

It Takes a Ballpark Village:
Stadiums, Coalitions, and Growth in Two Cities

by

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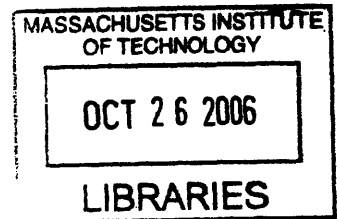
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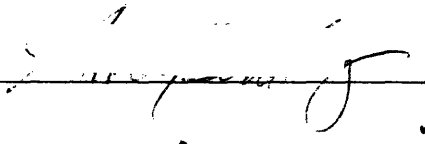
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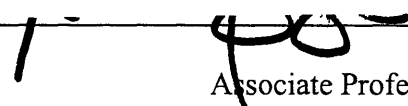


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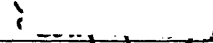
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ABSTRACT

The typical stadium development story features a City interested in investing in its future. The City looks to a new ballpark to spark revitalization, provide new jobs and industry, and increase civic pride. Yet, academic research suggests that the City is looking in the wrong place. Economic and even social benefits rarely materialize in quantities sufficient to compensate the City's investment of money, time, and opportunities forgone. Assuming that stadium proponents and local governments behave rationally in their choice to support these projects and that academic research is accurate, a different motive may cause the continued support and interest in new stadium projects.

I suggest that what motivates the local governments, interest groups, and private individuals that actively support stadium construction is a central interest in growth. This belief in growth and general development as the desired outcome, rather than specific new jobs or civic pride, may guide the stadium process. Using case study data from San Diego and St. Louis, I examine the stadium planning process, groups involved, motives for participation, and outcomes produced. I then compare the two cases, paying particular attention to evidence of a motivating growth agenda and a new element in these stadium projects – the 'ballpark village' development.

My core analysis is prefaced by a review of relevant planning literature, including stadium costs and benefits, growth machine urban theory, equitable development, and community organizing; it is followed by a ruminative consideration of the ballpark village as a stadium development strategy.

Thesis Supervisor: Xavier de Souza Briggs
Title: Associate Professor of Sociology and Urban Planning

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Introduction

Sports stadiums and arenas, festival marketplaces, and convention centers are among the types of mega-projects undertaken by municipalities in hopes of spurring economic development. Governments expect mega-projects to provide broad-based economic benefit – enough to qualify as a benefit to the entire public. As a result, mega-projects frequently receive some form of public subsidy. Festival marketplaces and convention centers provide benefit in the form of jobs and increased consumer activity and point to these purely economic justifications when questions arise regarding a project’s specific public benefits. Stadium projects, however, can claim emotional or social benefits in addition to these economic justifications. Civic pride, fan camaraderie, and national media exposure are considered as frequently as are economic forms of benefit.

In the past, economic benefits were widely believed to be sufficient to require that the public support the stadium financially. Direct benefits (stadium-related jobs) and indirect benefits (increased development and consumer spending) would justify the costs and public subsidies. As a result of experience and economic research, some cities and members of the public are taking another look at the extent to which a stadium on its own provides tacit economic benefit. This trend has caused a closer look to be given to different benefits, particularly those that have been left out of the stadium cost equation but still warrant public subsidy. Consumption benefits include the extent to which every citizen benefits from a city’s team without ever buying a sporting event ticket. While these benefits have always been acknowledged, public discourse and academic research dedicated to this benefit type have increased. An emerging approach to stadium benefits is to create new strategies that might better deliver economic benefit to the city. A trend toward incorporating mixed use development into stadium agreements in the form of ‘ballpark villages’ reveals such a strategy.

I began my inquiry with an interest in groups that actively participate in the stadium planning process and how they gain access to that process. I then considered why groups

get involved and what they hoped to achieve through their participation. What community groups and organizations were actively involved in the stadium process? What were the organizations' motivations for participation and how might these interests and goals have been reflected in the resulting benefits or outcomes?

My research begins with a review of four areas of planning literature. I survey literature on the costs and benefits of stadium construction then look to models of what drives a city to seek growth generally and new development specifically. Issues of equity in development and outcome distribution are examined. And, finally, how communities organize to achieve specific goals or outcomes is reviewed.

I then narrate and analyze the baseball stadium processes in San Diego and St. Louis, first separately and then comparatively. In both San Diego and St. Louis, active participants in the stadium process tended to be motivated by growth interests. The exact form and structure of these interests were different in each city. The organizations involved in San Diego's stadium process worked together forming a loose growth coalition; in St. Louis, groups were involved through a more practiced growth machine.

Both processes yielded a completed stadium, as well as a ballpark village – adjacent mixed use development. This development enters the process as a benefit and changes the stadium development process and is considered a new benefit.

Research Context

Sports stadiums are both culturally and economically significant. They are a venue for competitive sports, a social gathering place, a source of private and public revenue, disruption, and alternately an improvement or impediment to quality of life.

Due to its significant iconic value, professional baseball stadiums become much more than sports venues to those that seek them. Baseball diamonds have a long urban history dating back to when games were held in city parks. These venues quickly became a source of pride for neighborhoods and eventually cities and regions. As the sport developed and a governing body was formed – Major League Baseball (MLB) – the supply of these teams and their stadiums became limited. That incredible value was made available to only a finite number of cities. An already coveted item became even more so and the resources and attention given to the structures of play increased.

Local governments see baseball stadiums as monumental and highly coveted symbols of success as well as economic generators. To city residents and businesses, the stadium might mean a thriving economy and successful businesses, increased property values as well as increased traffic, perhaps crime and displacement. To team owners, the stadium is a critical source of income, providing profitability and viability in the face of ever increasing player salaries.

Stadiums are a planning concern not just because of physical scale, but also because of their impact and use of scarce public resources. Ballparks are large, taking as many as 12 city blocks for the stadium structure alone. Integrating parking or retail into the stadium complex requires even greater amounts of land. This changes and redistributes land use not only on those designated blocks, but also in adjacent areas. The healthy economy and bustling retail with which stadiums are associated can become the lynchpin in a City's economic development efforts; local business development and job generation are

expected. A more general planning and public policy concern revolves around the City's investment and the highest and best use of public dollars.

It is within this context – of large, monumental, costly structures – that the decision of if, where, how and when a stadium will be built occurs.

Literature Review

Four bodies of literature provide this thesis's conceptual foundation. As stadiums are frequently subsidized and built as a result of their expected benefits, I first reviewed the literature on stadium costs and benefits. Second, Logan and Molotch's growth machine is an influential and widely cited conceptual model that allows a view into the politics and motivations that may be involved in the stadium process. Third, equitable development ideas and frameworks provide a context for thinking about how fair or just outcomes might be produced by development projects. Finally, a brief review of two works on community organizing and capacity is provided in order to understand how communities might mobilize to accomplish their goals and ensure that their interests in the stadium process are represented.

The literature on stadium economics informs us that stadiums do create benefits but that the many variables controlling the extent of those benefits make it difficult to qualify them as growth (benefits in excess of total costs) in every case. Despite this literature, cities continue to see evidence of revitalization and growth in cities such as Baltimore and Indianapolis – cities that have been transformed at least in part due to sports-oriented development. Coalitions and interest groups may form and rally around the pursuit of this type of growth. As they seek growth, issues of the equitable distribution of costs as well as benefits arise. Krumholz frames a working definition of what can be sought, while new approaches and frameworks recommend ways that equity might be achieved in a current context. The question of how communities are able to mobilize to achieve goals is covered by Weir and Chaskin.

This review includes works that are representative of larger bodies of work. When possible, literature that provides new concepts as well as synthesizes earlier or past research has been selected. The literature suggests that stadiums are not built for economic outcomes alone and that a second reason might be growth. Political coalitions may form around this secondary reason in order to shape outcomes. The review also

suggests that 'benefits' are not inherently equitable and that the ability of communities or interest groups to gain benefits will be a direct result of their ability to join the stadium planning process and influence outcomes.

Stadium Costs and Benefits

According to political, business, and other civic interest groups, a professional sports team and new stadium bring economic and public benefits to a city. A wide array of critics disagrees. Proponents expect growth in jobs directly related to the team and game day activities as well as an increase in overall economic activity. Proponents also predict social benefits in the form of civic pride, social cohesion, and general well-being.

Opponents see local and state governments subsidizing stadium construction, operation, and infrastructure improvement at very high costs.

Researchers and analysts studying these costs and benefits agree that stadium projects have an impact on a city. The majority opinion, however, holds that this impact – when considered against the public costs – does not (a) qualify as growth nor (b) provide an increase in general welfare or net economic benefit. A minority opinion reports that the means and methods of testing for benefits vary enough that the hypothesis that stadiums provide a net economic benefit cannot be disproved. The majority opinion acknowledges this variance, but maintains that public investment in sports stadiums will not reliably yield a net economic benefit. Even when non-economic benefits are considered in the literature, the value added is not considered to be in line with the public expenditure.

COSTS

Public subsidies generally cover one or more of three types of stadium costs: construction, operating, and opportunity costs. Available literature frequently quantifies construction and operating costs, while opportunity costs are often only described. The total costs of building and operating a stadium are covered by public subsidies, public and private loans, stadium rent, naming rights, personal seat licenses, ‘pouring’ and concession rights.¹ In order to accommodate escalating costs and growing payrolls, owners must

¹ A variety of revenue opportunities exist for the team. Stadium naming rights are sold to a private corporation (e.g., Petco in San Diego); personal seat licenses are paid by fans to reserve rights to buy tickets in the stadium's best seats; pouring and concession rights are the exclusive rights to provide food and beverages inside the stadium.

upgrade old stadiums with more luxury aspects and newer, more profitable consumer options. According to Zimbalist, construction costs increased 50 to 100% faster than rate of inflation in the 1980s and early 1990s.² Recent stadiums have cost between \$300 and \$500 million dollars.³ Stadium economists encourage us to think not only about the substantial financial costs, but also the opportunity costs of publicly subsidizing a sports stadium. In their view, the real cost of the stadium is not the combined total of construction and operating costs, but rather the other community improvements and local benefits that could have been provided using those subsidy funds. Civic boosters, local governments, and team management emphasize that while the construction and operating costs are great, the expected benefits are great enough to justify those costs.

SOCIAL AND CONSUMPTION BENEFITS

A professional sports team and stadium's social benefits include such intangibles as pride and overall improved city image. All city residents enjoy these benefits just by being in that city or region. These positive externalities occur as a direct result of the baseball stadium and become public goods that game day ticket purchasers pay for, but the entire city enjoys. Carlino studies National Football League (NFL) stadiums and observes city rent increases that suggest professional sports may constitute a public good. The benefit provided, according to his analysis, may be "large enough to perhaps justify the provision of subsidies to retain NFL teams, especially in larger cities."⁴ A second author, Santo studies the consumption benefits that may be associated with a MLB team relocation using 'willingness to pay' as a measure. His analysis indicates that "the efficient level of public investment based on projected consumption benefits would be approximately 74 million."⁵ Since much of this consumption benefit will derive from persons not attending

² Zimbalist 1992, 136.

³ The three last three professional baseball stadiums built (2006, 2004) ranged in cost from \$344 to \$458 million. The most expensive stadium to date is Safeco Field in Seattle, coming in at just over \$500 million. A new stadium for the DC Nationals is projected to cost upward of \$600 million.

⁴ Carlino 2004, 25.

⁵ Santo 2004, 32.

the games, “an equitable financing plan should employ non-user revenue sources.”⁶ However, \$74 million is significantly less than the total amount of most public subsidies. Santo also notes in his results the extent to which “respondents believe that stadium construction generates economic development, and the significant relationship between this belief and WTP [willingness to pay].”⁷ People are willing to subsidize a team and stadium, in part because they believe in its economic development benefits.

All of the literature agrees that a sports stadium creates social and consumption benefits. At issue, however, is how to measure the benefits and whether such measurements are accurate enough to be used in cost-benefit analyses. Furthermore, stadium proponents would argue that some of these benefits cannot be quantified. And, perhaps the absence as yet of a large body of literature on these benefits supports the proponent view.

