamination. As part of the Conveyance Agreement, the Navy must fully remediate the property before transferring ownership.⁶⁷ Parcel A was the site of military housing, and thus required the least amount of remediation. Future parcels are intended for green space, community facilities, commercial space, and light industrial uses. A mayor-appointed Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) has been involved in the various stages of this process.

While 512 new affordable units is certainly a boon to the community, the availability of these units is open to anyone, not just Bayview Hunters Point residents.⁶⁸ Also, why a non-local company such as Lennar was awarded such a lucrative contract is unclear, as is why their cut of the sale proceeds – 40% – is so large. Furthermore, while Lennar has employed local residents in clean-up activities, the long-term employment gains are questionable as most of these jobs are short-term positions, rather than stable, career work. Other community benefits include a 1.2-acre site for an African marketplace, as well as vaguely described initiatives like small business assistance and job training.⁶⁹ The enforcement of community benefits – particularly around

⁶⁶ San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and Lennar/BVHP LLC. "Disposition and Development Agreement, Hunters Point Shipyard, Phase 1," December 2003.

⁶⁷ "Conveyance Agreement between the United States of America acting by and through the Secretary of the Navy, United States Department of the Navy, and the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency for the Conveyance of Hunters Point Naval Shipyard." March, 2004.

⁶⁸ Fair Housing laws do not allow for preferential treatment to be given to Bayview Hunters Point residents.

⁶⁹ San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and Lennar/BVHP LLC. "Disposition and Development Agreement, Hunters Point Shipyard, Phase 1," December 2003.

employment – is ill-defined and follow-through for past projects is notoriously poor. One city official expressed his frustration with the effectiveness of community benefits around employment:

The Shipyards, great, this is gonna bring jobs, this is gonna be the jobs pipeline. Well my question is the job pipeline that looks just like the airport that didn't work. That looks just like the first sewage treatment plant that didn't work. That looks just like the college that didn't work... like the light rail that didn't work. Stop it! All these plans look the same.⁷⁰

The community echoes this frustration. During the open comment period at a recent hearing at City Hall, speaker after speaker demanded three things from the Redevelopment Agency and the Planning Commission: "jobs, jobs, jobs."⁷¹ In fact, Eve Bach from Arc Ecology observed in 2004, "...the City should be clear that in revisions to the [Shipyard] reuse Plan, the community's job creating strategy that prioritized light industrial development has almost completely vanished."⁷² Some short-term construction work will be available, but again, if past projects are to be used as an example, these promises are rarely met, or fall well below the set goals.

The main community benefit from the Shipyard redevelopment seems to be the remediation itself. As contaminants are removed from the site, the off-gassing of pollutants and the seepage of chemicals into the soil, groundwater, and bay will begin to slow several decades of residents' exposure to toxins. This consequence of redevelopment, however, remains reactive and can hardly be considered a 'benefit' as it is a human rights issue to be able to breathe clean air where you live, work, and play. The most significant *proactive* community benefit coming out of the Shipyard Redevelopment then is the Shipyard Legacy Fund. This fund, as mentioned in the introduction, will be capitalized through the sale of subdivisions of Parcel A. The city's 60% cut is expected to be between \$30 and \$40 million available over the next 7-10 years, held by a quasi-public entity.⁷³ Rather than going into the City's general fund, this pool of money is reserved for community and economic development activities in Bayview Hunters Point. How and for what

⁷⁰ Dwayne Jones, personal interview, March 2006.

⁷¹ San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and Planning Commission special joint hearing, March 2, 2006.

⁷² Quoted in Sumchai, Ahimsa Porter. "The Job Myth." *SF Bayview*, June 16, 2004.

⁷³ Urban Strategies Council. "Introducing the Shipyard Legacy Fund," presentation to the Bayview Hunters Point Project Area Committee, February 16, 2006.

the money will be spent is unclear to all, and the Oakland-based non-profit Urban Strategies Council has been hired to work out the structure and process of the fund. They have laid out a schedule of future meetings to gather and process still more input from the community. Ultimately, the Redevelopment Agency has the final authority on the use of the funds. From a community weary of meetings and wary of Redevelopment, attending yet another meeting to give input, seems like an frustrating exercise in repetition. The process mirrors that of other redevelopment initiatives, with a focus on community input versus facilitating community control. However, the opportunity for targeted programming with this funding pool represents an opening for community advocates. As the fund will be capitalized gradually over time, the challenge is to leverage that capital in such a way as to have real impact as soon as possible.

II. The Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan

What we're asking people to do with this Redevelopment Plan is to take a leap of faith. Right? Which, if I'm in the shoes of somebody who lives in that community, it'd be difficult for me to do.

– Fred Blackwell, Mayor's Office of Community Development⁷⁴

Messing with the Redevelopment Agency is like dancing with the devil. But when you go into it and you know who you're dancing with before you get there, and you've learned some lessons from the past, it is up to you to make sure you lead.

– Angelo King, Bayview resident and BVHP PAC chair⁷⁵

The recent adoption of the Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment has reignited intense community debate about the nature and course of the relationship between the SFRA and Bayview Hunters Point. The current plan is actually an expansion and amendment to a redevelopment plan which dates back to 1969. At the time, SFRA was charged with redeveloping dilapidated wartime housing. The current plan expands the project survey area to approximately 1600 acres, thereby including nearly all of Bayview and Hunters Point. With formal designation as a survey area, the SFRA is now empowered to use a set of tools, with restrictions, in order to pursue redevelopment.

⁷⁴ Fred Blackwell, personal interview, March 2006.

⁷⁵ Angelo King, personal interview, March 2006.

A resident-elected Project Area Committee, the BVHP-PAC, spent several years drafting a Revitalization Concept Plan, which helped shape the Redevelopment Plan.

Seven geographic nodes have been identified for rezoning and targeted redevelopment attention. The plan largely hinges on the use of tax-increment financing within the Survey Area, estimated at \$187.8 million.⁷⁶ A foundational assumption of the plan, then, is that as a result of other city redevelopment activities, property values will increase such that new activities can be funded. Half of the TIF funds, \$93.9 million, have been pledged to build affordable housing, while the other half is for community enhancements (\$56.3 million) and economic development (\$37.6 million).⁷⁷ The Agency estimates that by 2025, 3700 new housing units will be built in the project area as a result of the BVHP Plan. However, they do not provide a breakdown of the income categories of this new housing. In a telling admission, the BVHP Plan notes that the “number of non-affordable units provided in the Project Area would exceed demand for these units,” yet at the same time “the projected need for affordable housing may exceed that provided by the Project in the Project Area.”⁷⁸ While close to \$100 million is a sizeable investment in affordable housing, the statement that market-rate units will be over-built and affordable units will be under-built is cryptically disconcerting. Considering the market-rate housing in the pipeline at the Shipyard and from new private conversions of vacant industrial buildings,⁷⁹ the neighborhood can expect a significant influx of market-rate housing through these two projects. While inherently not a bad thing, this influx carries the hallmarks of gentrification.

An estimated 5,523 jobs would be accommodated by the plan, through the provision of 2.4 million square feet of medical, retail, and commercial spaces. These jobs are “intended, in

⁷⁶ Fred Blackwell, personal interview, 2006.

⁷⁷ Evans, Tom and Stan Muraoka, SFRA. BVHP Plan Revitalization Activities and Community Benefits, memorandum, February 27, 2006.

⁷⁸ SF Redevelopment Agency and SF Planning Department. “Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Projects and Zoning: Draft Environmental Impact Report,” Oct. 19, 2004.

⁷⁹ Vega, Cecilia M. “Plan calls for upscale condos at old Bayview cola plant.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, Sept. 2, 2005.

part, to provide employment opportunities for residents in the area.”⁸⁰ No details are given as to how these employment opportunities would be created, or what training is to be provided. A controversial mall and new football stadium around Candlestick would provide for half of the estimated new jobs the proposal claims to provide. Many residents question why the jobs program emphasizes retail employment, in all likelihood non-union, and low-paid. In a written comment submitted to the Agency, a community member states, “The training in skills that are now available in BVHP through YCD [Young Community Developers] and the Community College on Evans Street is of no use to the community if there are no actual shops where those who possess these skills can and will be employed.”⁸¹ The writer points to an important omission in the plan – the provision of living wage, career jobs in the light industrial sector. Stan Muraoka, the project manager at SFRA and one of the principal writers of the plan, passed off the details of economic development and jobs to the Mayor’s Office. In addition, he argued that it’s unrealistic for people to expect to live and work in one area – rather, residents of Bayview Hunters Point should take advantage of new transit service to access jobs region-wide.⁸² Moreover, he disagreed with the notion that the light industrial sector should be reinvigorated in this area, arguing instead that production, repair, and distribution should move to the nearby cities of South San Francisco, Brisbane, or Oakland. This attitude is hardly in line with the much-touted job opportunities stemming from redevelopment – every other city official made some mention of the return of blue-collar work to Bayview Hunters Point. Existing community support for the plan is largely due to the promises of employment, despite reservations about the workings of the plan itself.

⁸⁰ SF Redevelopment Agency and SF Planning Department. “Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Projects and Zoning: Draft Environmental Impact Report,” Oct. 19, 2004.

⁸¹ Lutton, Kevyn. From Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Projects and Rezoning EIR, Draft Comments and Responses on the Environmental Impact Report, February 2006.

⁸² Stan Muraoka, personal interview, March 2006.

