

# Expansion of Community Modeling: A Case Study in Park Hill, Denver, Colorado

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## Abstract:

*Park Hill, a neighborhood of northeast Denver, Colorado, has a long history of ethnic and socioeconomic diversity. The economic boom in the Denver metropolitan area has created both good and bad effects. The community is currently unable to respond effectively to the increasing isolation of its members and the decreasing diversity. The cause for this is not a lack of programs, a lack of personal commitment, or a lack of potential funding. Rather, it is the difficulty of creating effective and consistent programs using existing volunteers and donated resources. In order to meet this difficulty, the community needs better coordination among stakeholders, improved structures for program implementation, and support, which will support efforts to acquire more resources. Using a new community assessment model – the Organizational Culture model, I determined that the first step in Park Hill is to improve communications among the various interests within the neighborhood.*

## Introduction

Park Hill was first developed in 1905 with the intention that it would be an ethnically and economically diverse neighborhood (Branscombe 1997b). Ninety years later, the diversity of the community is at risk, the result of economic expansion in the Denver metropolitan area combined with the closing of Stapleton International Airport. The neighborhood is fortunate in that there is a strong community identity and that there are varied groups within the community who are committed to social action. Park Hill's geographic make-up is variously defined by residents, city agencies, and the US Census Bureau; all definitions describe an area of approximately eight square miles in the northeast quadrant of the city with approximately 10,000 households. For the purpose of this study, we adopted the neighborhood designations applied by the Denver Safety Office of Policy Analysis (Denver 1998), which are consistent with U.S. Census Bureau tracts (U.S. Census Bureau 1990a, 1990b, 1990c, 1990d, 1990e, 1990f). These are traditional designations most commonly recognized by residents, real estate agents, local politicians, and the media.

With approximately three persons per household, the estimated population in Park Hill is 30,000, comparable in size to the cities of Broomfield (24,638), Englewood (29,387), Grand Junction (29,034), and Littleton (33,685) (U.S. Census Bureau 1994). Council District 11 includes south Park Hill and north Park Hill, as well as northeast Park Hill east of Monaco,

Montbello, and Green Valley. Council District 8 includes northeast Park Hill, west of Monaco, and many minority neighborhoods between Park Hill and downtown, including Five Points, Curtis Park, and Globeville. Thus, despite being the largest neighborhood in the city, there is no formal representation of Park Hill as a single, formal political entity to the City of Denver.

The Greater Park Hill Community, Inc. (GPHC) and its predecessors have been Park Hill's informal political representatives to the City since 1955 (Branscombe 1997a; Branscombe 1998). The GPHC executive board is generally made up of older, longtime residents of the north Park Hill area and representatives from the neighborhood churches. Recent demographic changes have drawn newer residents from central Park Hill to the organization, but the decision-making process is held by the established hierarchy. Various positions the GPHC has taken over the past three years have been unpopular with newer residents. One member of the executive board has tried to attract newer members into the structure; however, the organization appears resistant to alternative perspectives.

Dissension between the GPHC and oppositional groups peaked in early 1997 over the existence of a new restaurant in the neighborhood. A group of residents developed a business plan to establish a new family-style restaurant in the heart of Park Hill. The building that the restaurant moved into had originally been a church, then became a mixed-use structure containing apartments, a drug store, and other small service-

oriented shops. The block is a center for Park Hill socialization, with a small grocery store, a dry cleaner, a bookstore, a dance studio, a hairdresser, a florist, and the district office of Denver Councilwoman Happy Haynes. The space that the restaurant leased had most recently been a small bakery that had gone out of business.

Aware of the historic relationship between the GPHC and the City of Denver, the partners of the new restaurant approached the GPHC asking them not to oppose their application for a liquor license. The reaction of the GPHC executive board was rapid and decisive. Concerned about traffic difficulties, loiterers, and public displays of drunkenness, the organization continued to oppose any form of liquor sales in the neighborhood. The principals of the new business appealed to the GPHC to change its position if the principals could demonstrate support from the neighborhood. The GPHC meetings became well attended, but the organization's leadership was inflexible. Often, the debate on this subject was set at the end of meetings, and delayed until opposition to the GPHC left the meeting. Other strategies included unclearly worded motions and executive board action beyond the control of the general membership. The result of the "Cherry Tomato" debate was a severely weakened GPHC, and the potential for a competing Park Hill advocacy group organized around the central neighborhood residents.