DIRECT ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The literature reviewed agrees that a new sports stadium will generate local jobs – the basis of a stadium project’s direct economic benefit. But studies disagree on the quantity of jobs created. A majority of the literature shares a dismal view of the number of jobs generated while a small minority cites significantly larger totals. Baim is among that minority and maintains that service sector jobs in a city may increase anywhere from 23,000 to 55,000 with the addition of a professional football team (NFL) and from 40,000 to 44,000 for a professional baseball team.⁸ He further characterizes the jobs as new, rather than replacement jobs. Baade finds much smaller direct job growth resulting from a new baseball stadium in King County Washington (home of the Seattle Mariners), citing a gross increase of 2,249 but a net increase of only 427.⁹ Sylvan finds similar low

⁶ Ibid, 1.

⁷ Ibid, 29.

⁸ Baim 1994, 184.

⁹ Baade 1997, 92-3. Net jobs are all total new jobs after taking into account those jobs that are not really new, but rather replacing similar jobs that existed prior to stadium construction.

net job increases, writing that the daily operation of a professional sports stadium generally requires 300 to 400 persons.¹⁰

The literature discusses not only quantity but also quality of the jobs generated. Both inside and beyond the walls of the ballpark, the majority of employment is in food and retail establishments. These establishments generally offer low skill, low wage jobs without benefits. The best jobs and highest salaries created by a stadium do not go to local residents. Baade examines the distribution of the gross salary increases of all jobs created by a sports team and finds that “most of the money in sports is earned by people in national rather than local or regional labor markets.”¹¹

INDIRECT ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Indirect economic benefits are those that will invigorate the economy by increasing consumer spending and attracting new industry. The literature indicates that the real amount of these benefits is mitigated by a number of constraining factors.

New stadiums are expected to attract new consumers who will spend not only inside the ballpark, but also in the surrounding restaurants and stores. The literature struggles with whether additional dollars spent are new to the local economy, or whether they are merely dollars redirected from other local and regional recreational activities. On the consumer side, it is argued that families have a limited amount of income that can be spent on entertainment and recreation and that any dollars spent by a family at a baseball game replace a different use of that recreational spending. The spending is not new; is being distributed differently. This substitution effect also operates on the regional level, attracting spending from outside of the local host city and perhaps co-opting regional recreational spending. On the supply side, it is argued that stadium-related activities may be taking profits from other local entertainment businesses. While a movie theater or bowling alley might be locally-owned, a professional sports team rarely is; profits that

¹⁰ Sylvan 1998, 11.

¹¹ Baade 1997, 94.

would have gone directly to local or regional owners are leaking out of the local and into the regional or national economies.

Rosentraub finds that the amount of pre-existing recreational spending in a city and the relative saturation of the sports entertainment market will inform how much economic growth can result from increased spending patterns.¹² If recreational spending is already at a maximum level, growth cannot occur and any observed spending changes will be the result of substitution. Noll and Zimbalist also note an erratic spending pattern for replacement stadiums in cities that already have a team. An immediate increase in spending after stadium completion is common, but in the long term spending slows down.¹³ In addition, the tendency to enclose most commercial activities within the stadium walls diminishes some of the extended spending and positive neighborhood effects that could result from game day expenditures.¹⁴

Proponents expect not only consumer spending, but also new industry to increase with the construction of a new stadium. The new stadium may be considered a sign of an urban turnaround and the city may be seen as “embarking on a civic renaissance.”¹⁵ This perceived revival attracts new firms which in turn generate new jobs and increased economic activity. Noll and Zimbalist report that many corporate executives indicate that the presence of a professional sports team affects their location decisions; however, many other city characteristics are also cited, such as the quality of local labor and city amenities. Noll and Zimbalist ask, how else might the city spend \$200 to \$300 million to attract these businesses?¹⁶ Presenting a contrasting and minority view, Baim provides analysis that supports baseball’s ability to attract businesses and create jobs. He finds non-agricultural and service industry job growth in cities with sports teams. The amount

¹² Rosentraub 1997, 161.

¹³ Noll and Zimbalist 1997, 17.

¹⁴ Ibid, 66.

¹⁵ Sylvan 1998, 14.

¹⁶ Noll and Zimbalist 1997, 73.

of predicted growth, he explains, is a direct result of the extent to which the city becomes a ‘magnet’ as a result of the stadium – the extent to which a city is able to capitalize on the stadium as an attraction.¹⁷ The presence of a professional sports team may be one of many factors affecting corporate location decisions, but even Baim agrees that a stadium alone will not draw new businesses to the area.

SUMMARY

The majority of literature finds economic benefits associated with building new stadiums or hosting professional sports teams to some extent. But, the variability in the type and significance of those benefits differs not only by researcher, but also by city or region of study. Even the location of the stadium – suburban or urban, commercial or residential neighborhood – can affect the extent to which a stadium succeeds or fails as an economic development catalyst.¹⁸

A central disagreement exists within the literature regarding if and how these social and economic benefits can be measured. Baade relates a tendency within the field’s research to measure economic effects on the small sample of citizens with the most dramatic gains or losses rather than a larger group with less dramatic results.¹⁹ Zimmerman explains that gains in aggregate may be small, even negative, but for some individuals and businesses, the gains could be very significant.²⁰ This tendency to consider only a small portion of the affected population causes some of the polarized results evident in the literature. Baim suggests that variability in data, methods, and results indicate that “no general conclusion can be offered concerning a sports team’s economic impact on the host community.”²¹

¹⁷ Baim 1994, 191.

¹⁸ Baim 1994 and Baade 1997.

¹⁹ Baade 1997, 98.

²⁰ Zimmerman 1997, 123.

²¹ Baim 1994, 190.

Popular successes in cities such as Indianapolis and Baltimore suggest that a connection between stadium construction, sports-oriented development, and resulting economic growth can be made. But a majority of the research finds that resulting growth to be of insufficient value to warrant the public costs of development. The contrast between the popular and political belief in stadium benefits and the academic and advocate research regarding the inconsistency of those benefits creates the space within which the stadium process takes place. Both proponents and opponents can find evidence to support arguments, and that incongruity creates political opportunities for a variety of groups on both sides of the argument.

Growth and Politics

Logan and Molotch present an urban theory that rests on a core growth motive and the political regime that it creates. The significant costs of sports stadiums require active support of a variety of city and regional groups with similar interests. That interest might be growth. Logan and Molotch's growth machine model explains a motivation that may drive the stadium development process as well as the alliances that form as a result.

Delaney and Eckstein take the growth machine concept and apply it to the stadium negotiation processes in nine cities. Their study examines the parties involved in these nine processes and extracts from that examination the nature of the growth coalition in each city. Delaney and Eckstein carefully characterize the alliance of growth interests as a coalition, rather than a machine. They suggest that alliances of growth interests do not always work in a precise and efficient manner and instead vary greatly in their structure, strength, and ability to create desired outcomes.

GROWTH MACHINE

Logan and Molotch present an explanation for what they see as a cross-city pattern of growth-oriented politics. They describe this far-reaching interest in growth and the parties involved as the growth machine. This machine seeks to “alter how markets function, how prices are set, and how lives are affected” and operates under an “interest-driven social construction of cities.”²² The authors find that local politicians in this context pursue ‘value-free development’ – that development driven only by profit-seeking behavior. Growth machine members accomplish this development by connecting “civic pride to the growth goal, tying the presumed economic and social benefits of growth in general... to growth in the local area.”²³

²² Logan and Molotch 1987, 3-4.

²³ Ibid, 60.

Core members of the growth machine include politicians, local media, and utility companies; auxiliary members include cultural institutions, universities, professional sports, organized labor, self-employed professionals, small retailers, and corporate capitalists. Individual growth machine members are either conservative or liberal strategists. The conservative seeks growth at any cost, while the liberal seeks growth while placating opposition and using government planning and programs.²⁴ Similarly, member interests range from a specific interest in both the extent and spatial organization of growth, to those that want any amount of growth regardless of where it occurs.

Logan and Molotch list professional sports teams as an important auxiliary member of the growth machine. They say that “sports teams have an important ideological use, helping instill civic pride in business through jingoistic logic.”²⁵ Team sports, in particular, are useful to the growth machine, “growth activists are less enthusiastic about sports that honor individual accomplishment and are less easily tied to a locality or team name.” The team is useful to the extent that it promotes a singular city identity.

The concept of a growth machine is pivotal to understanding how cities function, Logan and Molotch suggest. They find that growth politics are often ignored or given only passing review by social scientists.²⁶ However, the effects of this machine are far reaching. Politicians, media, and local businesses all have inherent profit-driven interests in seeing a city grow. The prevalence of these attitudes toward growth can greatly affect the larger functioning of the city, turning population-appropriate levels of public services into those levels compatible with local growth strategies.²⁷ Logan and Molotch suggest

²⁴ Ibid, 67-8.

²⁵ Ibid, 80.

²⁶ Ibid, 63.

²⁷ Ibid, 65.

that “growth may not be the cause of problems, but increases in scale make it more difficult to deal with those that do exist.”²⁸

Logan and Molotch acknowledge that growth may create positive outcomes in some cases, but state that “for many places and times, growth is at best a mixed blessing and the growth machine’s claims are merely legitimating ideology, not accurate descriptions of reality.”²⁹ The reality is that “additional local growth under current arrangements is a transfer of wealth and life chances from the general public to the rentier groups and associates.”³⁰ This inequitable transfer should attract public attention and concern. In an earlier work, Molotch addresses what he terms the growth machine’s liabilities – those weaknesses that threaten the growth agenda. One liability is the “increasing suspicion that in many areas, at many historical moments, growth benefits only a small proportion of local residents.”³¹ A second liability is the amount of data available regarding who bears the costs of growth, “the weight of research evidence is that growth often costs existing residents more money.”³²

GROWTH COALITIONS AND STADIUM BUILDING

Delaney and Eckstein suggest that the nature of the stadium process – as observed and reported – can indicate the strength or stage of development of a local growth coalition. In their study, growth coalitions range from weak to strong and from decreasing to increasing power. The basis for comparison rests on two propositions: “first, that the quest to secure public dollars for private stadiums can best be understood by thoroughly examining social power in each city and particularly how this power is exercised by local growth coalitions; and second, that these battles are emblematic of much larger

²⁸ Ibid, 94.

²⁹ Ibid, 85.

³⁰ Ibid. Rentier groups are those that profit directly from development.

³¹ Molotch 1976, 318.

³² Ibid, 319.

disagreements about how a community most benefits from the allocation of scarce resources.”³³

Delaney and Eckstein describe the effect of population trends on a local growth coalition and its ability to fund new stadiums. They find that cities with growing populations tend to have weaker growth coalitions; they can “still build stadiums with public dollars, but they have more difficulty doing so compared with cities that have strong coalitions.”³⁴ The absence of a strong coalition creates a “power vacuum” that may require another group to step in and actively pursue the growth agenda. Declining cities, on the other hand, frequently have very strong growth coalitions. Delaney and Eckstein attribute this to older cities having “more entrenched political and economic power structures” that can directly push the stadium agenda forward. Because “actual growth is a scarce resource,” those groups with more ideological legitimacy regarding economic and development matters are charged with directing change and those groups tend to be local corporations and members of the local growth coalition.³⁵

They find that “the easiest path to a new publicly subsidized stadium is to have a strong, clandestine, corporate-driven, local growth coalition that chooses to emphasize ways in which the stadium will enhance community self-esteem and community collective conscience.”³⁶ They go on to characterize the city in which this would work best as “a medium-sized city with a floundering economy, a weak mayoral form of government, urban-to-suburban population migration, a commuter-oriented downtown, relatively few senior citizens, and no significant opposition.”³⁷

³³ Delaney and Eckstein 2003, 9.

³⁴ Ibid, 14.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid, 42.

³⁷ Ibid, 42.

Curry uses a ‘game’ model to analyze the stadium process in Columbus, Ohio. He describes a city as “a complex network of games in which other players of different games make use of each other.”³⁸ He places the stadium process as a sub-type of an ‘urban redevelopment game,’ the goal of which is “to ‘win’ and to receive the approbation of knowing onlookers,” or even to control the game itself.³⁹ Curry’s conceptualization of the stadium process as a typology joins Delaney and Eckstein’s in a minority of stadium studies describing broad political patterns. Much of the research available regarding the structure and politics of the stadium process is city or project-specific. Authors detangle and analyze the process and outcomes of one particular set of social and political circumstances. Broader concept or framework studies are less common, but just as necessary to understanding the stadium process and considering how that process could change.