In order to assuage community fears of a repetition of the Fillmore, the Redevelopment Agency has strictly limited their ability to use eminent domain,⁸³ and have publicly waived this right.⁸⁴ However, by and large, this gesture has been dismissed by community members and even officials from other city agencies. From my interviews, it is clear that residents regard City talk as cheap – the Redevelopment Agency is asking the wrong people to take a leap of faith. City officials across agencies emphasize that the new BVHP Plan “is 180-degrees from the old Urban Renewal plan” and that “they’ve taken the bad things, the scary things out of redevelopment.”⁸⁵ However, it can be argued that the main purpose of intervention remains the same: physical upgrade, with little substantive consideration of the effects of said upgrade on the people there. The language of the documents mirrors that of past efforts, with the phrase ‘eliminating blight’ peppered throughout. While the Plan does not constitute a massive “land grab,”⁸⁶ or Fillmore Urban Renewal all over, there is the unsettling effect of designating someone’s entire neighborhood a “Project Area.” As community benefits rest largely on the TIF, there are no proactive safeguards to protect against displacement.

The attitude from city officials was that since the Redevelopment Agency will not be actively taking property and directly displacing people as they did in the Fillmore, they are not responsible for displacement that may occur as a result of their activities now. It was suggested that residents need to “start planning” for the higher cost of living, which is purportedly in the inevitable future of Bayview Hunters Point. Despite the impressive estimates and colorful maps, Stan Muraoka downplays the significance of the BVHP Plan: “You’ll see Bayview being spruced

⁸³ Eminent domain is the power of the government to take ownership of private property, without the owner’s consent, so long as just compensation (fair market value) is given in exchange for the property and the taking is for a ‘public use.’ This power has been used for the construction of schools and highways, and more recently controversially extended for use in conjunction with economic development projects. Historically, many claim that eminent domain has been abused by local governments, with critics contending that its overuse was mainly in working class, often ethnically-diverse communities, with like the Fillmore.

⁸⁴ San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan, adopted March 2006. The Redevelopment Agency is not allowed to use eminent domain on property zoned R-1, and must have the PAC’s endorsement to pursue eminent domain taking on commercial, industrial, or mixed-use properties.

⁸⁵ Michael Cohen, personal interview, 2006.

⁸⁶ Campbell, Maurice and Barbara George. “Redevelopment planning land grab of Shipyard and all BVHP.” *SF Bayview*, Nov. 26, 2003. Willie Ratcliff, a longtime Bayview resident and the publisher of the *SF Bayview*, a local widely-read newspaper, regularly publishes anti-development articles with alarmist headlines. He has been an outspoken critic of the City, though many question his motives for opposition.

up, and you'll see some changes along Third Street, but the rest of it... it's pretty much gonna be the same."⁸⁷ Why expend thousands of hours of planning and millions of dollars of resources merely for some 'sprucing' up?

III. Communities of Opportunity

We live in show-me times.

– Fred Blackwell, Mayor's Office of Community Development⁸⁸

Communities of Opportunity (COO) is a targeted planning effort put forth by the Mayor's Office of Community Development. As far as I can gauge, this is the only initiative in Bayview Hunters Point that specifically focuses on bettering economic and social outcomes for the indigenous population of the neighborhood. It almost seems as though this initiative is taking on community engagement in response to the failure of other city agencies to do so. COO has already begun working with the residents of Alice Griffith public housing (in Hunters Point), planting trees, repainting walls, offering computer classes, and opening an Opportunity Center.⁸⁹ What is particularly striking is the very explicit commitment to serving the African American population of Bayview Hunters Point; it sees there an "opportunity to create the conditions for the reemergence of strong communities of stable and self-sufficient families with the continuation of a strong African-American presence and culture."⁹⁰ When asked why this focus, Dwayne Jones, the director of the initiative, explained, "When you disproportionately across all departments have extreme negative outcomes for a particular ethnic group, you have to figure out how to address it in a focused context."⁹¹ In politically-correct San Francisco, and in the post-affirmative action era, it's rare to see such unapologetic language towards focusing attention and resources to a particular race or ethnic group.

⁸⁷ Stan Muraoka, personal interview, March 2006.

⁸⁸ Fred Blackwell, personal interview, March 2006.

⁸⁹ DelVecchio, Rick. "Alice Griffith's renewal; City, residents team up to restore housing project." *SF Chronicle*, July 15, 2005 and Fred Blackwell, personal interview, March 2006.

⁹⁰ Mayor's Office of Community Development. "Communities of Opportunity Pilot Phase Business Plan, 2006-2010, January 2006.

⁹¹ Dwayne Jones, personal interview, March 2006.

Communities of Opportunity was able to take advantage of the ongoing community planning process for other projects to develop a course of action with a timeline of measurable goals. In fact, MOCD deputy director Fred Blackwell, and his efforts through COO, was the only positive thing from the City identified by one community resident otherwise angry, frustrated, and distrustful of the City's actions in Bayview Hunters Point.⁹² COO intends to focus its efforts on four pilot zones in Bayview, Hunters Point, and neighboring Visitacion Valley where negative outcomes for children and families are most pronounced. COO activities focus on connecting residents to jobs and training, providing more resources for youth and education, combating violence, and promoting economic development.

As MOCD continues crafting the details of the initiative, the office carries on with community projects, so that talk is backed by in-time results. As the quote opening this section suggests, the agency is attempting to address the distrust and skepticism of a neighborhood that has heard a lot of hot air coming from the City. In this way, the agency sets itself apart from other City-sponsored projects in Bayview Hunters Point. The vision set forth by COO therefore focuses on a people within a place: to "create opportunities for black families and neighborhoods to live and thrive within San Francisco, stemming the outward migration of African Americans."⁹³ If this plan continues to be backed by concrete actions over the long-term, and secures sufficient financing to do so, the positive impact of the Bayview Hunters Point community could be substantial.

IV. City Attitudes and Themes

Fate. The community benefits outlined above are the main conduit through which the City and neighborhood residents interact. Through interviews with representatives from the SFRA, MOED and MOCD, some common as well as divergent themes emerge which are interesting to

⁹² Tessie Ester, personal interview, March 2006.

⁹³ Mayor's Office of Community Development. "Communities of Opportunity Pilot Phase Business Plan, 2006-2010, January 2006.

consider in the context of what is community development in Bayview Hunters Point. The first theme is a strong point emphasized by all the city interviewees: the inevitability of change, and to a lesser degree, gentrification and displacement. They all placed gentrification and displacement at arms-length from their own projects, arguing that market forces are too strong to overcome – small-scale gentrification and displacement are an inevitability in the near future of Bayview Hunters Point. None, however, place the actions of the City, or their own agency, as being in some way connected to, or a shaper of, these market forces. It can certainly be argued that the development of luxury condominiums along Third Street has everything to do with the nearly-finished light-rail, the streetscape improvements which came in tandem, and the future forecasts of increased property values. In fact, several city officials argued that the city redevelopment initiatives would work to *mitigate* the ill effects of market forces, by providing more affordable housing. Michael Cohen emphatically stated that the efforts of the city would “unequivocally mitigate, not accelerate” displacement.⁹⁴ The loss of affordable housing due to increasing property values and subsequent increased rents, was not explored. But to what extent can the City’s actions be held responsible for the newly-sparked private redevelopment in the area? Residents see the Planning Commission approving the conversion of industrial properties into luxury condos, can’t help but see the two connected, and subsequently harbor suspicions of the motives behind redevelopment. As private activities continue out of the control and direction of the community, a general sense of fear arises among residents suspicious of change, inevitable or not.

Frustration. A second theme to emerge is an underlying sense of frustration. I get the impression that officials at various agencies, particularly Redevelopment, feel as though the community is holding them back. An interested parallel emerges on the community side, as they are beyond frustration at what they perceive to be city foot-dragging on fulfilling past

⁹⁴ Michael Cohen, personal interview, March 2006.

commitments. Some city officials acknowledge their own role in the inertia, as demonstrated by Stan Muraoka's quote in the opening of this chapter, while other's frustration is directed at those who oppose the projects. Frustration was also expressed at other agencies, particularly from MOCD. Tired of plans that 'look the same,' their Communities of Opportunity initiative is attempting to amend for the slow, ineffectual work of other agencies.

What constitutes good community planning? Very different community engagement approaches were used and lauded by the three agencies. Dwayne Jones noted that rather than doing a long extensive meeting process in order to shape the initiative, MOCD used the visioning that had already been done:

I have 3 generations of input already... there are consistent things from what your grandmother said, to what you said, to what your daughter is now saying. They're the same things. I want a grocery store, I want a movie theatre, I want a safe place for my kids to go. Clean parks, I want all the things that they have in every other neighborhood... So you can bring into real time the development projects instead of great, now that we know what you want for the third time, let's begin the planning process.⁹⁵

In this way, COO was on the ground running. It's important to note that as a Mayor's Office initiative, they are on a different political schedule than the entrenched Redevelopment Agency. Stan Muraoka described the Agency's process in complete contrast, valuing the thoroughness and time spent in the early planning stages:

We went through a very open-ended process to work with the PAC to conduct community workshops and really explore you know, where is the community. Even though it's been done before, where is the community, what are the outstanding issues. And then go through actually a couple years of visioning with them. You know, where it was very open-ended, we listened to them and we said to them ok, if you could have something change in this community, what would it be?⁹⁶

While both paths of engagement may be necessary for plans of this scale, the consequences may be that community frustration increases with each new meeting, each year gone by. Yet it's fascinating to see how the plans play off each other, and how the planners have vastly different

⁹⁵ Dwayne Jones, personal interview, March 2006.