In this environment, Denver councilwoman Allegra "Happy" Haynes is both a formal and informal leader in Park Hill. Acutely aware of the changing relationships in the neighborhood she represents, her expressed intent is to ensure that all members of the community are provided an opportunity to participate through the development of a neighborhood plan. Her interests lie in ensuring the community remains vital, and she understands the importance of a strong business sector as a component of that vitality.

### **Models for Understanding and Action**

In *The Community in Urban Society*, Larry Lyon reviews the effectiveness of theoretical and practical approaches of community development, which provides the primary definitions for framing this study. The project's baseline terminology hinges on a clear understanding of the term "community." Since it is imperative to examine Park Hill in its entirety, a holistic

definition is desirable. Lyons, as well as Beti Thompson, has defined community as a system of people who interact socially in a way that creates psychological attachments between each other and a specific geographically bounded area (Lyon 1987; Thompson and Kinne 1990). Everett M. Rogers, in considering how new technologies are transmitted and adopted, has also been compelled to define community as a pattern of social relationships that gives "regularity and stability to human behavior" (predictability) in social system (Rogers 1995).

Lyon differentiates between two dimensions of community development: task and process, and their relationship in identifying whether the change is desirable or undesirable. Tasks are focused on creating discernible outcomes in the community, while process goals are more abstract. Achieving a balance of task and process is most likely to produce universally desirable outcomes, but not every situation is appropriately managed this way.

Rogers suggests that changes occur across a social system through sharing information on new processes. This "diffusion of innovations" occurs at different rates through the system and is dependent on several factors, including social structure. Many of the factors that Rogers focuses on are individual: such as age, education, and socioeconomic experience. However, Rogers clearly identifies how structural communications and individual relationships within the society can facilitate or impede the acceptance of different ideas or processes. Based on Bandura's social learning theory, Rogers advocates that consultants should identify 'early adopters' in a community because of the ideal mix of their social acceptance within the community, and their higher tolerance for uncertainty (Bandura 1977; Rogers 1995). According to Rogers, these members of the community are most likely to be effective opinion leaders.

From this foundation, the researchers developed their methods by combining Rothman and Hendrick's development models. Rothman's action models are predicated on evaluating and modifying systems processes (Rothman 1987). For example, locality development characteristically attempts to improve process goals through enhancing communication between established stakeholders in the community. This approach assumes an organizational bias – in terms of communication and action processes (Pace

1983) - for the developmental action plan. The social planning model concentrates on solving task goals, with the consultant providing technological assistance. The social action model is predicated on the assumption that the individuals in the community system need empowerment to utilize the existing organization and technology. These models are not intended as isolated theoretical applications, but rather as approaches for real-world practitioners to mix and adapt to unique and unpredictable community settings.

In reviewing community development literature, similarities to organizational development theory (a field of Industrial and Organizational Psychology), became obvious. This perspective of the social system described as an organization (and vice-versa) was further strengthened by Gregory Johnson's descriptions of the effects of scalar stress on the complexity of social systems (Johnson 1982). The sociotechnical systems model was originally conceived to introduce the concept of a human factor subsystem into the practice of industrial and organizational analysis and development (Hendrick 1986, 1996). With some modifications, the sociotechnical systems model is a very effective framework for organizing ethnographic data collected from the community (Kirwin 1998; Kirwin and Brett 1998). The modified sociotechnical system models the community as four integrated subsystems with specific ethnographic characteristics. Dysfunction in the organizational subsystem favors locality development for resolution, while the technological subsystem favors social planning solutions, and the human factor subsystem responds to social action solutions.