SUMMARY

Logan and Molotch’s growth machine suggests that political actors may pursue ‘value free’ development and growth as an end in and of itself. They describe political interactions and alliances driven by the interest in growth and the variable social outcomes of that growth. Delaney and Eckstein take these ideas and study the stadium process, speaking to the coalitions and outcomes created. Applying the growth machine construct to stadium processes may provide an understanding of political motivations that goes beyond the economic motivations that fill the stadium’s public discourse. Variability in economic outcomes suggests that broad-based, equally distributed financial gain cannot be motivating a majority of stadium process participants. An interest in some other gain or some other value may be driving that political process.

³⁸ Curry 2004, 29.

³⁹ Ibid, 30.

Equity and Development

Large development projects receive public subsidies because cities believe that they will receive project benefits. Benefits may be implicit in the project or may be only project-related. The City may elect to place additional requirements on a developer to obtain benefits. Strategies that have been used to guarantee or capture benefits include clawbacks, linkage fees, set-aside and infrastructure requirements, and community benefit agreements (CBAs).

Projects or firms receiving public money under the premise of providing public benefit can be subject to clawback provisions. These provisions allow a locality to require repayment of some set amount of funds should the promised public benefits not be delivered according to agreements. Linkage fees require payments from commercial or residential developers in order to help meet the increase in demand for city services caused by the new development. Collected fees can be used to build affordable housing, provide for job training or similar. Developers may also be required to create set-asides for open space, public schools, infrastructure, or affordable residential units as a requirement for building permits or other approvals.

Municipalities created such guarantees and monitoring mechanisms in direct response to the amount of public investment that was being made in residential and commercial development. More recently developed tools, such as CBAs, are also being used to gain more equitable development outcomes. The persistence of these strategies suggests that the benefits of development projects are not sufficient on their own and that policy or other strategies are necessary to increase project benefits or to justify expenses.

Clawbacks, set-asides, and CBAs attempt to distribute the benefits of development in a way that is more closely aligned with public costs. Krumholz articulates equitable development as a planning goal and recommends how it should be pursued. His work in combination with new approaches and frameworks directs us to consider what can and should be required in exchange for public resources.

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

Krumholz defines local economic development as the “process by which local governments manage resources to stimulate private investment opportunities in order to generate new jobs and taxes.”⁴⁰ These outcomes are generated not just by the specific funded project, but also by secondary spin-off projects. While the ideal economic development process should be strategic, detail-oriented, and involve “rational planning and a broad range of technical studies,” Krumholz finds that in the actual process, “practitioners spend most of their time not on research and analysis, but on public relations, marketing, advertising, and sales.”⁴¹

This absence, in practice, of a prescribed process leads to variable outcomes and often ineffective plans. Krumholz describes the jobs and tax revenue that economic development should generate and states that “these elements provide the entire ‘public purpose’ for the use of public subsidies to stimulate private investment.”⁴² However, if results are variable and accountability as well as oversight problems exist, then the public purpose is not being served.⁴³ In this context, economic development exacerbates rather than alleviates the inequitable distribution of resources and therefore opportunity.

Krumholz discusses economic development trends of the 1980s and 1990s, observing that many of the projects were downtown real estate developments: “If a city developed a new festival market shopping mall, new office towers, and a new hotel, it was considered to be revitalized.”⁴⁴ This perceived revitalization did not address some of the cities’ larger economic problems. In fact, Krumholz states that “amid all of the new construction and the obvious regeneration of parts of the business district, nagging questions of equity,

⁴⁰ Krumholz 1999, 83.

⁴¹ Ibid, 83-4.

⁴² Ibid, 84.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

purpose, and effect remained.”⁴⁵ He describes “big bang” projects such as Union Station in St. Louis and Horton Plaza in San Diego that displaced residents and changed neighborhood makeup.⁴⁶ Projects were unable to meet stated goals and “did not seem to translate into lower poverty and unemployment rates for city residents.”⁴⁷

These failings lead Krumholz to ask, “Who gains and who loses as a result of downtown development? [...] How is the public interest served when the city trades uncollected property taxes that provide social and educational services for lower-income people, for physical development that provides benefit for higher-income people?”⁴⁸ He suggests that these questions should have been asked by city officials and representatives, but were not. Krumholz emphasizes that challenging existing trends in economic development is difficult, observing that “the more progressive alternatives confront the boosterism of the public-private growth coalition, challenge the rational voice of the market, and bring into question the allocation of public subsidy for private profit.”⁴⁹ While difficult and perhaps politically risky, he suggests that leaders willing to undertake progressive strategies have the opportunity to change the future of economic development.

He provides three principles to guide more progressive and equitable economic development. The first is “a shift from real estate speculation to public investment.” Krumholz advocates stepping away from a focus on real estate and instead investing in the public, in education and workforce training. The second is a “need to build upon strengths.” Krumholz suggests that cities concentrate their resources on those activities in which they have some sort of natural advantage, finding ‘a market niche.’ And, the third is “the need to address redistributive issues.”⁵⁰ Krumholz describes economic development patterns in which certain groups consistently lose while others consistently

⁴⁵ Ibid, 85.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 90.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 90-1.

win. He observes splits along rich and poor, urban and suburban, and urges us to examine the government policies that permit these systematic inequities and to work toward more fair and efficient solutions.

NEW APPROACHES AND FRAMEWORKS

Within the last two decades, new ways of thinking about development and equity have emerged. Community benefit agreements (CBAs) are an attempt to specifically address the public purpose when subsidies are provided to private developers. More general approaches to incorporating equity into development can be seen in new strategies and frameworks, such as PolicyLink's regional equity work.

CBAs are legally binding agreements that specify benefits and concessions and are used in cases of large private development projects that receive some sort of public subsidy. Local organizing groups intervene early in the development process, gather allies, express concerns, and are able to “gain leverage by withholding their support.”⁵¹ The Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) and the Figueroa Corridor Coalition are credited with creating the first formal CBA in 2001. The agreement was in response to a second wave of Staples Center development and included the following provisions: sets a goal of 70 percent of new jobs at the officially recognized living wage; a hiring program to give local residents and those displaced by construction first shot at the new jobs, along with training; community consultation on the selection of the project's commercial tenants; a 20 percent set-aside of affordable housing within the complex; and a commitment of \$1 million for community parks and recreation to offset the disruptive effects of massive development.⁵²

LAANE and the community and labor organizations involved describe their goal as “accountable development.” The LAANE executive director elaborates, “If public money is used to subsidize private development, then the developer has to guarantee

⁵¹ LeRoy and Purinton 2005, 3.

⁵² Range 2004, 2.

community benefits like good jobs, affordable housing, child care, all the things that communities need.”⁵³ Their organization efforts center on “changing the paradigm of economic development, changing the power imbalance between the public and private sectors.”⁵⁴

CBAAs draw on the concept of equitable development, forming a different and perhaps more evolved incarnation of traditional tools such as clawbacks. They also extend the reaches of traditional organizing activities. One author suggests, “CBAAs represent a significant evolutionary development in two root concepts of grassroots organizing: 1) targeting employers slated to receive economic development subsidies or other government monies for specific local benefits such as jobs; and 2) community-based unionism, in which organized labor supports efforts outside the immediate domain of the workplace and the collective bargaining agreement.”⁵⁵ Both have roots in labor, community and civil rights movements that can be traced back to at least the 1930s.⁵⁶ It is not that the individual ideas are new, but rather that their incorporation and uses are new.

CBAAs function and secure benefits on a neighborhood level. PolicyLink approaches equitable development through a more macro-level framework, promoting the policies and strategies of “community based regionalism.”⁵⁷ PolicyLink discusses large public investments that occurred in poor or low-income communities and the displacement of those communities as revitalization began. The regional equity framework includes seven areas of action: transportation, housing, economic opportunity, land use and infrastructure, education, environmental justice, and health. In order to achieve a more equitable distribution of economic opportunity, ‘double bottom line’ outcomes are

⁵³ Ibid, 1.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 2.

⁵⁵ LeRoy and Purinton 2005, 3.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ PolicyLink 2002, 7.

necessary – ones that include “financial returns for investors coupled with community benefits for residents.”⁵⁸ Finally, the framework recommends policies and organizing efforts that may promote regional equity. Of the several provided, two specifically address development: (1) negotiate with developers of major commercial real estate projects to secure community benefits and institutionalize these community benefits into policy, and (2) enact state legislation to hold publicly subsidized economic development projects accountable.⁵⁹

PolicyLink’s framework can be interpreted as drawing on Krumholz’s principles, incorporating ideas from clawbacks and similar tools, and then situating them in a current regional context. Their recommendations and model policies attempt to make the ideas of classic equitable development accessible to policymakers. They also target their message to local and regional actors, who may consider equity in relation to an isolated project or initiative, but may not consider the cumulative effects possible. PolicyLink’s framework also serves to keep the issues of equitable and accountable development in the current public policy conversation.

SUMMARY

Krumholz’s foundational theory and PolicyLink’s evolutionary framework suggest that cities should attempt not only to generate benefits from economic development but also to distribute it equitably. The history of exactions and development fees when paired with the current attention to CBAs suggests that cities and communities have been successful in gaining equity from development outcomes. This range of equitable development tools and frameworks indicates that stadium process participants might be able to craft comparable strategies.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 14.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 27.

Community Organizing

In stadium projects, communities can form around specific economic or social interests related to the new stadium, collectively identifying by one or more characteristics. Shared interests might include the number of new jobs expected, the retail, commercial, or residential development the stadium might encourage, or the land it will occupy and property owners it might displace. In order for each community to be able to express its interests in the process and move the final stadium decisions in a direction most favorable to them, they must be able to gain power and the capacity to act.

COMMUNITY POWER

Weir offers a review of strategies that community groups use to gain power and the types of relationships that these groups can develop with local political structures. She draws on a variety of earlier theoretical and empirical research and provides a broad overview of community organizing issues.

Weir describes three strategies used by local community development groups to gain resources. The first strategy is protest and is “often the strategy of choice for groups that lack channels to power.”⁶⁰ Weir describes this approach as being effective within the “context of a broader social movement” in part because it “requires a willingness to take on established powers.”⁶¹ She describes failings of this strategy, including a lack of staying power, the possibility of being granted only “symbolic recognition” as a reward or having the protest co-opted by more powerful groups.⁶² Weir discusses the history and legacy of protest movements and concludes that “protest may be a particularly valuable tool in the early stages of organization when groups are trying to demonstrate their power

⁶⁰ Weir 1999, 141.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid, 142.

– to potential members and the targets of the protest – and few existing channels are open to them.”⁶³

The second strategy is political participation designed to secure resources. Weir speaks specifically to federal resources such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), but this strategy might be equally applicable to resource distribution by any level of government. Political participation includes “electoral activity and participation directed at changing local, state, or federal policy as well as involvement in neighborhood planning and local decisions.”⁶⁴ She examines formal channels of involvement, such as the role of citizen advisory councils in the allocation of CDBG funds and concludes that “the existence of formal channels may provide opportunities for participation, but community mobilization is essential to get the most out of such participation as well as to develop informal channels of influence.”⁶⁵ The timing of that mobilization is also critical and can have a significant effect on resource distribution.⁶⁶

The third and final strategy is network building, where ‘network’ is defined as “a diverse set of ties to public, private, and nonprofit entities that provide access to resources and permit leveraging of public resources.”⁶⁷ Network building can be motivated by a number of factors. Weir describes the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) as an example of legislation that forced community organizations to work together and create networks.⁶⁸ She cites the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) initiative as another program that has forced organizations to build networks.⁶⁹ These programs and the opportunities they afford “have put community development corporations into a

⁶³ Ibid, 144.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 147.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 149.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 150.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 151.

network that provides access to resources outside the neighborhood, spurs neighborhood groups to join citywide coalitions, and provides them with powerful political allies.”⁷⁰

After presenting these strategies, Weir turns to an examination of community based organizations (CBO) and their relationships with local politics. She defines three categories or types of relationships that can characterize CBO and political interaction within a city. These relationship types can either enhance or retard a CBO’s ability to represent their interests into the local political process. The first type “features elite domination and weak connections between community organizations and the centers of economic and political power.”⁷¹ In these types of cities, “community groups tend to retain a protest orientation or to remain small dependent organizations because they have found few channels for effective independent participation.”⁷² Sunbelt cities are often elite-dominated and Weir cites Houston and Atlanta as examples.