⁹⁶ Stan Muraoka, personal interview, March 2006.

planning ideologies. While all of my interviewees discussed the Redevelopment and Shipyard plans at length – without specific prompting to do so – none mentioned Communities of Opportunity at all, save those who originated the initiative. As the plan arguably most aligned with an anti-displacement agenda, the low-profile nature of COO even across city agencies is puzzling, if not troubling.

Representation. All rhetorically asked, who speaks for the Bayview? Implicitly they questioned the legitimacy of many who do purport to speak for the Bayview at community meetings and hearings at City Hall. While there is the voice from official channels – supervisor Sophie Maxwell, the elected BVHP-PAC, and the mayor-appointed Shipyard CAC, there is also a tacit acknowledgement that there is no single voice. The inability to pinpoint a single ‘who’ has stalled the process and is the source of much frustration.

Silent minorities. Another common theme from city interviews is the glancing mention of the silent populations of Bayview and Hunters Point: Latino and Asian households in the neighborhood. Largely absent from public debate, together this growing resident base makes up over 45% of the neighborhood population. The reasons why Latinos and Asians don’t participate are worth exploring for a moment. Their relatively recent entry into the neighborhood means that neighborhood institutions have yet to develop which serve them. The infrastructure of participation is often facilitated by these anchor institutions, such as churches, homeowner associations, and civic organizations. The lack of those points to the lack of participation. But it seems to go beyond that, to a question of turf, a question of symbolism and history. Despite the decreasing numbers, Bayview Hunters Point is considered San Francisco’s African American neighborhood. Whether it is out of fear, intimidation, respect, or disinterest, City officials suggest, Latinos and Asians return to their stronghold neighborhoods for social, economic, and civic participation.

Participation. The reasons why the overall participation and organization of the community around redevelopment has been underwhelming, is where city officials agency to agency begin to diverge in their views. The explanations for low participation rates range from Maslow's hierarchy of needs to a deep sense of apathy resulting from decades of broken promises. Fred Blackwell, of MOCD, remarked, "This is a neighborhood that has been promised a lot, and delivered little."⁹⁷ This view is corroborated by Dwayne Jones, also of MOCD, who noted that people have given up after "years of distrust and unfulfilled promises around the provision of opportunities out of the Shipyard." However, Kurt Fuchs and Michael Cohen of MOED, and Stan Muraoka, of SFRA, all noted that it's a simple matter of time and the privilege of participation. Fulfilling basic needs takes higher priority to neighborhood planning. As Michael Cohen put it, "Living is pretty hard up there on the Hill. And coming to a hearing on the development of a 1600 housing unit residential project may not be top on someone's priority list."⁹⁸ So combined, the picture is one in which resident's participation in planning and redevelopment have been frustrating rather than fruitful, with the pressures of survival and everyday life more pressing.

The Opposition. Attitudes regarding those who are vocal – and opposed – to many of the City-led plans vary agency to agency. The descriptions of dissenters by City officials include "annoying," "self-serving," "stubborn," "uneducated," "simplistic," and even "whack-jobs." However, representatives from MOCD, who have engaged in more personal, grounded engagement paint a more nuanced and sympathetic picture. Those who challenge the City's plans are described as "neighborhood stewards" and "watchdogs" who hold the City accountable.⁹⁹ On the other hand, Michael Cohen from MOED gave this simple statement: "There is a core group of naysayers... who hate anything anybody wants to do anywhere in the Bayview."¹⁰⁰ Kurt Fuchs,

⁹⁷ Fred Blackwell, personal interview, March 2006.

⁹⁸ Michael Cohen, personal interview, March 2006.

⁹⁹ Dwayne Jones, personal interview, March 2006.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

also of MOED, reiterated this sentiment, “they just don’t want anything developed, they don’t want any change.”¹⁰¹ Moreover, there is not consensus about the motivations of this group. While some believe that the core opposition “have deep agendas either to their personal self interest or political agendas,”¹⁰² others characterize them as sincere community elders. None respond to the opposition’s arguments, however, or acknowledge that they have one.

Un/founded fears. Across the board, all the city officials concede that fears expressed by residents about gentrification and displacement are not entirely unfounded. At this point, however, several interviewees expressed exasperation at the recurring evocation of Fillmore Urban Renewal by community members. Tired of residents who “bring up stuff that happened forty years ago,”¹⁰³ some city representatives, notably from MOED and SFRA, feel the fears are exaggerated or the result of uninformed opinions – residents simply “going on emotion.”¹⁰⁴ Again, over at MOCD, however, Dwayne Jones stated, “You would be a fool to think that level of distrust is unfounded.”¹⁰⁵ Yet the range from dismissive to understanding attitudes does not affect the general sense of frustration over a long, contentious planning and approvals process.

When I look at the bigger picture of San Francisco, and Bayview Hunters Point’s position therein, it’s clear that fears of gentrification are not unfounded at all. The housing market in San Francisco is perpetually tight; residential vacancy rates in 2004 were 5.2%, and are expected to decrease to 4.1% in 2006.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, in 2000 the Mayor’s Office of Housing estimated a 15,000 shortage of affordable housing units in the city, while the San Francisco Housing Authority’s current waitlist for public housing stands at 30,323 individuals.¹⁰⁷ Bayview Hunters Point, shielded from the chilly San Francisco fog, is arguably the sunniest and warmest

¹⁰¹ Kurt Fuchs, personal interview, March 2006.

¹⁰² Michael Cohen, personal interview, March 2006.

¹⁰³ Fuchs, March 2006.

¹⁰⁴ Stan Muraoka, personal interview, March 2006.

¹⁰⁵ Dwayne Jones, personal interview, March 2006.

¹⁰⁶ Souza, Lawrence. San Francisco Economic and Apartment Market Overview. San Francisco Apartment Magazine, April 2005.

¹⁰⁷ Bayview Hunters Point PAC, “Community Revitalization Concept Plan,” November, 2000. This figure is cited as an estimate from the Mayor’s Office of Housing. See also the San Francisco Housing Authority website, “SFHA Demographics Profile”: www.sfha.org/demog/index.htm.

neighborhood in San Francisco. With its stunning views of the San Francisco Bay as well as the rest of the city, Bayview Hunters Point is also a short commute for young professionals working in downtown San Francisco, the South Bay, or Silicon Valley. As California Senator Diane Feinstein remarked, with the conveyance of Parcel A, San Francisco now “grows by 75 acres.”¹⁰⁸ Residents are well aware of these dynamics, and are trepidacious about the future.

The future of Bayview Hunters Point. Perhaps most illustrative is city officials’ descriptions of the future of the neighborhood. Using the next 15 years as the time frame, most officials described a decreasing African American presence in the neighborhood, with more Asians households moving in. They described the neighborhood as becoming less isolated from the rest of San Francisco, not only logistically through the light-rail connection, but also psychologically, as resources and attention are directed there. MOED focused almost entirely on describing the physical and aesthetic changes, envisioning a cleaner, better-kept, more aesthetically-pleasing Bayview Hunters Point. Dwayne Jones hoped that the black middle class would return to the neighborhood, as did Stan Muraoka. Neither addressed the difference between importing a black middle class and growing one internally – as is a stated goal of Communities of Opportunity. City officials agreed that Bayview Hunters Point will look better, and be more racially and economically diverse. In other words, there will be less poor black residents in the next few decades.

¹⁰⁸ Office of California Senator Diane Feinstein. “Ceremony to Celebrate Conveyance of First Parcel of Hunters Point Shipyard.” Press Release, January 12, 2005.

Chapter Four: The Community Fights Back – *and each other*

You always need both sides, and the fact that we have factions in this community shouldn't prevent us from sitting at the table and discussing the issue from all points of view.

– Angelo King, Bayview resident and BVHP PAC chair¹⁰⁹

A community divided can never survive. And somehow this city has perfected the art of dividing this community.

– Marie Harrison, Hunters Point resident and activist¹¹⁰

Right now our community is in a trauma of violence and crime.

– Tessie Ester, Hunters View resident¹¹¹

In mirroring city/neighborhood dynamics, this thesis presents the City's landscape of plans first, followed by the community's response in this chapter. Largely playing a reactive role, Bayview and Hunters Point residents tend to organize around specific issues or in opposition to a specific proposal. To what extent is the city participation process amenable to building a relationship that is not solely reactionary? More importantly, to what extent does the community have the tools, capacity, and consensus to organize proactive measures? While it may seem intuitive to focus on the city/neighborhood dynamics, in Bayview Hunters Point it is also crucial to examine the intra-neighborhood dynamics as well. At the risk of delving into armchair anthropology, in this chapter I outline the main community dynamics impacting effective participatory planning and redevelopment.

I. The Hill and the Flats

Despite the name 'Bayview Hunters Point,' the redevelopment area actually comprises distinct neighborhoods. Lumped together as the Southeastern neighborhoods, Bayview and Hunters Point are more similar than not, but wealth, privilege and power are not even distributed across the two. The Hill, referring to Hunters Point, contains two of the larger public housing projects, Hunters View and Alice Griffith. Residents of the Hill are not only less affluent than their

¹⁰⁹ Angelo King, personal interview, March 2006.

¹¹⁰ Marie Harrison, personal interview, March 2006.

¹¹¹ Tessie Ester, personal interview, March 2006.

Bayview counterparts, but they also less formally represented on the various citizens committee involved with redevelopment. Importantly, gang violence, youth crime, and turf issues are more prevalent on the Hill.¹¹²

The Flats, or Bayview, are much more politically involved and economically diverse, with the black middle-class largely settled there. As political voice gets channeled through the Bayview, the needs and opinions of Hunters Point residents tend to fall by the wayside.¹¹³ While

the per capita income of Bayview Hunters Point is \$14,200, a closer look at the income distributions shows a more economically-diverse neighborhood. Almost 15% of neighborhood residents report an annual household income of over \$100,000; 21% make less than \$15,000. In more generalized terms, 35% of the neighborhood makes both less than \$25,000, and over \$60,000 per year.¹¹⁴ While the

Household Income Statistics		
Income Ranges	City-wide	BVHP
Less than \$15,000	14.5%	21.0%
\$15 - 19,999	5.7%	7.3%
\$20 - 24,999	5.0%	6.2%
\$25 - 29,999	4.7%	5.3%
\$30 - 34,999	5.2%	5.9%
\$35 - 39,999	4.8%	3.2%
\$40 - 44,999	5.3%	4.2%
\$45 - 49,999	4.1%	4.5%
\$50 - 59,999	8.4%	7.4%
\$60 - 74,999	10.5%	7.7%
\$75 - 99,999	11.9%	12.3%
\$100,000+	19.9%	14.9%

Source: BVHP PAC Revitalization Concept Plan, 2000

data shown in the table at right does not breakdown the neighborhood specifically to Bayview and Hunters Point, visual evidence as well as interviews with residents indicate clearly that the upper incomes lives in the Flats, while the lower incomes are on the Hill.

Even in language, Hunters Point is second-tier to Bayview – people refer to the southeastern neighborhoods as just ‘the Bayview,’ leaving off Hunters Point. While perhaps a minor point of speech, it does lend credence to the feeling that the neighborhood is invisible behind its (relatively) wealthier neighbor. It is important to note that residents themselves did not

¹¹² Epps, Kevin. (Producer and Director). Straight Outta Hunters Point [Documentary Film]. Mastamind Productions, 2005. See also personal interviews with Tessie Ester and Lavelle Shaw, March 2006.

¹¹³ Angelo King, personal interview, March 2006.

¹¹⁴ Bayview Hunters Point Project Area Committee, “Revitalization Concept Plan,” November, 2000, pg 25.

identify this dynamic explicitly, but the tension is apparent, particularly on the Bayview Hunters Point Project Advisory Committee. As the redevelopment debate focuses on race, at what point do class lines supersede racial ones? One interviewee related the story of African American and Asian homeowners joining to oppose the placement of a parole office in the neighborhood.¹¹⁵ He summed up the situation by saying, “A lot of homeowners are more alike than different.”¹¹⁶ Much like during the 1966 Hunters Point Riot, while the racial nature of the debate is often emphasized, the class issues are just as prevalent. Redevelopment will certainly affect all neighborhood residents, both rich and poor; on an individual level, however, who will be able to remain in Bayview Hunters Point and who will be displaced is largely a question of economic status.

II. Inside, Outside, we’re all on the same side?

With everything that’s going on with this community, and this lack of civic engagement, and this petty fighting, it doesn’t recognize the power that [the PAC] has as the local community elected body.

– Angelo King, Bayview resident and BVHP PAC chair¹¹⁷

As is legally-mandated by California state law, a Project Area Committee (BVHP PAC) was formed in 1997 to steer the direction of redevelopment and allow for citizen participation in the BVHP Plan. The Shipyard Redevelopment Plan also had a Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) as well as the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Either elected through a community vote or appointed by the Mayor and District 10 Supervisor, these bodies theoretically are the official voice of the community. However, this claim is hotly contested among the community members I interviewed, at community meetings, as well as in written comments and responses. The legitimacy of these committees is essential to the perception that the intentions and motivations of the plans are sincerely for the good of the community. However, allegations circulate regarding the financial stakes of individual members, and even payments made to members by developers in order to skew support. The Bayview Hunters Point PAC members have been called “sell-outs” in

¹¹⁵ Dang, Janet. “Residents Say No to Parole Office.” *Asian Week*, May 11, 2000. See also King interview, 2006.

¹¹⁶ Angelo King, personal interview, March 2006.

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*

the local newspaper, the blogosphere,¹¹⁸ and to their faces more times than I can adequately document.¹¹⁹

Allegations aside, the make-up of these bodies does inherently call into question how representative they truly are, as in any democracy. They are weighted towards older more established residents, mostly from Bayview, mostly homeowners. In fact, 60% of the neighborhood's homeowners are elderly.¹²⁰ One community member pointed out, "They're homeowners, they have businesses... they are not in dire need for money. So their outlook on things is a little bit different than people who don't have all that."¹²¹ The chair of the BVHP-PAC, 29-year-old Angelo King, is the only member under 50. He expressed his frustration that many community activists are unwilling to join the PAC, or else offer construction solutions to the redevelopment debate: "Some of our hardest-core opposition I think would be wonderful [on the PAC]. I mean some of the greatest opposition helps you to produce a better document." Yet the PAC's relationship to those against the Redevelopment Plan remains antagonistic. In essence, both sides accuse the other of placing personal gain over the community's best interest. Mr. King is working to recruit young members and tenants to the PAC, in order to better speak to the needs of the residents of the Hill. By some accounts, there has been difficulty getting people to serve on the PAC because "for years, nothing ever happens."¹²² Others claim that there is resistance to certain people joining, namely residents of the housing projects on the Hill.¹²³ So again, in formal channels of representation, the distinctions between Bayview and Hunters Point are very important to remember.

¹¹⁸ The term 'blogosphere' collectively refers to online blogs – or public web-based journals – which have proliferated in recent years.

¹¹⁹ The SF Bayview regularly publishes articles and editorials trashing the PAC, as does outspoken Bayview resident Francisco Da Costa in his personal website and blog: www.franciscodacosta.com. I also attended meetings at City Hall where "sell-out" was audibly yelled multiple times at African American members of the PAC and SF Planning Commission.

¹²⁰ Bayview Hunters Point Project Area Committee, "Revitalization Concept Plan," November, 2000, pg 26.

¹²¹ Lavelle Shaw, personal interview, March 2006.

¹²² Dwayne Jones, personal interview, March 2006.

¹²³ Tessie Ester, personal interview, March 2006.

In general, the PAC is seen as a potentially useful and potentially powerful body. For instance, more specific language outlining the process for using eminent domain was included after the PAC sought advice from their own outside lawyer.¹²⁴ Tessie Ester, a resident of Hunters View housing agrees that the PAC could be a useful tool for the community. However, as is, the PAC is “full of BS” and lacks representation from Hunters Point.¹²⁵ Lavelle Shaw, a resident of Alice Griffith put the intra-community disputes, and accusations of ulterior motives from both sides, in perspective, “Some of them are being sincere, some of them not... you know, that’s life, that’s politics, that’s the way it is...Every community leader is a politician.”¹²⁶ His statement could be seen as advice to his community – accept that altruism may not be the governing motivation for all parties involved, and push forward.

III. Beyond Black and White

The hegemony is definitely black, the politics is black, the issues is black.
– Angelo King, Bayview resident and BVHP PAC chair¹²⁷

Much like the ongoing rebuilding debates in New Orleans, the politics of redevelopment in Bayview Hunters Point has focused on black/white tensions. But also similar to New Orleans, there are important and increasingly powerful populations being overlooked, namely Asians and Latinos. Together representing almost 45% of the 94124 zip code, they have not been at the forefront of the redevelopment debate, on either side. All those I interviewed from the community are African American, and could only offer explanations for this absence based on conjecture. Although I was interested in exploring this dynamic and interview residents of other ethnicities, I my attempts to find contacts were fruitless. This speaks to a point raised by many from both the City and the neighborhood: civic, social, and cultural institutions serving these ethnic groups are located in *other* neighborhoods such as Chinatown, the Mission, and Visitacion Valley.

¹²⁴ Angelo King, personal interview, March 2006.

¹²⁵ Tessie Ester, personal interview, March 2006.

¹²⁶ Lavelle Shaw, personal interview, March 2006.

¹²⁷ King, March 2006.

As mentioned earlier in the case of Asian and African American homeowners fighting a parole office placement, there have been instances of not only political engagement, but also cross-racial collaboration. Another such instance was during redistricting for the 2002 elections in the city. A coalition of Asian, African American, and Latino organizations worked together to ensure they could secure representation across the city, with the explicit goal of keeping District 10 a “safe African-American seat.”¹²⁸ So given that they have flexed their muscle before (as in the parole office case), and have worked in coalition to influence city-wide politics (as in the redistricting case), why then is the Bayview Asian community largely absent from the redevelopment debate?

Several reasons may be at work. While some find it easy to lump together ethnic minorities as “people of color,” in the case of Bayview Hunters Point several articles on Bay Area gentrification actually name the new Asian households as gentrifiers, in addition to traditional white in-movers.¹²⁹ Largely middle class and homeowners, they have followed the conventional path of an incoming, wealthier, gentrifying class by purchasing and refurbishing homes, while altering the character of the neighborhoods both residentially and commercially. With greater access to capital through financial institutions that cater to their needs, Asian households are by and large financially more stable and supported than their African American counterparts in the neighborhood. Several interviewees suggested that therefore Asians are largely to benefit from redevelopment activities.¹³⁰ In fact, one common theme across responses from the city officials and community members is that the Asian population and influence will only continue to increase in the coming years, as that of African Americans continues to decline.

¹²⁸ Driver, Nick. “Asians gear up for redistricting,” *San Francisco Examiner*, April 8, 2002.

¹²⁹ Alejandrino, Simon Velasquez. “Gentrification in San Francisco’s Mission District: Indicators and Policy Recommendations.” San Francisco: Mission Economic Development Association, 2000.

¹³⁰ Marie Harrison, Maurice Campbell, personal interviews, March 2006.