The second type of relationship, patronage politics, “is a system in which political patronage permeates economic development and organizes the transactions through which community groups gain access to resources.”⁷³ This structure can be found in Chicago and New York, cities that have traditions of community organization but also a history of trying to gain resources from politicians pursuing their own interests.⁷⁴ She goes on to say that “in these systems, groups with political ties may participate through the established system, but new groups or those outside the patronage network must often engage in protest or build outside networks to secure resources.”⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Ibid, 152.

⁷¹ Ibid, 154.

⁷² Ibid, 155.

⁷³ Ibid, 154.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 158.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

The third and final type of relationship is that of “inclusive cities.” This is “a more inclusionary political setting in which the interests of neighborhood organizations overlap with those of private or public leaders but CBOs retain an independent base of power.”⁷⁶ She goes on to say that “in inclusive cities, community-based organizations exercise independent power or win influence because city governments find them useful allies.”⁷⁷ Examples of this type of city include Pittsburgh and San Antonio.

Finally, Weir discusses various challenges to developing and empowering community groups. She identifies tensions that exist between strategies, such as trying to keep ties with the community while reaching outside the local community to gain resources. She also describes the challenge of building networks and collaborating without allowing cooptation.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY

Drawing on a long history of interest and research in how local actors and communities mobilize to create change, Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, and Vidal offer an interpretation of what it means to have the ability to act. This ability to build community power and strength (community capacity) is “the interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of that community.”⁷⁸ Building upon a variety of definitions of capacity in other works, Chaskin et al suggest that capacity relies on (1) the existence of resources, (2) networks of relationships, (3) leadership, and (4) support for vehicles through which community members participate in collective action and problem solving.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Ibid, 154.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 162.

⁷⁸ Chaskin et al 2001, 7.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 11.

Community organizing is one strategy used to build community capacity and is defined as “the process of bringing people together to solve community problems and address collective goals. The objectives of a community-organizing effort vary, ranging from the procurement of resources and the acquisition of power to the redefinition of group identity.”⁸⁰ Developing a strategy for community organizing requires deciding the following, “(1) whether to use a strategy based on conflict or consensus; (2) whether to focus on a single issue or multiple issues; and (3) whether to recruit individuals directly or through existing organizations.”⁸¹

In addition to community organizing, networks and collaborative alliances can help build a group’s capacity to act. Chaskin et al present strategies for building networks that include “(1) establishing or supporting broker organizations that can foster and convene partnerships and networks among existing organizations; (2) creating mechanisms of direct, ongoing communication and collective planning and action among organizations; and (3) supporting or engaging in particular partnerships focused on specific goals and activities.”⁸²

SUMMARY

Weir and Chaskin provide a general background for community organizations specifically and community mobilization more generally. Their works suggest the types of political environments within which organizations may find themselves, the strategies they might use to gain resources and power, and ways in which they can build internal strength to better prepare for the next campaign or mobilization. Weir provides a context for thinking about the development and manipulation of power to achieve community goals which may be particularly pertinent to the use of power in the stadium development context. While Chaskin et al’s research focuses on neighborhood level community groups, they provide information on how neighborhood-based groups build capacity and

⁸⁰ Ibid, 93.

⁸¹ Ibid, 94.

⁸² Ibid, 125-6.

may suggest how communities or groups with community interests might be able to affect stadium process outcomes.

Methodology

RESEARCH APPROACH

I have chosen to use a case study approach in order to understand the planning process and politics surrounding a city's decision to build a new baseball stadium. While the case study method allows for a nuanced analysis suited to studying planning processes,⁸³ there are limitations to this approach. Conclusions and lessons are contextual and are not directly transferable to all stadium or large-scale development projects. This method, however, will explicate these specific contexts and may allude to trends or patterns. Conclusions and recommendations may also imply directions for future research.

CASE SELECTION

I began my search for a case study with two basic criteria: (1) the stadium negotiation process must be complete, financing agreed upon and construction complete or close to complete, and (2) the stadium must have been built within the past 15 years. The first criterion comes from a need to look at not only the process, but what the process yielded. The second criterion is a result of wanting to limit my sample to those ballparks built after Baltimore's Camden Yards (1992) started the retrospective design trend as well as what I think is a reasonable length of memory. The original pool of possible cases – those stadiums built since 1990 – was 19.⁸⁴

Within this group were cities that built stadiums for a new team and those that built for existing teams. Building a stadium for an existing team means staving off what might happen if they left; attracting a new team is pursuing an unknown benefit. To limit my sample to those cities seeking both a new team and a new stadium would provide a

⁸³ Yin (1994) suggests that the case study method might be appropriate “in examining contemporary events, but when the relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated” (Yin 1994, 8). These circumstances are often true for policy issues and is true for the question that I ask.

⁸⁴ Washington DC is not included in this count as the stadium negotiation process is on-going and construction has not begun.

universe of two out of the 19 possible cases. Those two cases would have been the Arizona Diamondbacks and Tampa Bay Devil Rays, both established in 1995. Instead, I limited the pool of possible cases to those cities already hosting professional baseball teams. For these cities, I knew that (a) a stadium of some sort already existed, and (b) the City had some level of familiarity with and even commitment to the team.

All stadiums constructed before 2000 were eliminated from the pool of possible cases. It was important that I be able to speak with people who were involved in the process and to minimize data collected from people having only second or third hand knowledge of the events. In addition, I recognized that memories of events change and fade over time. Of the original 19, six cases met these criteria: Milwaukee (2001), Pittsburgh (2001), Cincinnati (2003), Philadelphia (2004), San Diego (2004), and St. Louis (2006).

In order to make the best use of available time and resources, I needed to reduce the sample size to one or two cases. I was interested in the process surrounding an individual professional baseball stadium project rather than a larger sports-oriented development. Stadiums that were part of sports complexes or were going to be sited adjacent to a similar large scale entertainment project might yield muddled interview data as issues of sports-oriented development might replace those of stadium development. I eliminated the cities that placed the baseball stadium next to a football or other stadium – Cincinnati and Philadelphia. A second concern was the stadium's location in relation to the city center. The post-1990s baseball stadium construction boom was due in large part to Camden Yards which was built with express downtown revitalization goals. This project also emphasized the stylistic and cultural aspects of bringing baseball back downtown, taking advantage of 'sight lines,' and returning the game to its urban roots. As this trend is referenced in stadium literature and the planning process itself, I eliminated those ballparks that were not in the central city or downtown districts – Milwaukee and Pittsburgh. The two stadiums remaining – also the two most recently completed – were in San Diego and St. Louis.

After this purposive sampling of the original pool of 19 stadiums, I selected San Diego's Petco Park (completed in 2004) and St. Louis's Busch Stadium (completed in 2006). I hoped that a sample size of two would allow a closer look at the cases than a larger sample might have. In addition, after conducting preliminary secondary research, I found interesting connections between the two projects. Newspapers articles referenced St. Louis representatives looking to some aspects of San Diego's ballpark as a model and both stadium projects included a 'ballpark village.'

DATA COLLECTION

I collected two forms of data for each case: archival (secondary) and interview (primary). Archival data included newspapers and other periodicals published during the planning process. These data suggested issues and participants in the stadium process and what information was being presented to the general public. Interview data provided insiders' accounts of the stadium process and outcomes, including constraints on action, decision points, and perceptions of other actors.

I completed a total of 18 interviews with city and regional government officials, neighborhood and business group representatives, local media and sports franchise representatives.⁸⁵ Fifteen of the 18 were affiliated with either San Diego or St. Louis. I generated a list of prospective interviewees (individual names and organizations) after reviewing newspaper and journal sources. Over 40 prospective interviewees were contacted by phone and email. Of the approximately 22 that were not interviewed, only one actively declined, the remainder never responded or stopped responding after initial contact. All interviewees were asked for recommendations of others I should speak with and many of the recommendations yielded interviews. This 'snowball sampling' can introduce some bias as groups may recommend interviewees with similar views, possibly weighting a particular side of the story. However, the recommended interviewee's affiliation and relationship with others interviewed was noted and taken into account in considering the data provided.

⁸⁵ For interview list, see Appendix A.

The vast majority of interviewees were extremely helpful, informative, and supportive of my inquiry. A small number denied participation in the stadium process (despite secondary information indicating otherwise), participated reluctantly, or provided abbreviated information. Not represented in this research are the views of local business owners or unaffiliated residents. Without this point of view, data represents involved party and official organizational views only. The local business and unaffiliated resident views might provide more information regarding on the ground outcomes and specific examples of changes caused by the stadium process. Further research should include these individuals.

In addition, the St. Louis sample is larger and more inclusive than the San Diego sample. Five interviewees were involved in the San Diego stadium process and ten were involved in St. Louis. Two central factors account for this difference. The currency of St. Louis's process provided more accessible possible interviews as people are still actively dealing with the issues. In addition, time constraints limited the number of San Diego interviews. However, government agency, community groups, and team representatives are included in the San Diego sample.

The majority of interviews were held over the phone and lasted between 20 and 30 minutes. One third of the interviews were recorded after receiving explicit interviewee permission; for the remainder, handwritten notes were taken. The specific questions asked of each interviewee varied, but the topics covered the stadium process as they understood it, their role and interests.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ For interview guide, see Appendix B.

Analysis

San Diego

Following a great regular season in 1996, Major League Baseball's San Diego Padres approached the city of San Diego with a request for a new stadium. The Padres had been sharing a stadium with the local professional football team (San Diego Chargers) in Mission Valley, a suburb of the city. There are a number of reasons given by different sources for why the Padres wanted a new stadium including that they had always wanted a stadium dedicated to baseball and following a very successful season, the team thought it strategically wise to try to get support for a new stadium. In addition, Qualcomm stadium was getting older and one source hinted that pressure was being exerted on the Padres to agree to leasing arrangements that would negatively affect the team's ability to generate revenue.

The Padres' request received support from both the Mayor's Office and the City Council. Multiple interviewees, however, spoke of general resistance to providing public subsidies to the Padres. One process participant related a belief that the Padres owner knew that he would have to build the stadium with private funds, but that the City might provide the land and infrastructure. Another interviewee indicated that San Diego is not a sports-centered town and perhaps members of the City Council would have received subsidy pushback from their constituents. From the beginning of the stadium process, there was a sense that if a new Padres stadium was to be built, some level of private or team funding would be required.

THE CITY

Two Mayoral taskforces were assembled to consider location options. Possible sites included nearby towns, a site next to Qualcomm, and other sites downtown. Initially, the Padres preferred a site adjacent to Qualcomm, citing existing parking and easy highway access. Padres fans also were not supportive of a downtown location at first, as

confessed by one fan in a newspaper article.⁸⁷ The Padres also expressed a ‘second choice’ interest in the Lane Field site on the bay which was downtown but on the west side of the city.

The City and its redevelopment agency, the Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC), preferred a downtown location, citing the need to use the ballpark to spark new development and revitalization. CCDC had developed Horton Plaza – an urban shopping are – in the mid 1980s and credited it with establishing the downtown entertainment district. CCDC saw an opportunity to try the same approach of using a central catalyst to spur development in the East Village. CCDC had already slated the East Village area for redevelopment, considering sports-related development (hockey or basketball) as many as 25 years prior. The area was predominantly manufacturing and industrial with some residences and social service providers. This stadium project offered the opportunity to infuse resources into an area perceived to have been bypassed by earlier redevelopment waves. A stadium supporter asserted that the ballpark was seen as an opportunity to obtain funds in order to create a whole new sports district. Another participant reported that the costs of servicing the neighborhood (e.g., providing policing) were increasing and far outweighed any income that the area was generating. This project might be an opportunity to change that balance.