IV. Community Attitudes and Themes

Frustration and distrust. While interviews with city officials indicated their awareness around the level of frustration and distrust coming from the community, it was nothing compared to hearing it directly and repeatedly from community members themselves. Every community interviewee brought up this historical frustration and distrust, stemming from years of empty promises:

- We were promised jobs, jobs, jobs, for the light rail. We didn't get any of those. – Marie Harrison¹³¹
- I don't trust the City... that's why you have certain things like the PAC. – Angelo King¹³²
- The City always says this, always says that, but doesn't never deliver. – Lavelle Shaw¹³³
- There have been so many promises made to the people, and promises broken. – Maurice Campbell¹³⁴
- All those guys do is come up here and make us promises and don't follow through. – Tessie Ester¹³⁵

When asked what would need to happen in order for interviewees to be open to a more trusting relationship with the city, most either dismissed the question as neither here nor there, or reiterated the need for concrete actions. Lavelle Shaw, the Tenant's Association president at Alice Griffith's housing, commented on the attitudes of residents after a year of working closely with the Mayor's Office of Community Development on a wide range of community improvements and programs:

Well, more people are open to talking in my development, Alice Griffith than in most other places because to them, it's a start. We're not saying that because the programs and Opportunity Center is here it's been a whole bunch of change, but we're saying we do got a start. But it's long, long road.¹³⁶

Tessie Ester, embroiled in battles with the SF Housing Authority over the relocation of hundreds of families while Hunters View is torn down and redeveloped à la HOPE VI, said in essence she

¹³¹ Marie Harrison, personal interview, March 2006.

¹³² Angelo King, personal interview, March 2006.

¹³³ Lavelle Shaw, personal interview, March 2006.

¹³⁴ Maurice Campbell, personal interview, March 2006.

¹³⁵ Tessie Ester, personal interview, March 2006.

¹³⁶ Shaw, March 2006.

believes it when she sees it, and not a minute sooner.¹³⁷ So while clearly the City has heard these sentiments expressed, their response by and large, has barely begun to chip away at decades of ill feelings. Redevelopment has only heightened suspicions for those unwilling to take the ‘leap of faith.’

Poor relationship with the police. While the police are not directly involved with planning initiatives per se, many residents see the police as a yet another negative force pushing African Americans out of the San Francisco.¹³⁸ Fast-forwarding from the 1966 Hunters Point Riot to today, to say the community/police relationship is poor would be a gross overstatement. In fact, one of the reasons residents fought the parole office was because they didn’t want any more armed officers in the neighborhood.¹³⁹ An internally-filmed and distributed video, made by officers from the Bayview police station, was recently leaked to the press, depicting racist and deeply offensive comic routines. While Mayor Newsom pursued disciplinary action against the participating officers (24 were suspended, then reinstated days later),¹⁴⁰ incidents like this continuously exacerbate the situation. Furthermore, a recent series in the *San Francisco Chronicle* studying the San Francisco Police Department’s use of force revealed not surprisingly that the city's black residents are disproportionately the object of police action and force.¹⁴¹ For those who believe the City’s intentions for redevelopment are to gentrify Bayview Hunters Point, police brutality and racial profiling seem to serve as tools to that end.

Disconnect around priorities. Meanwhile, 94 murders occurred in San Francisco last year, a 10-year high. No arrests have been made in 80% of those cases, and 20% of the murders

¹³⁷ Tessie Ester, personal interview, March 2006.

¹³⁸ Maurice Campbell, Marie Harrison, personal interviews, March 2006.

¹³⁹ Dang, Janet. “Residents Say No to Parole Office.” *Asian Week*, May 11, 2000.

¹⁴⁰ Derbeken, Jason and Rachel Gordon, and Trapper Byrne. “Video scandal rocks S.F. police: 20 officers ordered suspended – mayor condemns ‘sexist,’ ‘racist’ films, vows probe of department,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 8, 2005. See also Lee, Henry K. “All officers reinstate in SFPD video flap – Police chief lifts suspensions - Disciplinary action still possible,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 16, 2005.

¹⁴¹ Sward, Susan and Bill Wallace, and Elizabeth Fernandez. “The Use of Force - When SFPD officers resort to violence,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 5, 2006.

occurred on public housing property.¹⁴² The crime and violence in the neighborhood are top concerns for residents, which they expressed as issues not addressed by the City and its technicolor plans. The quote from Tessie Ester opening this chapter is her summation of the state of her community – one of trauma and violence. Several interviewees mentioned feeling as though the community sounds like a broken record, continuously reiterating the need for jobs.¹⁴³ Again, frustration has been building in the community at what is seen as hollow requests for feedback and input. As mentioned in previous chapters, the community has been called to countless meetings for dialogue and discussion – their needs have been assessed in countless reports. Yet when residents identify a need for programs to stop the violence, be it more beat officers or funding for after-school programs, the City responds with plans for more affordable housing, and better-looking sidewalks. Logistically, the gang-related struggles over turf rob residents of their freedom of movement – a reason cited for not being able physically get to community meetings, particularly at night.¹⁴⁴ Lavelle Shaw mused, “The light rail is nice but how is it going to help us?” He went on to state that the Mayor would better spend his time focusing on the youth of the city in general and southeast sector in particular, rather than on attracting tourists. When residents identify a pattern of persistent mismatched priorities, they are lead to conclude that there is no innocent mismatch at all.

Intentional gentrification. Every single interviewee, unprompted, emphasized their distrust of the intentions and motivations of the City, in addition to bringing up the history of redevelopment in the Fillmore, with some even alluding to the situation in New Orleans. Because of the lack of real benefits aimed at transforming the economic opportunities for the residents, the larger plans are dismissed as merely for the benefit of newcomers to the City, or a wealthy class

¹⁴² Goodyear, Charlie. “No arrests made in 80% of homicides – In 2005, 74 of 94 cases remain open, police report says,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 13, 2005.

¹⁴³ Marie Harrison, Maurice Campbell, Lavelle Shaw, personal interviews, March 2006.

¹⁴⁴ Tessie Ester, Harrison, Shaw, personal interviews, March 2006.

interested in shorter commutes and panoramic views.¹⁴⁵ The Mayor's Office initiative, Communities of Opportunity, is completely overshadowed by the Redevelopment and Shipyard plans in terms of scale and resources. Recognizing the power of the City to promote change, and that "some things in our community could be fixed with a phone call from our mayor,"¹⁴⁶ many question the confluence of actions by the city. Moving forward in tandem with the redevelopment plans are the construction of light-rail service to the neighborhood, the closure of the polluting PG&E power plant, and the demolition and redevelopment of public housing – all arguably activities which make the neighborhood appear more attractive to wealthier residents. These activities are not problematic inherently, but without an equitable measure of investment in the needs of the indigenous population, it does smack of predatory planning.

However, not all the residents I interviewed placed the blame squarely on the shoulders of the City. Angelo King put the debate in perspective:

What they wanna talk about is somebody's out to get you – and it's the government, they're coming for your homes. The government don't want your home, real estate prospectors want your home. They do, they got a big old list and they sit there and call you all day. Old ladies get 20 pieces of mail about loans, mortgages, all that kind of stuff every single week. They get phone calls every single day. That ain't government, that's capitalism.¹⁴⁷

Echoing Stan Muraoka from SFRA, Mr. King takes a harder stance than his peers, chastising his community for not learning financial management skills in order to prepare for the changes to come. This critique, however, brings up decades of racism in financial institutions and educational systems outside the scope of this thesis. However, the sentiment does underscore an important bootstrap-attitude that is prevalent even in progressive San Francisco. Essentially he agrees with his neighbors fighting for employment opportunities, yet places responsibility on their own individual shoulders, rather than the City's.

¹⁴⁵ Tessie Ester, Marie Harrison, Lavelle Shaw, Maurice Campbell, personal interviews, March 2006.

¹⁴⁶ Harrison, March 2006.

¹⁴⁷ Angelo King, personal interview, March 2006.

The future of Bayview Hunters Point. As asked of the City, community members were prompted to describe their neighborhood in 15 years. All set up their responses in this manner: if we organize, then ___; but if not, then ___. Many predicted that the remaining black businesses would fail and be replaced by more upscale establishments, like Starbucks. While Michael Cohen of MOED did not anticipate a “sea change” in the area, he failed to recognize that a Starbucks on Third Street may well constitute a sea change for residents. As did the city, community members foresaw more Asians and white people moving into the neighborhood, with more African Americans moving out. A comparison could be drawn to the South End in Boston, which underwent intense gentrification, but contains several affordable housing developments. The character of the neighborhood is completely altered and upscale, with small islands of affordability – potentially the scenario post-Redevelopment and Shipyard plans.

Most described the ability of the community to unify and fight for equitable reinvestment as improbable, and predicted that in-fighting and other issues like violence, police suppression, and general poverty will thwart attempts to build a powerful enough movement. Lavelle Shaw stated, “In the end, most people are going to say, I’m tired. I’m gonna mosey on down like they want me to do. And we’ll gradually lose the fight.” Only Tessie Ester expressed hope for the future: “We’re gonna fight for ours...I’m not going nowhere. I’m gonna be the last one standing.” Also telling is that most describe the future in reaction, if we don’t fight against these plans, then ___. None described what specifically they would fight *for*. In community meetings, blog postings, local newspaper articles, and published comments and responses, this theme holds true. Community members submit their opposition, state their needs, and again and again, the City presents their affordable housing provisions, which exceed requirements by such-and-such a percent. Their vision for their own future is blurry, perhaps because in reality, it is.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Past history of 'development' in San Francisco give low and very low income residents abundant reasons to worry that this 'high housing' Redevelopment Plan will occur with no concurrent development of the human capital of local residents and will disperse the community. With no present time investment in the human capital laying dormant and undeveloped in low-income families they will end up with no tangible equity stake in the work of Redevelopment.