The City and CCDC were prepared to put money into the deal for a location that served their purposes, a downtown location. The Padres’ earlier site preferences were surpassed by the desire to receive public subsidies. The East Village site was officially proposed by the City and accepted by the team.

In order to maximize redevelopment potential and generate taxes to help repay bonds, the City would require ‘ancillary development’ of the Padres. The additional development was dubbed “Ballpark Village” and would feature commercial and retail businesses that would jumpstart the area’s redevelopment; the City would be getting ‘more than a

⁸⁷ Heller 2004b.

ballpark’ as the project slogan declared. The entire ballpark district would cover approximately 26 city blocks, of which 6 would be the new stadium. A portion of the total area would be Ballpark Village for which the Padres would have primary development responsibility. In order to complete the required development, the Padres acquired a local developer and formed JMI Realty.

Much debate and anti-tax activism surrounded the amount of public funding that would be provided to the Padres. One interviewee described what he felt was public resistance to providing public subsidies for private gain – resistance gained from looking around at other ballparks and seeing all the public money that went to them. The process of developing a financing proposal acceptable to a majority of voters was described by one process participant as “almost like a campaign” in its attempts to gain the support of a clear majority of voters. In October 1998, San Diego voters approved a proposition supporting construction of a new baseball stadium for the Padres. According to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Padres were to provide \$115 million, the City and CCDC would contribute \$275 million and other sources would provide \$21 million, making a total projected cost of \$411 million. The final costs of the project are cited as anywhere from \$458 to \$474 million.⁸⁸

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

The Mayor of San Diego at the time was committed to making sure that the stadium decision went to a vote. As one organization representative put it, the “Mayor made sure that, as this went forward, everyone got to take a whack at it.” Among the groups taking a whack were the Committee of 2000, the East Village Association, the Gaslamp Quarter Association, and ad hoc anti-tax groups such as the Stop C Campaign. Two other groups active during the time of ballot consideration were the Citizens for Revitalized Neighborhoods and A Ballpark for San Diego.⁸⁹ CCDC led the stadium process, under

⁸⁸ Heller 2004c, Powell 2004a.

⁸⁹ Delaney and Eckstein 2003, 133.

the direction of the Mayor. Local chambers of commerce and visitors associations were also involved.

The Committee of 2000 was an ad hoc proponent organization that sponsored speakers and luncheons in order to educate the public regarding benefits a new stadium could provide. This was a membership-based organization begun by a native San Diegan and fan of baseball; it was “an independent citizen committee that was not beholden to the San Diego Padres.”⁹⁰ The membership consisted of in excess of 1000 individuals from San Diego and other states, all Padres fans interested in seeing the team have its own stadium. The Committee of 2000 encouraged citizen support and promoted the idea of a new stadium as a redevelopment catalyst, presenting examples of the types of economic benefit that other cities had experienced. In discussing why he started this organization, the founder said, “I didn’t do it for me. I did it because I truly believe that this was in the best interest of our city.”

The East Village Association (EVA) is a community-based nonprofit organization that was established in 1992 when the East Village became part of the City’s redevelopment area. Property owners decided to organize in order to monitor the redevelopment agency's activities and to help reverse the decline of their neighborhood. The membership was originally predominately property owners, but has grown to include merchants and residents. The majority of EVA members felt that the East Village was large enough for a stadium and that the underutilized San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) property would be a good site. As a result, the organization lobbied to have the stadium put in their neighborhood.

The Gaslamp Quarter Association (GQA) also supported an East Village location. The Gaslamp neighborhood is an entertainment district with clubs, restaurants, and other venues. GQA is a business improvement district (BID) organization representing 16 ½ blocks of nationally recognized historic district. While the GQA has existed as an

⁹⁰ Interview, stadium proponent.

organization since the 1980s, it has been under City charter as a BID since 1991. GQA felt that the siting of the stadium next to their already successful entertainment venues was important and might help bring even more people downtown. They formed a taskforce of GQA representatives and community members – both proponents and opponents of ballpark – and met to discuss the ballpark project. GQA’s membership was initially unsure of the project and had concerns about impacts, “Before it’s built, when it’s just a drawing on a piece of paper, people get scared.”⁹¹ But, one interviewee felt that once the project got started and ground was broken, GQA’s membership was more supportive. This offer of active neighbor support was likely very influential in the final decision to site the stadium in the East Village.

While some groups worked within the process, other ad hoc anti-tax coalitions and groups such as the Stop C campaign lobbied and litigated against City efforts to provide public funding to the stadium project. Lawsuits (according to one article, 17 total)⁹² as well as injunctions were filed challenging the project. Litigation ranges from environmental impact issues to questions regarding the legality of the original referendum and MOU.⁹³ One source also described legal contestations regarding concerns about traffic, parking, as well as the effect of displaced social service recipients.⁹⁴ As a result of litigation and financial challenges, construction stopped on the project for almost two years.⁹⁵

Changes in elected officials over the course of the eight year process posed additional challenges. All nine City Council seats turned over between 1998 and 2001 and Mayors changed.⁹⁶ These shifts caused some decisions, including financing, to be reworked after

⁹¹ Interview, neighborhood advocate.

⁹² Heller 2004c; Glater 2003 reports 19 lawsuits.

⁹³ Delaney and Eckstein 2003, 141-2.

⁹⁴ Interviewee stated that the concern was that the displaced homeless population would “spill over” into other nearby neighborhoods.

⁹⁵ Interviewees consistently cite a 2 year delay while newspaper articles report a delay of 14 to 15 months.

⁹⁶ Heller 2004c.

the team thought them complete. There were also minor (and later found false) accusations of political impropriety and gifts given to individual council members that disrupted the process.⁹⁷

The local media actively participated in this stadium process. More than one source implied that without the specific, active participation of the media, as many types of project opinions would not have been heard. Individual members of the public and organized anti-tax groups were able to have a great effect on the length of the process and its portrayal in the media. According to one neighborhood advocate, the sense was that the majority of San Diegans were in favor of the ballpark project, but a vocal minority received more than equal media time and this in turn distorted the reality being portrayed. A second neighborhood advocate felt that “the most powerful role that anybody played in this is the role of the press.” One process participant countered that it was the paucity of Padres public communication during the process rather than the concerted action of the media that allowed smaller opinions and views to command a disproportionately large percentage of media coverage.

PROCESS OUTCOMES

Despite these speculations and legal challenges, Petco Park was completed in 2004 and is considered by CCDC to be a success. Neighborhood associations and proponent interest groups believe that the ballpark has delivered on promised surrounding development and has increased tax revenues to the City. The ballpark is credited with providing San Diego with ‘one of the largest urban revitalizations going on in the country right now.’⁹⁸ According to CCDC, the stadium and Ballpark Village project has sped up a revitalization process that might otherwise have taken 25 years. CCDC also talks about how the increase in property values has allowed it to issue bonds in order to build affordable housing and infrastructure. There is construction throughout the immediate area of the ballpark and an increase in property values across an even larger area.

⁹⁷ Delaney and Eckstein 2003, 142.

⁹⁸ Interview, stadium proponent.

According to one neighborhood advocate, an important outcome of the ballpark project is its use as a ‘way of training’ San Diegans to lead urban lives and to learn a way of life that does not rely on an automobile. The creation and marketing of public transportation options for the ballpark (including trolley, bus, and water taxi), may help promote such a change of thinking.⁹⁹ The ballpark contributes to the existing draw of downtown attractions such as the Gaslamp District, the Convention Center, and Horton Plaza, and may actually change the way people relate to their city.

Both neighborhood associations, GQA and EQA express qualified support of the stadium project outcomes. GQA has a particular interest in protecting the commercial and retail character of the Gaslamp neighborhood and does not want residential development close enough to cause conflicts. The organization reasonably expresses concern about plans to develop residential units within Ballpark Village. In addition, some Gaslamp businesses feel that the type of crowd that baseball games attract is not interested in their fine dining or similar establishments and may actively deter those patrons that are interested. Initial concerns about parking and gridlock remain. Similarly, EVA qualifies its praise for the reuse of the SDG&E property and development outcomes. The project they lobbied for and pursued as a 9 block stadium on a single property turned into a 26 block redevelopment project, relocating and acquiring the properties of some of the EVA membership that had supported the East Village site. Close to 100 properties were relocated and/or acquired.¹⁰⁰ While the EVA maintained its support of the project at the organizational level, individual membership was split.

Development has changed the East Village. The stadium project MOU included Ballpark Village milestones which have been met and surpassed. Yet, changes have occurred since conceptualization regarding the make up of the development. There is considerably more residential development than was in original plans and shifts in design and size are chronicled in newspaper articles.

⁹⁹ Heller 2004b.

¹⁰⁰ Interviews, stadium proponent and a neighborhood advocate.

Initially, the Padres ownership may have viewed the ancillary development as an additional and unwelcome responsibility, but now realize its revenue-generating potential. When Ballpark Village was designed, the City was ‘risk-averse’ but according to the Vice President of the Padres, “Now development is not hard to do, and some people wish we didn’t have the rights [to develop].”¹⁰¹ The City and CCDC as well have gained from Ballpark Village through increased tax revenue. In fact, it was the gains of this large development project that drew representatives from St. Louis to see the new ‘redevelopment model’ and consider how they might be able to redevelop their own downtown.¹⁰²

A GROWTH MOTIVE

Many of the interests of actively participating groups were related to growth and development – starting, stopping, and directing it. These growth interests spread across various groups and activities and produced a subtle collaboration between government, businesses, and neighborhood associations that allowed the completion of San Diego’s baseball stadium. While participant goals were different, none were in direct opposition, and progress required reaching consensus on selected points of difference. The Padres wanted a new baseball-only stadium. The Mayor and City Council needed the Padres to remain in San Diego. CCDC wanted redevelopment and needed a particular neighborhood to be selected. EVA was willing to have the stadium placed within their neighborhood as they wanted vacant and underutilized properties reused. GQA was agreeable to being the stadium’s neighbor, as it would strengthen their pre-existing efforts – complementary but not competing growth. Advocate groups just wanted a new baseball stadium. Through the stadium process, these proponent groups worked together to find a single solution. As one stadium proponent said, “If you are going to advance the public interest, you have to do that through partnerships.”

¹⁰¹ Nicklaus 2003b.

¹⁰² Nicklaus 2003a.

While the City and team led the process, they did not completely control it. To move the process forward, additional groups were necessary. Ad-hoc proponent groups, such as the Committee of 2000, formed to assist the stadium cause. This ad hoc group formed with the express purpose of filling a perceived gap in Padres representation. San Diego's growth interests were not yet as synchronized or practiced as an older growth machine might have been and required new organizations to support the growth agenda. In addition, the gravity of the growth coalition and its ability to control the process was unable to stop the delays caused by opponent litigation. Despite the informality or looseness of the growth coalition, one participant expressed the sentiment that the outcome would eventually favor the City and the team's interests, "I believe that ultimately [the team] did what [they] wanted to and what CCDC would accept."

PROCESS ANALYSIS

Some organizations within San Diego's loose affiliation of interests had more success achieving their goals than others. A group's level of success might be viewed as the extent to which the group accomplished its stated goals or interests in the stadium project. Perhaps only San Diego's Committee of 2000 had close to complete success. Their central goal was to ensure that a ballpark was built; they had no stated interest in the financing or location. Their interest aligned with the government and general growth interests.

San Diego's neighborhood groups, the EVA and GQA, had some level of success. Both groups began with an assumption that a new stadium would be constructed and neither had a vested interest in financing. EVA wanted the ballpark to be sited in the East Village on a large underutilized lot; this happened, but ancillary development was also built and this project extension displaced business and residences that EVA did not expect to be lost. If Ballpark Village and the associated development had been part of the original plan, the organization might have altered its interests. Similarly, GQA had an interest in having the stadium adjacent to the Gaslamp in order to support the redevelopment efforts already underway in the area. It was indeed sited next to them, but

there are lingering concerns about the effect of baseball crowds on existing businesses and how efforts to increase residential development in the area will affect the business of the Gaslamp.

Challenges to the process itself were described as barriers to success. The two year delay occurred after construction had begun and streets had been closed to accommodate that work. One neighborhood advocate expressed the opinion that the street closures negatively affected surrounding businesses and that they felt that “the project needed to get done” so that business could return to normal. Other stadium proponents and neighborhood advocates described the amount of anti-subsidy lawsuits and injunctions as excessive and obstructionist, and perhaps designed to destroy the stadium development process.

While some participants existed before and persisted after the process, other ad hoc organizations existed only during the process. Stadium project proponent, public funding opponent, and location proponent organizations all became involved in the process. One interviewee spoke of neighborhood groups that ‘worked with the process’ setting their own priorities and engaging with other organizations and local government as necessary. This individual concluded that in so doing, the groups ensured that as the project progressed, “they were not going to end up being run over by it, which happens to a lot of groups that just say no.”

In the end, the process yielded a profitable project in an area that had been designated for redevelopment. While the change in the East Village landscape is drastic, one neighborhood advocate speaks of the attachment to the old East Village scale as a ‘romantic’ attachment, saying “in a downtown, it was like being nostalgic for Manhattan at 4 stories – cities evolve, but it’s really difficult for people to sort of see that.” The political success of the combined ballpark and ancillary development project process has not been lost on other San Diego teams, as the San Diego professional football team

subsequently began to campaign for a new stadium to developed around the concept of being 'more than a stadium.'¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Powell 2004a.

St. Louis

When the St. Louis Cardinals changed ownership in 1997, discussion began regarding the age and state of disrepair of Busch stadium built in 1966 as a multi-sport facility. In order to upgrade the ‘fan experience,’ improve fan comfort, and remain competitive with other league teams, the Cardinals required a new baseball-only stadium. One stadium supporter describes the feeling on the part of the team “that without a state of the art ballpark, they couldn’t compete.” The Mayor at the time was uninterested or unable to work with the Cardinals, but the Mayor elected in 2001 took an active interest in a new stadium.

The team had hoped to receive enough funding from the state in order to build a publicly-owned stadium – the existing Busch Stadium was owned by the team. But financial constraints and a resistant state legislature would challenge that plan. As one newspaper article states, “though the Cardinals were seen as pivotal to downtown, St. Louis’ status as a stagnant, older city had tied the city’s hands financially.”¹⁰⁴ According to the team, the preferred site was always the existing stadium site; the location has great access with four interstates intersecting nearby and plentiful parking. But, resistance to subsidies caused the Cardinals to consider stadium sites in suburban St. Louis and across the river in Illinois. There are different opinions regarding how seriously non-downtown locations were considered, but the possibility of the Cardinals leaving downtown did exist. Some amount of public subsidy was necessary because the City “was not willing to test the Cardinals’ willingness to move, as the city’s NFL team did in decamping to Arizona in 1988.”¹⁰⁵ Mayor Slay was quoted as saying, “I will not be the mayor who sits still and watches a new ballpark get built outside the [city] limits – a mayor who watches \$8 million a year in direct taxes go south – or east or west.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Kaszuba 2005.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ponder 2004, 76.

THE CITY

The team's first stadium proposal was a request to the state legislature for \$200 million in bonds. The state rejected the request.

The Mayor's Office began to work with local business and civic interests to develop a partial funding package that would keep the baseball team downtown. Multiple interviewees commented on the extensive out-of-state fan base of the Cardinals and stated that these dollars could not be lost to Illinois or suburban locations. In addition, the City had subsidized the Edward Jones Dome football stadium as well as the multi-purpose Savvis Center and felt it would be fair to support a new ballpark also.¹⁰⁷ The City offered the team abatement from a 5% amusement tax if they would build the stadium.¹⁰⁸ The change as approved by the Board of Aldermen would reduce the tax due to \$0 if a developer invested over \$300 million and reduce the tax to \$2 million if the investment was \$150 million.¹⁰⁹ A stadium proponent but subsidy opponent indicated that what amounted to a rebate was more palatable to the public than an outright gift of money might have been.

The City was also able to work with the State and County to add state tax credits and county bond financing to this rebate amount. State assistance helped offset costs of demolishing the old structure and environmental clean-up and county bonds would go toward other costs. The second proposal totaling close to \$200 million dollars in subsidies consisted of the following: \$105 million in amusement tax relief from the City, \$30 million in tax credits from the State, and \$45 million in bond financing from the County. The State also agreed to rebuild a highway ramp that had to be moved to accommodate the new stadium. The team would have to pay for the remainder of construction costs, totaling close to \$200 million. This proposal was accepted by the team. One interviewee expressed the opinion that the team's extensive public relations

¹⁰⁷ Interview, stadium proponent.

¹⁰⁸ This tax applied only to sporting events, not to any other type of performance or event.

¹⁰⁹ Interview, public agency employee.

campaign making the case for a new stadium long before approaching the State for the first time committed the team to building a new stadium whether or not they got the subsidies they wanted. Despite the slightly higher team investment that would be required, the Cardinals likely had to accept the financing offered.

The active efforts to assemble public financing occurred not through formal City organizational channels, but instead through the informal connections of a tightly knit group of downtown interests. The Mayor, Downtown Now, and the St. Louis Downtown Partnership mobilized their resources and took advantage of available networks to gain funding. The stadium process in St. Louis was led by the City with critical support from city, county, and state groups. From start to finish, the process took approximately five years.

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Downtown Now is a nonprofit development agency that represents business entities and actively supported the City in the campaign to keep the Cardinals. They focused on the possible negative impact a Cardinals departure would have on the city. In their view, the team represented a large St. Louis business that the city needed to keep. Downtown Now felt they had credibility in the process because they were not poised to profit directly from a stadium decision; their only interest was in rebuilding downtown St. Louis and keeping the Cardinals downtown. The organization provided lobbying support and facilitated the use of available state tax credits.

The Downtown St. Louis Partnership consists of both a membership-based organization and a community improvement district (CID) that functions similarly to a business improvement district (BID). This organization was interested in preserving the rebound in downtown real estate and business that the city had experienced the past few years. They sponsored lectures and neighborhood meetings highlighting what a new stadium could provide to the city. They also donated an amount of funds to the Cardinals to help pay for street furnishings – a service they might provide to any downtown business.

Additionally, the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association (RCGA) is credited with considering what the Cardinals meant to the region. RCGA visited San Diego and met with San Diego City officials in order to learn about the revitalization experienced as a result of Petco Park.¹¹⁰ According to one newspaper article, the St. Louis visitors left with a positive impression of what development could do, “Growth, as the leaders saw on this trip, can solve a lot of problems.”¹¹¹

The St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC) was also involved in the stadium project. SLDC is a nonprofit private agency created to better coordinate and execute development in the city. It staffs and oversees a variety of City agencies including the Land Clearance Authority (LCA) which is the current evolution of the group that carried out urban renewal projects. LCA owns the land under the ballpark for which the team has a long term lease and SLDC provided environmental assessments and land clearance support. Another organization that likely offered resources and support is Civic Progress, an informal association of the city’s largest businesses and employers founded in 1953. While their specific role is not known, this group has supported similar large-scale downtown development projects in the past, including urban renewal projects and the Savvis Center. One author described Civic Progress as “St. Louis’s ultimate insiders’ group.”¹¹² One interviewee described this organization as a major force behind City development decisions and a second interviewee suggested that the stadium project would not have occurred without Civic Progress’s support.

The group that formed and continues to work against the spending of public dollars on Busch Stadium is the Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums. This group was started by citizens and led by a later state representative. According to one member, the membership came from various political backgrounds and interests and that the membership would disagree on any issue outside of their central subsidy issue, the “only

¹¹⁰ Nicklaus 2003a.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Heathcott 2005, 157.

issue that unites us is the stadium issue.” A Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums founder points to past experience in a reform organization and with grassroots organizing to describe how the organization formed. The group sought to prevent any form of taxpayer subsidies from going to pay for a new stadium. The concern was not only the amount of funding being sought, but the highest and best use of taxpayer dollars; according to this organization, many other city public services would have benefited from that funding. Through petitioning and subsequent public votes, the group successfully added a city ordinance and a county charter change requiring a public vote for sports facility subsidies. The Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums pursued these changes differently at the state and city level because of the time required to enact each change. An organizational representative said the group wanted to push for a city charter change, but went for an ordinance change, “We were worried about time, and it takes more signatures to do a charter change, so we just went for a straight ordinance change.” The city level ordinance stands, but did not alter the City’s contribution to the stadium; the amusement tax rebate was approved by the Board of Aldermen just prior to the passing of the ordinance. However, the County charter change as adopted would require that the County’s contribution of \$45 million in bonds go before a hearing and public vote every year before being disbursed.

The county charter change post-dates the bond agreement and the prospect of having to vote every year in order to meet obligations to the team has prompted a lawsuit by the bondholders against two representatives of the Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums and the County. The individuals named have been removed from the lawsuit, but have now initiated a counter-suit alleging that without their names on the original litigation, there is no actual resistance to the claims of the plaintiffs. The remaining defendant would be the County, which is interested in fulfilling the bonds according to the MOU. One lawsuit, one counter-suit, and possible allegations of Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation (SLAPP) violations remain.

A subsidy opponent indicated that while the Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums was the only organized anti-subsidy group, there was state-wide resistance to

subsidizing the stadium. In discussing public opinion about subsidies, a second interviewee asked, “Why should we pay for billionaires to pay millionaires to play on a grass field?”

Lastly, the media was not cited as an active participant. The only mention is from one stadium proponent but subsidy opponent who held that the media manipulated information to support the work of proponent groups.

PROCESS OUTCOMES

Despite litigation, construction went forward. The stadium opened for its first regular season game on April 10, 2006 and Ballpark Village is tentatively projected to be complete in 2008. The City expects that its investment will help sustain the increase in downtown development seen in recent years and that the City will maintain its role as a regional center. One downtown booster describes the \$3 ½ billion in public and private investment in downtown over the last 6 years and expects it to grow to closer to \$4 billion in the next year.

According to a business advocate, the City will benefit indirectly in terms of jobs and revenue. The central motive, in this person’s view, was less about direct job and revenue benefits and more about avoiding the possible negative outcomes of a departing team. A local business advocate also expressed the opinion that the new ballpark might extend redevelopment south of an area formerly considered downtown’s edge. Proponents also spoke about attracting visitors with the new stadium, particularly those that in the past might have been “intimidated by downtown.”

The new stadium is situated slightly downhill of the old location and has made approximately 8 acres of developable land available. One business advocate describes the situation downtown in which it is difficult to find a clear and open footprint and that this type of land is more economically viable for development. These approximately 6 new blocks are desirable for this reason alone. This adjacent land will be developed by

the Cardinals in partnership with the Cordish Company¹¹³ as a mixed use Ballpark Village development. The first phase of development will consist of the ‘Cardinals Experience’ which will include a museum, restaurants, and other retail; residential and commercial space will be built later according to market demand. The goal is to create retail that can “feed off ballpark.”¹¹⁴

One writer describes the effect Ballpark Village had on the way the stadium project was discussed within the media and among interested parties: “With the advent of the Ballpark Village concept, the center of the discourse shifted from a spotlight on revenues and luxury boxes – inside the stadium – to the contribution the new ballpark would make toward the overall revitalization of downtown St. Louis – outside the stadium.”¹¹⁵

Ballpark Village will offer another way for the Cardinals to generate revenue and compete with bigger media market teams.¹¹⁶ The development will also offer the City a source of increased tax revenues. One interviewee stated that since the old stadium attracted 3 million fans a year and the new stadium would seat fewer per game, economic development improvements would have to come from this ancillary development. A newspaper article reports that Ballpark Village is “expected to capture the redevelopment potential surrounding the stadium.”¹¹⁷ Supporters also hope that Ballpark Village will help create a destination that will continue to exist on non game nights. A stadium supporter spoke of the development as an opportunity for the team to “really create an entire neighborhood that is anchored by a ballpark.” A second supporter shared the hope that the development might create a whole ‘hub of new activity’ in an area that was ‘pretty dead’ before.

¹¹³ The Cordish Company is an entertainment and real estate developer known for large-scale urban revitalization and ‘sports-anchored’ development.

¹¹⁴ Interview, business advocate.

¹¹⁵ Ponder 2004, 75.