– Kevyn Lutton, community resident¹⁴⁸

I've learned that the city knows exactly where they can and cannot put things. And I've learned more importantly how fast they can put those things up when there's political will to do so.

– Dwayne Jones, Mayor's Office of Community Development¹⁴⁹

Red-lined? Not just red-lined, this community is *red-circled*. Everybody's walking around with a big red circle on their butt, a target. And they don't even know it.

– Marie Harrison, community resident and activist¹⁵⁰

The previous chapters outlined a complicated and messy story of a single neighborhood at a pivotal point in time. It is clear that no quick fix could be introduced to solve the problems of process, relationships, and poverty in Bayview Hunters Point. Furthermore, it is unlikely that those in power will suddenly drop their plans and pursue an entirely new course of action, with a new set of values. Yet within the realm of possibilities exists openings, however small, that may have positive impacts on the lives of these people rooted in place, the Bayview Hunters Point residents, and increase their ability to weather the changes coming to their neighborhood. Communities of Opportunity is trying to pursue this goal from one end, and the Shipyard Legacy Fund way well add to this effort in the future. The scale, resources, and timing of COO and the Fund, however, are severely limiting in terms of what can and needs to be pursued *now*.

I. Program Strategies

What appears to be necessary to prevent displacement in Bayview Hunters Point is not the typical battle for inclusionary zoning or affordable housing exceeding that which is already required by law. The Shipyard and Redevelopment plans already offer that. Rather, as the

¹⁴⁸ Lutton, Kevyn. From Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Projects and Rezoning EIR, Draft Comments and Responses on the Environmental Impact Report, February 2006.

¹⁴⁹ Dwayne Jones, personal interview, March 2006.

¹⁵⁰ Marie Harrison, personal interview, March 2006.

residents describe and MOCD recognizes, there is a need for investment in the *people* of Bayview Hunters Point themselves. Kevyn Lutton's quote opening this chapter stresses this point: investing in a place without a parallel investment in the people who value this place as home, is a recipe for displacement.

Outlined below are a handful of programs that specifically reinvest in people. With the goals of expanding community assets and access to capital in both personal and business realms, these programs are worth exploring for applicability in Bayview Hunters Point. Community control and ownership are key to fighting displacement, through the strengthening of the economic stability of Bayview Hunters Point residents. The programs are separated into the following categories: expanding access to capital, job placement, community asset-building, commercial gentrification, and youth violence prevention.

Access to capital. With seed funding from the Shipyard Legacy Fund and outside matching grants, a revolving loan fund could be established to serve not only the business needs of the neighborhood, but also the consumer needs as well. Many businesses are expected to remodel alongside streetscape improvements, while residents have need for home improvement and other consumer loans. Since many residents are organized through their churches, it may be worthwhile to explore church-based lending. Local churches could partner with an existing business assistance organization, such as the Bayview Business Resource Center, to manage and administer the microloan fund. In this way, community members have access to capital through an intermediary they know and trust. Lacking the often-intimidating atmosphere of a bank, services cater to a clientele not altogether familiar with formalized financial services. Church-based lending has been developed more fully internationally, as in the Philippines and South Africa, though domestic examples do exist. Nehemiah Gateway Community Development

Corporation in Wilmington, Delaware, is the non-profit arm of the Shiloh Baptist Church, whose loan fund mostly provides consumer loans.

One potential leader in church-based lending may be the True Hope Church of God in Christ, located in Bayview. They recently partnered with a private developer to build 20 middle-income and 75 low-income homes for first-time homebuyers. They also partnered with Goodwill Industries to train approximately 100 residents to be truck drivers. They operate a Computer Learning Center and other programming for children and youth. Given their entrepreneurial spirit and connection to the community, True Hope may be an effective center for microlending in Bayview Hunters Point. While decades of disinvestment will not vanish through these small loans, they may enable households and businesses to maintain and expand their assets, thereby keeping a stronger foothold in the community.

Job placement. Bayview Hunters Point is home to several job training programs and business technical assistance centers including the Renaissance Center, Young Community Developers, the Bayview Business Resource Center, the Southeast Neighborhood Jobs Initiative, and the Evans Campus of City College of San Francisco. However, several of those I interviewed as well as numerous comments made at City Hall hearings indicate that once trained, job seekers from the neighborhood have great difficulty finding employment. Furthermore, an extensive study conducted by MOCD found that the training received is not always in line with employer needs.¹⁵¹ One model which may address this challenge can be found in the Boston Health Care and Research Training Institute. A collaboration between two Community Development Corporations, Fenway CDC and Jamaica Plain NCD, the Training Institute partners with 11 local employers to provide pre-employment training as well as career advancement training. Focused on the healthcare and research sectors, the Training Institute is able to adapt its courses to suit employer

¹⁵¹ Mayor's Office of Community Development. "Connecting Communities: Project Connect Report." January 2005.

needs on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, for those entering the system, placement is facilitated by the close Institute-employer relationship. For those attending for career advancement, the employers give release time so that employees can attend courses. In this way both new people are funneled into jobs, and those employed can advance in their careers. Offerings range from GED and language classes to specialized medical trainings. If Renaissance could connect with employers, not only to build paths for placement, but also to better design curriculum for training, the placement performance may dramatically improve.

With the massive transformation in progress just to the north of Bayview Hunters Point, in Mission Bay, thousands of new jobs will be created in the medical and biotech sectors. Specialized training will be necessary for residents to access these jobs, as well as a commitment by the firms to hire from the community. As past agreement-focused campaigns have proven to be less than successful, a program structured around formal community/employer partnerships may prove more effective. The Southeast Neighborhood Job Initiative received a \$100,000 Rockefeller grant to convene a roundtable to explore accessing the employment opportunities from Mission Bay medical and biotech focused firms. One avenue to pursue is the Training Institute model – formalizing the relationship of new employers with the local job training centers to develop appropriate curriculum as well as a direct channel for recruitment. Furthermore, the medical industry is already a major employer throughout San Francisco. Such a partnership need not limit itself to, or wait for, incoming Mission Bay businesses.

Community Assets. Given that the majority of homeowners in the community are elderly, it is imperative for the households to engage in informed estate planning, so that assets are passed down to the next generation. Unfortunately, predatory lending/buying as well as reverse mortgages are becoming more commonplace in Bayview Hunters Point. For homes where there is no next of kin, or the next of kin is not interested or more likely not able to maintain ownership of the

property, a community land trust model may be appropriate. Under this arrangement, the house itself is still owned privately, but the land on which it sits is held by the trust. The community-governed trust then can regulate resale such that the house stays affordable over time. Most community land trusts allow for the homeowner to recapture a small portion of the increased value at the time of sale, given a certain number of years of residency. One of the largest community land trusts in the country, in Burlington, Vermont, has over 6000 units of affordable housing; community land trusts exist in cities such as Portland, Washington DC, Baltimore, and Cincinnati. The San Francisco Community Land Trust is a new land trust that recently acquired its first mixed-use property in Chinatown.¹⁵² They are an interested partner in pursuing the affordable housing land trust strategy in gentrifying or pre-gentrifying communities such as Bayview Hunters Point.

At the individual level, Bayview Hunters Point residents could also benefit from personal asset-building. There is a growing movement across the country to start IDA (Individual Development Account) programs in low-income communities. IDA's are matching savings programs that help low-income individuals gain personal finance skills and saving discipline. Typically these matching savings programs double or triple every dollar saved by an individual for a specified maximum, while offering budgeting and finance workshops in tandem. The final saved amount can be used towards purchasing a home, starting a business, or financing education. In addition, Lawrence CommunityWorks, a CDC in Lawrence Massachusetts, uses the IDA model to build a network of peer-led neighbor circles. With the philosophy that 'Assets Build Communities,' these 'Adult Learning Clubs,' continue to play mutually-supportive roles long after the IDA program has ended.¹⁵³ Seeing the IDA program in this context, IDA's are more than just a individual asset-building tool, but also an important community-strengthening vehicle. EARN, a

¹⁵² Tracy, James. Phone interview. San Francisco Community Land Trust: www.sfclt.org.

¹⁵³ Lawrence CommunityWorks: www.lcworks.org.

San Francisco non-profit, has begun a pilot IDA program in Bayview in collaboration with the Bayview Business Resource Center. Expanding this program to Hunters Point, using Shipyard Legacy funds, and broadening the vision to include an Adult Learning Club-style network, may greatly strengthen the economic sustainability of households across Bayview and Hunters Point.

Commercial Gentrification. With businesses along Third Street already suffering due to the extended construction of the light rail, there is major concern in the community about the future of the black-owned small businesses in Bayview Hunters Point. With commercial rents expected to increase, one idea to consider is using Shipyard Legacy funds to establish a commercial land trust. Similar to the community land trust described earlier, a commercial land trust would secure community control of the property and stabilize the rents. When the light rail was built in Portland, Oregon, the Portland Community Land Trust received funding from the City of Portland to acquire mixed-use properties along the rail line, in a direct effort to pre-empt gentrification. A commercial land trust would not only keep rents low, but also give more voice to small business owners as to how the district should expand, and what tenants should be welcomed – something of a business association with teeth. The Bayview Merchants Association would be a natural partner in this endeavor, along with the San Francisco Land Trust mentioned earlier. It is imperative to push this process sooner, rather than later, before land costs are prohibitive and small businesses close for good.