¹¹⁶ Interview, stadium supporter.

¹¹⁷ Kaszuba 2005.

Both proponents and opponents of Ballpark Village expressed doubt regarding whether the project would occur and if it would generate the outcomes proponents hoped. A newspaper article reports a political figure saying, “Nobody really expects that that’ll materialize... If it does, terrific.”¹¹⁸ A subsidy opponent expressed the opinion that the financing of the ballpark and incorporation of Ballpark Village represented the City “giving away their tax-base, which they’ve been doing for decades.” A proponent responded to the public doubt expressed, saying “I think a lot of people thought, honestly, that the ballpark village was just a hollow promise and an effort to get public funding for the stadium.” The same proponent felt that the public now sees that it is more than just a promise.

There were, however, changes to the original concept of Ballpark Village. One source describes a shrinking of the development from 6 blocks of mixed residential and commercial to 2 blocks of “mainly commercial development.”¹¹⁹ The article also mentions a reduction in the penalty the Cardinals would have to pay if they failed to complete the development. There is a further description of final Ballpark Village development being a compromise of what both the City and team wanted but that “the economic benefits are clearly tilted in favor of the Cardinals.”¹²⁰

City and proponent groups hope that the stadium and ancillary development will help build investor and developer confidence in downtown. One supporter stated, “Keeping the ballpark downtown was a critical factor in rebuilding the confidence of a whole variety of markets in the future of downtown.” The project was also described as just one part of a bigger campaign to bring the city back. As one business advocate said, the project was “not meant to be a silver bullet, [it was] only meant to be one major development among many major developments going on here.” The desired outcome is

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ponder 2004, 78

¹²⁰ Ibid.

one where investors become willing to ‘take a chance’ on an area that has not seen investment in 50 years.¹²¹

A GROWTH MOTIVE

The drive for a new stadium in St. Louis was associated with the need for growth and development, as it was in San Diego. But, in contrast to the loose affiliation of interests in San Diego, the growth interests in St. Louis were closely aligned and sometimes interrelated. The Cardinals wanted a new baseball-only stadium and public subsidies. The City wanted to keep the Cardinals downtown and therefore also wanted to arrange for some sort of subsidy. Affiliated growth interests wanted continued downtown improvement and since the City believed the team was critical to that, also wanted the Cardinals to remain downtown. The merest suggestion that failed attempts to obtain financing in the Missouri state legislature was forcing the Cardinals to explore not just suburban locations but out-of-state locations as well, set the chain of growth interests in motion.

The organizations that mobilized on behalf of the Cardinals were parts of a growth network with a history of working together as well as sharing members. The far-reaching connections of these networks allowed the Mayor and others to put together the patchwork of direct and indirect subsidies that finally persuaded the Cardinals to remain in the city. Conversations with involved parties revealed a team-oriented approach to the problem of how to keep the Cardinals downtown. In describing their campaigns, stadium proponents talked about what ‘we’ did, or how ‘we got together’ to decide what could be done. The perception of having to seek consensus among affiliated but not aligned groups (as in San Diego) was not evident. Rather, there was a sense that a task needed to be done and the appropriate resources needed to be assembled. A coalition of growth interests was able to combine bonds, tax credits and rebates sufficient to keep the team, despite governmental financial constraints. The same coalition did this in the face of citizen opposition, publicly expressed in signs such as, “When the Cardinals start

¹²¹ Interview, stadium proponent.

building highways, I'll start paying for a stadium.”¹²² The growth interests actively avoided the motions of the Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums, maneuvering around those initiatives that would have slowed or even halted the stadium process. The new city ordinance requiring a vote on any subsidies going to professional sports venues was avoided by granting the team tax abatement. Similarly, litigation against the County that would require a public hearing and a vote every year has been unsuccessful in court to date.¹²³

The groups' collaboration sounded efficient and characteristic of a group used to working together to achieve growth goals. One author speaks of development in the 1950s and 1960s, describing Civic Progress's role and how they “worked with local government officials to push redevelopment projects that would generate economic growth benefiting corporate interests and, presumably, the city at large.”¹²⁴ The interlocking relationships of the growth machine members also likely affected development processes both historically and presently. The old Busch Stadium was also intended to spark revitalization; it was expected to “act as a performance-enhancing drug for a sagging downtown.”¹²⁵ One author, in describing the construction of the earlier Busch Stadium provides an example of the links between growth interest groups:

The Cardinals owner August A. Busch Jr. was a leader of Civic Progress, an organization that promoted slum clearance, urban redevelopment, and government spending for downtown. Civic Progress got the land near the park declared a blighted area, and formed a redevelopment corporation to acquire land through powers of condemnation and eminent domain.¹²⁶

¹²² Slogan on a sign seen by interviewee.

¹²³ An appeal to the Missouri Supreme Court was pending at the time of interviews, March through April 2006.

¹²⁴ Heathcott 2005, 159.

¹²⁵ O'Neill 2005.

¹²⁶ Reiss 1998, 12.

PROCESS ANALYSIS

Throughout the stadium process, a central focus of the involved parties was what would happen if the team left, not necessarily what would happen if they stayed. Both the team's business and cultural values were at stake. There were many concerns that the improvements and investment the city had seen in recent years would slow or stop altogether if the Cardinals left. This investment had revitalized the western side of downtown, but little activity had taken place on the eastern side (where the stadium is), so the departure of the team might have further reduced the chances of that area's turnaround.

There was a push to consider the team not as a professional sports franchise, but as a major business and employer of residents. A business advocate referred to the Cardinals as a 100 year old business and that "if they had left it would have been pretty devastating." Another supporter declared, "If the Cardinals had left, we could have rolled up the sidewalks and closed the door." Proponents and business advocates posed questions such as, "What would we do if it were a manufacturing firm? ... Certainly, we would step up and do something." Stadium subsidies were not being proposed, business retention incentives were. Finally, emotional motivations were not absent from the process; as one public agency employee stated, "It's big business, but it's also a big part of our culture."

Among all of the actively participating groups, only Downtown Now and the St. Louis Downtown Partnership had complete success – achieved the goals they set out for the stadium process. They wanted to ensure that a ballpark was built downtown, but had no stated interest in the financing or specific downtown location. Their interests were in line with the government and growth interests.

The Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums was unsuccessful in preventing any form of taxpayer dollars from subsidizing the stadium, but their lobbying efforts were successful and contributed to the reduction in amount and change in type of funding.

They successfully changed the county charter to require a public vote and hearing before spending tax dollars on professional sports facilities, and had a similar city ordinance passed. The group is currently involved in a series of appeals and countersuits to decide whether county appropriations for the stadium must be voted on each year before being disbursed.

Proponent groups were motivated by a need to subsidize the team in order to retain a large local business. In focusing on business retention subsidies, the growth interest groups stayed away from issues such as equity or compensation for a public good generated by the presence of a sports team. As one business advocate asserted, thinking about the Cardinals as a business rather than a baseball team ‘took the emotion out of it’ and allowed the issue to be dealt with rationally. It also effectively limited the stadium process conversation. Opposition, as it was expressed, focused on financing issues – on the subsidies themselves – rather than more general issues of equity or opportunity costs. A Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums member expressed the opinion that their organization was addressing only a portion of what needed to be addressed. This interviewee speculated that a ‘Save Busch Stadium’ movement might have been able to stop the construction of a new stadium and bring other issues into the process. But there was no interest in this initiative and no other organized resistance to the stadium.

Comparative Analysis

One author describes what he believes to be three converging trends shaping the current context for stadium development. The first trend is the increasing importance of sport in American culture, including the “growth of professional sports as a powerful institution.”¹²⁷ A concurrent “decline of the inner city and the desperate attempt of local leaders to redevelop the urban core with projects that are beneficial to both the city and the local leadership” is the second trend.¹²⁸ The third and final trend is the “emergence of a populist, oppositional social movement” against public funding of projects that benefit the private sector.¹²⁹

Curry’s three trends describe the business of sport and the ability of sports franchises to exercise their will, cities’ economic and political revitalization strategies, and an emerging counter-movement. These trends describe stadium planning in a city driven by growth interests. Acknowledging that many factors affected the stadium processes in San Diego and St. Louis, this study relies on the contexts of growth and economic development. Growth, economic development, and public benefit are linked in these cases of stadium development.

Interest groups and public agencies in both cities mobilized around a central growth-oriented goal of completing a stadium project, some in favor and some against. In San Diego, this mobilization took the form of a loose affiliation of growth interests, while in St. Louis it was an efficient, entrenched growth machine. Groups mobilized despite financial and social constraints, and in the presence of conflicting research regarding whether or not stadium projects provide a net economic benefit relative to cost. Out of this process and organizational efforts, emerged two baseball stadiums and two ballpark village mixed use developments.

¹²⁷ Curry 2004, 8.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid, 9.

ORGANIZING AROUND GROWTH

San Diego's and St. Louis's political leadership demonstrated an interest in the stadium as economic development, as a source of revitalization and growth. Yet it was not jobs or increased spending that dominated the process described by participants. It was growth and development more generally that pulled interest groups together.

San Diego's stadium process provided evidence of various growth interests that collaborated in order to pursue and eventually achieve growth goals over an eight year period. In contrast, the coalition in St. Louis identified a primary goal – keeping the Cardinals downtown – and shepherded the stadium project through the political process. Both cities faced challenges regarding the use of subsidies and general public dissent. In St. Louis, the central challenge to stadium construction was finding an agreeable financing option that included some relief for the team. In San Diego, financing as well as a new location had to be determined. In San Diego, the stadium would serve an explicit planning purpose, the redistribution of land uses; the East Village was no longer a viable industrial and manufacturing district and a more appropriate set of uses was needed. St. Louis sought more general development goals for its stadium.

The non-governmental interest groups involved in the stadium process were either (a) those that were pre-existing and had missions broader than the stadium project, or (b) those that were created during the stadium development process with the express purpose of influencing the outcomes. Groups that pre-dated the stadium process pursued multiple interests as part of its general mission, focusing on issues as the membership dictated. While a group's mission may have been broad, the central goal in the context of the stadium project tended to be singular. In San Diego, EVA existed to protect resident and property interests generally, but within the context of the stadium process pursued only the stadium location issue. The same can be said of Downtown Now and its involvement in St. Louis. Groups that formed during the process, on an ad hoc basis, also pursued a single interest. Whether it be the Committee of 2000's interest in promoting the benefits of a new stadium or the Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadium's interest in

preventing the expenditure of taxpayer dollars, these organizations had very narrowly focused interest and no mission that would require them to exist beyond stadium completion.

Organizational involvement was also influenced by the manner in which the City guided the decision-making process. San Diego's Mayor at the time made it clear that the stadium process would involve a series of public hearings and go to a vote. Groups in this city could expect some opportunity to offer opinions and participate in the process. San Diego interviewees alluded to an openness and access to decision-makers that allowed community groups to influence the process even if they were ultimately unable to change the outcome. In St. Louis, on the other hand, the Mayor was committed to keeping the Cardinals downtown, to business retention, and to development. There was no overt commitment to making the process accessible or participatory. Groups with non-growth interests in this stadium process would not expect to be invited to participate in the process. San Diego's expectation of a public vote opened up the conversation and provided an opportunity for a variety of voices; St. Louis's more closed decision process may have required more formal channels or confrontational tactics for entry.

Having interests that overlapped with the City and team allowed some groups to "work with the process"¹³⁰ and use consensus strategies to achieve their goals. Organizations that use this approach tend "to accommodate more nuanced discussion of complex problems, and they typically seek both to identify remedial programs that enjoy broad support and to assume some responsibility for implementing them."¹³¹ This approach allows organizations to develop relationships with those in power and those who have resources.¹³² EVA, GQA, Downtown Now, and the Downtown St. Louis Partnership were all able to create or strengthen their working relationships with the City. Anti-tax groups, such as the Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums, worked against

¹³⁰ Interview, San Diego neighborhood advocate.

¹³¹ Chaskin et al 2001, 98.