Youth Violence Prevention and Opportunities. The challenges facing Hunters Point youth are serious and deserve explicit attention. While youth-related activities may not address gentrification, focusing on education and opportunities for youth is critical to community long-term stability. A handful of programs exist in Hunters Point which have made some positive impacts – such as Girls 2000, Brothers without Guns, and the Peacekeepers – yet they are severely limited by shrinking funding as well as territorial boundaries. One straightforward response

proposed by numerous community residents is to sufficiently fund these programs such that sister programs can be started in other pockets of the neighborhood. While the Peacekeepers may be effective in Alice Griffiths, their members don't carry the same respect – and free range of movement – in other areas. With precarious shoe-string budgets, most of these programs rely on the mentorship provided by former gang members. Preventing violence and de-escalation as a top priority needs to be reflected in the sufficient funding for these programs.

Besides direct-intervention activities, there is a growing movement to use microenterprise as a vehicle for youth violence prevention. Organizations like Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, Homeboyz Interactive in Milwaukee, YouthBiz in Denver, Added Value in Brooklyn, and People's Grocery in Oakland all employ 'at-risk' or formerly-incarcerated youth in small business ventures centered around a wide range of enterprises such as web development, music, tattoo removal, art and design, food production, clothing and accessories, and urban farming.¹⁵⁴ An emphasis on music and youth development may be particularly relevant in Bayview Hunters Point, as gang violence in the past has been provoked by battling music crews.¹⁵⁵ Rather than focusing on service provision and training, as do current youth programming in neighborhood, these microenterprises build leadership skills in the participating youth, in addition to providing employment opportunities.

II. Final Thoughts

Renewal planners and administrators faced a difficult bind: on the one hand, all the political and economic incentives pointed toward supplanting a "blighting" population and its "blighting" land uses with a higher-status population. On the other hand, they could not acknowledge to those about to be displaced, or perhaps even to themselves, that they were engaged in highly regressive social engineering. Renewal entrepreneurs resolved this bind largely by denying it.

- John H. Mollenkopf, referring to Fillmore Urban Renewal, 1983¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Homeboy Industries: www.homeboy-industries.org; Homeboyz Interactive: www.homeboyz.com; YouthBiz: www.youthbiz.org; Added Value: www.added-value.org; People's Grocery: www.peoplesgrocery.org.

¹⁵⁵ Epps, Kevin. (Producer and Director). Straight Outta Hunters Point [Documentary Film]. Mastamind Productions, 2005.

¹⁵⁶ Mollenkopf, John H. *The Contested City*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.

The people of Bayview and Hunters Point have been shuffled around for a long, long time – from the South, from the Fillmore, from meeting to meeting to meeting to meeting. They have breathed in the acrid smell of illegal waste dump fires and watched decades of disinvestment slowly rot the structural integrity of their community. They are suspicious and exasperated and rightfully so. There has been a near-deadlock of repetition as the community repeatedly expresses their anger at a powerful process out of their control, and the City responding with what is essentially the same plan presented again and again, explained through different multimedia culturally-sensitive ways. The community calls for jobs, the City offers housing. The process has been going in circles, as years of planning go into the planning. And all the while, the community members of Bayview Hunters Point harbor a deep-seated fear, based on their own history as well as the national climate, that San Francisco wants its black population out.

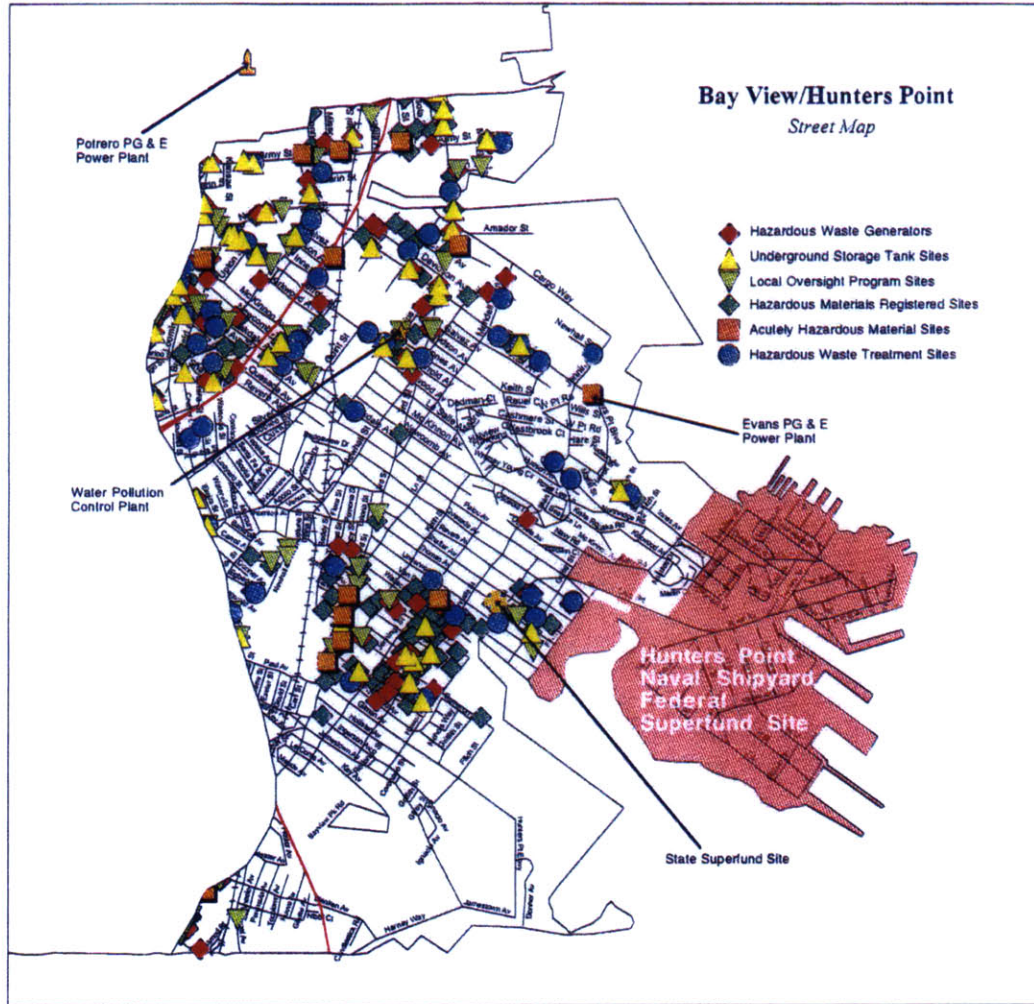
Fundamentally, SFRA's Redevelopment Plan is not the answer to the question: What do the residents of Bayview Hunters Point need to rebuild a strong, healthy, sustainable community? Which begs the following: what question, then, was posed to elicit such an answer? Rather than treating the neighborhood as a playground for planners, the City needs to reorganize its priorities such that initiatives that value the people first and foremost, like Communities of Opportunity, have the resources and political will to be successful. Instead, the community seems like an after-thought, with funding for real community development – through the modest Shipyard Legacy Fund or TIF financing – coming years down the line. In the past, the Shipyard was a central economic engine for the community; the current redevelopment framework relegates it to a marginal role in terms of community benefits.

While the City initiatives have attempted, on the surface, to reorient themselves as participatory and responsive, they neither fundamentally acknowledge and address this fear of replacement, nor provide clear actions to show that displacement is explicitly not their intention.

If the City was truly intent on pursuing a strategy to better the lives of the current residents of Bayview Hunters Point, priorities, timing, and resource allocation would reflect that commitment. They do not. Moreover, the disconnect and strife between the official community representative bodies and the residents themselves does not bode well for pushing a strong pro-resident, anti-displacement agenda. In the fight against gentrification and for revitalization, community organizing is the greatest tool for building and wielding real power. Bayview Hunters Point has mobilized in the past to fight for the health and safety of its own; now it must mobilize to fight for its future. I hope that by holding a mirror up to this complicated situation, this thesis can provide openings for exploring paths towards a Bayview Hunters Point that may become, in the words of resident Tessie Ester, “a beautiful dream” for future generations.