¹³² Ibid.

growth interests and used conflict rather than consensus techniques. Conflict approaches “often provide a clear, simple statement of the problem” and use highly visible techniques to attract public and media attention.¹³³ This approach is the only option in certain situations, those cases “in which individuals in positions of influence are, in fact, genuinely opposed to the types of change communities would like to see happen. In such circumstances, a conflict-based approach may not only be preferable, it may be the only realistic alternative.”¹³⁴ For the anti-tax, anti-public subsidy groups in both cities, directly opposing the support of growth initiatives likely forced them into using conflict approaches. The City and team had no interest compatible with the interests of these oppositional groups.

Neighborhood groups emphasized aspects of the stadium process that the growth coalition or machine might have otherwise disregarded. These groups wanted to talk about where the stadium would go, what it would cost, what the projected negative impacts would be. One author describes the changing public perception about what a publicly-financed sports stadium can and cannot provide to a host city and growing feelings of a sort of ‘buyer’s remorse’ in thinking about other stadium projects that fell short of expectations.¹³⁵ Organized neighborhood involvement may be a reaction to this remorse and an attempt to maintain a growth agenda but alter the outcomes of the typical process.

BALLPARK VILLAGE

Ballpark villages attempt to secure added benefit from a stadium project by requiring the team to provide growth-generating development outside the stadium walls. It may help cities guarantee that they will receive the growth benefits that stadiums were expected to provide but did not consistently produce in the past. One author quotes a member of St. Louis’s RCGA as saying, “The thing that really creates a compelling public purpose is

¹³³ Ibid, 97.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Baim 1994, 190.

the combination of the village and the ballpark.”¹³⁶ This public purpose is approximately 8 acres in St. Louis and over 10 in San Diego.

St. Louis’s Ballpark Village is modeled after San Diego’s although both are “ultimately mimicking the Wrigleyville neighborhood in Chicago.”¹³⁷ The results of this development in the two cities may not be the same, however. One newspaper reporter contrasts the conditions surrounding the stadium projects in San Diego and St. Louis and notes that San Diego had the advantage of a strong economy while St. Louis does not and this difference may raise concerns in expecting a ballpark village to deliver the same outcomes there.¹³⁸ In addition, San Diego officials attribute the beginning of downtown’s transformation to the success of the Horton Plaza shopping center, and this reporter compares it to the similar St. Louis Centre noting the latter’s relative failure.¹³⁹ St. Louis may experience great success with its ballpark village development, but it may not be reasonable to expect it to be the same in character or form as San Diego’s. It should also be remembered that the public subsidies were greater in San Diego, so perhaps it is justifiable that their ballpark village should have to provide greater benefit.

In San Diego, Ballpark Village was a way to assign additional development responsibilities to a team in order to meet the City’s revitalization goals. In St. Louis, it was a way to steer public opinion and a means through which to guarantee a particular type of growth. Initially, the San Diego Padres viewed Ballpark Village as a burdensome obligation and the St. Louis Cardinals spoke of it as a benefit to the city. Now both recognize the development’s profit potential.

Newspaper articles assert that both ballpark villages changed in size and projected uses over the course of their consideration and construction. In San Diego, the development

¹³⁶ Ponder 2004, 75.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Nicklaus 2003b.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

has more residential than projected and is denser than original plans specified. Planned open space, The Park at the Park, that was to be part of ancillary development has also decreased in size during the process. These alterations may be explained by shifting market conditions and a reflection of the type of development that would be most profitable or have the greatest impact. St. Louis's Ballpark Village is under negotiation, but has already decreased in size once.

In both cities, the ballpark village is portrayed as something that the city receives in addition to a new stadium. Yes, the taxpayers are asked to contribute public funds for a new baseball stadium, but the team is being required to provide for the taxpayers, too, and that requirement takes the form of the mixed use development. It may represent a formal internalization of what used to be considered one of the natural economic benefits of a stadium project, the spillover development and businesses. The ballpark village model forces the sports team to take responsibility for the development around the ballpark, and to create the conditions for increased spending and tax revenue for which the City before had responsibility.

However, the ballpark village might also be a new proponent strategy to help achieve growth interests at little additional cost to the team or City, while providing a more credible public benefit. It guarantees non-stadium growth in the form of mixed use development and is portrayed as a benefit to the entire city. This guaranteed ancillary development might also represent the granting of development rights that are more exclusive than burdensome. If property values are expected to increase in the area surrounding the stadium, then assigning responsibility for that area to the team is equivalent to designating profit. If the team owns the right to development they can lease or sell space in the structures they build or buildings themselves. A question might be, how much of the development, had it not been contractually assigned to the team through the MOU, would have occurred anyway and been provided by local or regional developers; are there any additional transaction costs associated with the team's involvement that may be passed on to retail, commercial, or residential users? Answers

to these questions will affect the extent to which a ballpark village can be considered a public benefit.

Conclusion

Both San Diego and St. Louis produced new baseball stadiums as a result of organized political participation that was rallied around a growth interest. They also experienced opposition to their stadium projects, specifically related to the provision of public subsidies. And each also produced a ‘ballpark village’ – a mixed use development to be developed by the baseball team for the use of the entire city.

San Diego’s Petco Park was completed in 2004 and portions of its ballpark village are still under development. St. Louis’s Busch Stadium is being completed in 2006 and its ballpark village is under consideration. This approach of packaging a stadium and ancillary development together is still too young to be assessed comprehensively, but some short-term effects are visible. In San Diego, the immediate neighborhood is experiencing new development and investment. Property values have increased and land uses have changed.¹⁴⁰ Aside from these immediate short-term outcomes, however, very little is known. Other such relatively short-term effects, such as changes to quality of life, city finances, distribution of land uses, are still emerging. Many of ballpark village’s basic impact questions remain unanswered.

Long-term outcomes can only be conjectured for now. Economic effects, such as employment and wage effects, may rely on larger city efforts; the development of this mixed use center might have the greatest impact when supported by other city initiatives. Increased consumer spending, rather than substitution spending, may occur in the long run to the extent that there was unmet consumer demand for the types of services that a ballpark village provides. There may also be shifts in a city’s job to housing balance if the stadium project sparks more residential development than it does commercial, as is happening in San Diego. Other social effects may include changing demographics of the

¹⁴⁰ Interviews, CCDC, stadium supporters, and neighborhood advocates.

area around the ballpark (in the form of gentrification) and a far-reaching redistribution of land uses.

The process of agreeing upon this type of development might also have long-term effects on how a city's interest groups interact and the roles each take in future growth agenda projects. Successful and active involvement in this project may strengthen an interest group or help it build working relationships with the City or other organizations. These connections and networks may change the group's involvement in future development or growth projects.

A view of both the short- and long-term outcomes will allow researchers to identify what a ballpark village actually represents. Whether or not the direct attribution of positive or negative effects can be made to the stadium or ballpark village will likely pose a familiar problem to researchers who study stadium effects. A few central concerns regarding past stadium-only projects may be addressed by stadium and ballpark village projects.

A criticism of the economic generator justification for stadium projects is that the stadiums tend to enclose souvenir, retail, and food establishments within their walls. Whereas in the past these services would have been available outside of the stadium and perhaps owned by residents, they are now owned by the team itself. Ballpark villages might encourage sports franchises to release some of that control and incorporate a few of those services into development outside of the stadium. They might also foster the provision of new commercial or retail services that the neighborhood before lacked. New, rather than replacement, services might create new jobs and spending. Finally, a ballpark village may change the cost and benefit balance for the City or team. If the team must both finance and develop the ballpark village, the City may be receiving a guaranteed economic benefit where it would have only expected one in the past. This responsibility might also alter the overall stadium economics to the extent that it represents an additional source of profit for the team.

The question for stadium process participants becomes: how do we plan for and work with this type of stadium project? San Diego and St. Louis both went through a stadium planning process, but the product was a stadium as well as an affiliated mixed use development. Opponent and proponent groups had to consider not only the usual stadium questions (how large will it be, where will it go, how much will the City be asked to contribute) but also a set of questions that they perhaps had never asked within this context (what types of development do we want or need). The addition of a ballpark village changes the process rhetoric as well as outcomes. The local business community may become involved in different ways than in the past, as new ballpark village businesses may complement or threaten existing offerings. Residents may become more interested in the process since they may now be able to influence what additional products and services are made available to them. The process length also increases and participant groups will want to remain involved after the stadium has opened, as the ballpark village decision-making and development process will continue past that opening; interest groups in San Diego secured a CBA for Ballpark Village development a full year after stadium construction was complete.

These ballpark villages represents a shift away from a traditional stadium plan and may (1) guarantee growth and development benefits, and (2) be a means of bartering for public subsidies. Cities may be responding to what academic literature and now practical experience indicate are inconsistent and even insignificant spillover and increased consumer spending effects. The benefits cities long believed would occur as a 'natural' outgrowth of stadium development may now be incorporated, at least in part, in the MOU and as a contractually binding obligation.

But, the current conversation surrounding ballpark villages is unclear on the precise benefits to an individual taxpayer. If a ballpark village creates the opportunity for a type of retail and residential development unavailable prior to the stadium project, consumers may have more choice. If a ballpark village triggers revitalization that leads to higher wages or greater employment opportunities, workers will benefit. Such an outcome, however, may not be evident for many years. Other non-growth strategies of securing

benefits from stadium development, such as the possibility of a team building a school or some other non-revenue generating facility, have not yet being discussed.

Despite the omissions of the current ballpark village discourse, this ancillary development can provide benefit to a city. But these benefits could be more specific or have even stronger guarantees. The uses within the development might be specified, or the revenue streams resulting from development might be earmarked for specific public uses. Cities could create policies and procedures that permit more control over who benefits from ancillary development and how that benefit is allocated. Application of a development policy tool, such as clawbacks or impact fees, may provide more specific benefits. Outcomes might be guaranteed and fees collected might be designated for affordable housing, education, or job-training purposes.

This new approach to stadium projects may require cities and communities to become involved in new ways. A ballpark village may change not only the benefits of stadium projects but who becomes involved and how.

Appendices

Appendix A: Interview List

Individuals from the following organizations were interviewed. Names and titles have been omitted to protect confidentiality.

SAN DIEGO

- Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC)
- Committee of 2000
- East Village Association (EVA)
- Gaslamp Quarter Association (GQA)
- San Diego Padres, Public Relations¹⁴¹

ST. LOUIS

- Board of Aldermen
- Coalition Against Public Funding for Stadiums
- Downtown Now
- Downtown St. Louis Partnership, Inc.
- East-West Gateway Council of Governments
- Mayor's Office
- St. Louis Cardinals, Public and Government Relations
- St. Louis County Planning
- St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC)
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch Reporting Staff

¹⁴¹ Individual was a member of the franchise during the stadium process, but has since changed employers.

OTHER

- Boston, Fenway Community Development Corporation
- Boston, Red Sox Public Relations
- New York City Government, Economic Development

Appendix B: Interview Guide

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

- Please describe what your group does.
- What is your interest in the stadium?
- How did you think the stadium project would affect your constituents and interests? How has it?
- What do you think about Ballpark Village? What do you think Ballpark Village will accomplish? What does the city gain from it? Residents, local businesses?
- Are the project's contributions a good match to the city's needs?
- Where you or any other groups that you know of invited to talk about the stadium with the city and/or team? If you were invited to comment, what did you talk about and how influential do you think your comments were? If you were not invited, would you have been interested in providing comments?
- In your opinion, what is the greatest challenge to revitalization in the city? What is the city's greatest asset?

CITY, COUNTY, OR STATE POLITICAL OFFICE QUESTIONS

- Please describe what your agency does.
- What is your interest in the stadium?
- What were your responsibilities in the stadium planning process?
- Who were the major players in the stadium process? The minor ones?
- What other organizations, community groups, or agencies were involved? Which of those groups did you work with?
- How influential do you feel your participation was?
- Please tell the story of the stadium as you understand it. Include why the team wanted a new stadium, timing of request, site selection, etc.
- How would you describe your organization's role? Other organizations' roles?
- How was financing discussed? What subsidies or in-kind contributions were offered? Is your agency providing any of the financing or tax credits?

- What is your understanding of Ballpark Village? How did the idea come about, who will be responsible for completing or administering it? What will the development consist of and what do you hope it will accomplish?
- How does the stadium project fit into larger City development goals? Are there other related projects or initiatives?

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