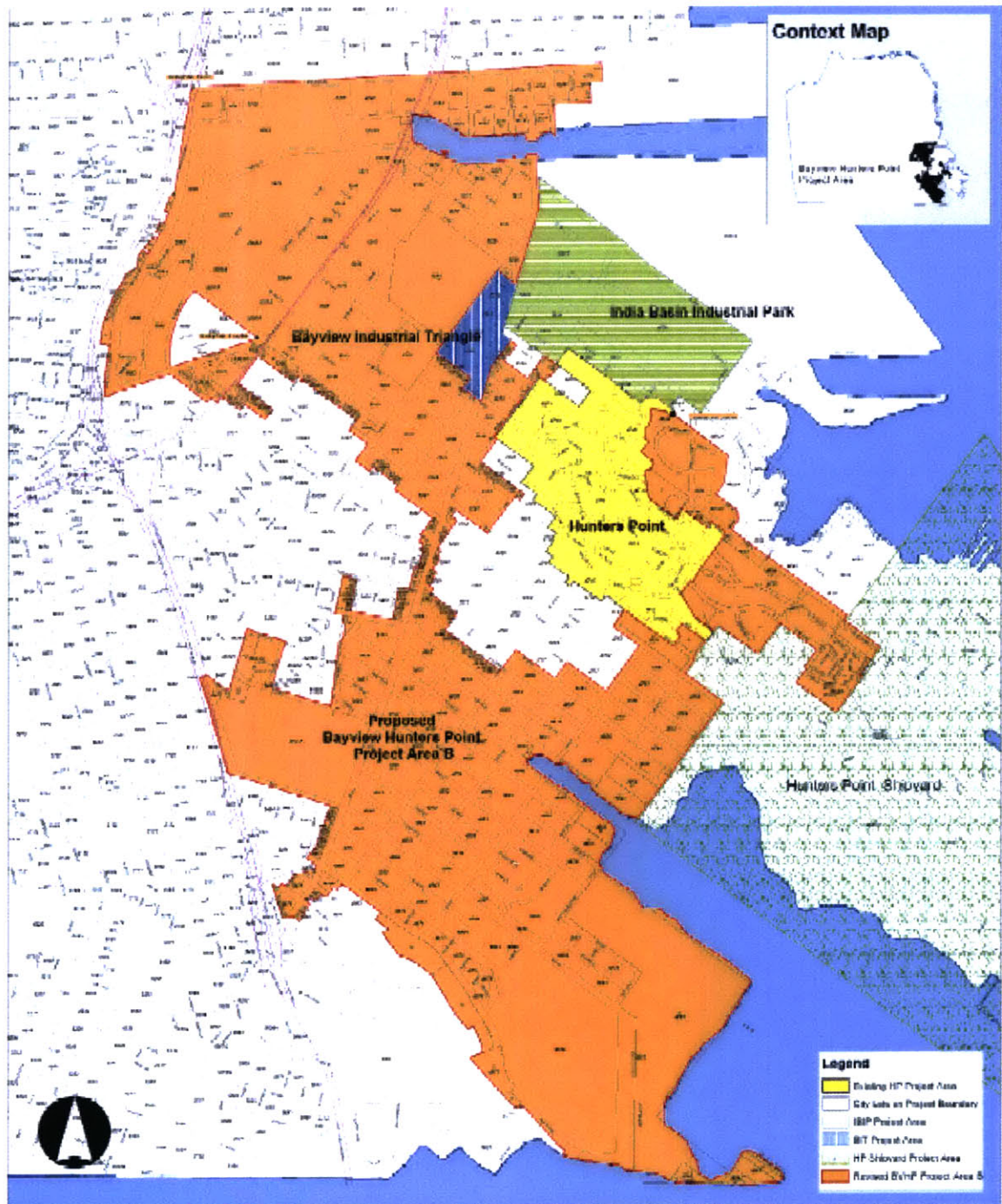
Appendix 1: Maps

A. Toxic Sites in Bayview Hunters Point



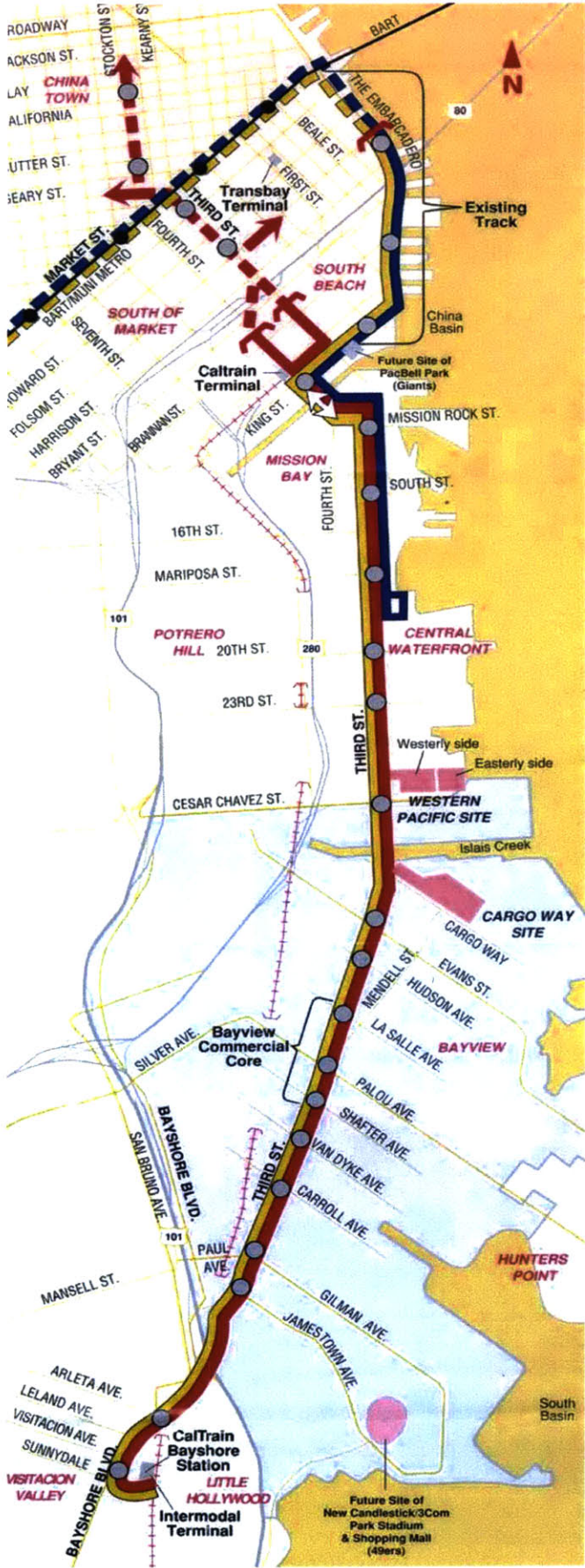
Sources: San Francisco Department of Public Health and the Bayview Hunters Point Health and Environmental Task Force, 1995. From the Literacy for Environmental Justice website: www.lejyouth.org.

B. Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Survey Area



Source: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, January 11, 2006

C. Third Street Light Rail Route



Source: Korve Engineering

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Literacy for Environmental Justice website. "Environmental Justice and Southeast San Francisco":
www.lejyouth.org/about_lej.php4#bayview.

San Francisco Housing Authority. "SFHA Demographics Profile": www.sfha.org/demog/index.htm.

San Francisco Redevelopment Agency project summaries: www.sfgov.org/site/sfra_page.asp?id=5607

People's Grocery: www.peoplesgrocery.org.

Wikipedia, environmental racism: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_racism.

YouthBiz: www.youthbiz.org.

Interviewee Profiles

Fred Blackwell, personal interview, 3.3.2006

Mr. Blackwell is an African American Oakland native, and newcomer to San Francisco. For the past year he has served as the Deputy Director of the Mayor's Office of Community Development. While in graduate school in UC-Berkeley ten years ago, Mr. Blackwell was involved in the early stages of the Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan.

Maurice Campbell, personal interview, 3.2.2006

Mr. Campbell is an African American 9-year Bayview resident, originally from the Peninsula, who hosts a KPOO radio show called Connect the Dots. Previously, Mr. Campbell served on the Executive Committee of the Hunters Point Shipyard Citizen's Advisory Committee.

Michael Cohen, personal interview, 3.3.2006

Mr. Cohen is a white San Francisco resident and the Director of the Base Reuse and Development office under the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development. He has been involved in some capacity or another with the Shipyard redevelopment for the past 10 years. Previously, Mr. Cohen worked at the San Francisco City Attorney's Office.

Tessie Ester, personal interview, 3.3.2006

Ms. Ester is an African American 46-year Hunters Point resident, and long-time Hunters View public housing resident. A member of the Hunters View Mothers Committee, she has been organizing to negotiate the terms of resettlement and right of return of residents, as Hunters View will soon be demolished and redeveloped. Previously, Ms. Ester served as the president of the Hunters View Tenants Association.

Kurt Fuchs, personal interview, 3.2.2006

Mr. Fuchs is a white long-time San Francisco resident. He is the Project Manager for the Hunters Point Shipyard Redevelopment Plan in the Base Reuse and Development office under the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development. He worked extensively with the finance committee of the Shipyard Citizens Advisory Committee as well as in negotiating the finance deal structure of the Navy/City/Lennar agreement. Previously, Mr. Fuchs worked at the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.

Marie Harrison, personal interview, 3.3.2006

Ms. Harrison is an African American 45-year resident of Hunters Point whose family was displaced from the Fillmore from Urban Renewal. She is an outspoken activist and works as a community organizer with the environmental justice organization, Greenaction. Previously, Ms. Harrison has run for the District 10 supervisor seat, and served for 15 years on the Hunters Point Shipyard Restoration Advisory Board.

Dwayne Jones, personal interview, 3.3.2006

Mr. Jones is an African American Los Angeles native and 25-year Bay Area resident, the last 8 in San Francisco. He recently was promoted to the position of directing Communities of Opportunity, after serving as Director of the Mayor's Office of Community Development. Previously, Mr. Jones was the Executive Director of the Bayview-based Young Community Developers.

Angelo King, personal interview, 3.17.2006

Mr. King is a 29-year-old African American 8-year resident of the Bayview, and lifelong San Francisco resident. He currently serves as the chair of the Bayview Hunters Point Project Area Committee, of which he has been a member for 5 years. Previously, Mr. King worked with the Bayview-based Southeast Neighborhood Jobs Initiative.

Stan Muraoka, 3.17.2006

Mr. Muraoka is an Asian American 35-year Bay Area resident, and serves as the Project Manager for the Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan at the San Francisco Redevelopment Authority. He has been involved in redevelopment projects in the BVHP area for almost ten years. Previously, Mr. Muraoka worked as a city planner at the Authority.

Lavelle Shaw, personal interview, 3.17.2006

Mr. Shaw is an African American 30-year Hunters Point resident and current president of the Alice Griffiths Tenants Association, a public housing development in Hunters Point. He has worked with the Mayor's Office of Community Development in developing the Opportunity Center at Alice Griffiths and also works with the violence-prevention group, Peacekeepers.