Thus, the organizational culture model began as three-dimensional with three subsystems – a tetrahedron of technology, human factors, and organization existing in a sphere that represents the external environment. The technical subsystem, corresponding to Rothman's social planning approach, is informed by collecting information on the organizations' political processes, economic practices, profession practices, language, communications and transportation technology. The human factor subsystem (Rothman's social action approach), is informed by the individuals, family groups, business owners and employees, social activists, housing patterns, socialization and deviation minimizing practices, traditions, and empowerment processes of the organization. The organizational subsystem,

corresponding to Rothman's locality development approach, is determined through identifying the community's stratification and specialization, such as the formal political representation, formal religious organizations, communication processes, and action plans. Following the Park Hill study, it became apparent that a fourth subsystem was crucial to understanding the whole system: that of identity. The identity of an organization is expressed as the values, real or perceived history, shared beliefs, and practices necessary to maintain and compete for resources.

## Methods

An ethnographic basis for understanding Park Hill interrelationships was completed between March 1997 and March 1998. Formal and informal interviews, attitude surveys, archival review, and participant observation were used. Several community stakeholders were selected for focused study after isolating groups that had unique, established identities to the greater geographic neighborhood rather than focusing on identities related to socioeconomic or ethnicity, which have been adequately documented in Census reports (U.S. Census Bureau 1990a, 1990b, 1990c, 1990d, 1990e, 1990f, 1994). Informal interviews were conducted with Park Hill residents who attended GPHC meetings and who patronized local businesses, with a GPHC Co-Chair, and with Councilwoman Haynes and her staff. The interviews, participant observation, and reference to other urban community redevelopment projects (Sainfort and Smith 1996; Smith et al. 1996) provided a framework for classifying these stakeholder categories as the businesses, residents, and educators who identified specifically with the greater Park Hill neighborhood.

A survey of the "Quality of Life in Park Hill," conducted by Councilwoman Haynes' office between August 1996 and March 1997, had a low response. This effort was treated as a pilot survey for developing the residential instruments for the current project. The business survey was designed by a Metropolitan State College (MSCD) geography class under the direction of the GPHC Business Development committee. Drawing on other surveys in the northeast Denver area, the assessment was piloted in late March by the MSCD students who conducted face to face interviews when possible. The educational survey was designed from questionnaires that the schools sent to parents and children. Parallel questions to correlate data to the

other two needs assessments were developed as well.

Further interviews, conducted through the summer of 1997, furnished elaboration and correlation of the surveys and clarified the purpose of the project. Ultimately, the residential survey included twenty-four attitude questions, four demographic questions, and one open-ended attitude question. Ten attitude questions, nine demographic questions, and one open-ended attitude question were included on the business survey. The educators' survey was composed of 21 attitude survey questions, four demographic questions, and one open-ended attitude question.

Councilwoman Haynes' office directed the Asset Management Branch of the city government to generate mailing labels with residential addresses in the 80207 zip-code, as well as residential addresses north of Colfax Avenue in the 80220 zip code. One thousand mailing labels were randomly selected by the GPHC informant, placed onto envelopes containing residential surveys, and distributed by mail. Approximately 600 businesses in the neighborhood each received a business survey by mail. Smiley Middle School and the seven elementary schools of the Park Hill Mini-district employ just under 300 full-time teachers, who each received a survey in their DPS mailbox from the principal of the school. Each survey was distributed in a sealed envelope that included a copy of the instrument and a Business Reply Mail (BRM) envelope. An undergraduate research grant from the University of Colorado at Denver covered the cost of the BRM permit and the printing of the envelopes. This allowed for the return of the surveys at no cost to the respondents. The grant also covered the cost of printing the educator surveys and other miscellaneous costs of the project. Councilwoman Haynes' office contributed printing and outgoing-mail costs for the residential surveys. A local businessman donated outgoing mail costs for the business surveys.

### **Results of the Ethnographic Assessment**

Initial observations of the community suggested that the dysfunction within appeared to be the result of conflicting social agendas. One side was intent on reducing the use of alcohol, drugs, and crime, and adopted an agenda whose intent was to eliminate environments that would foment these behaviors. The other side, while in favor of controlling and eliminating illegal activities that were associated with the use of

alcohol, drugs, and crime, had an agenda that was intent on building community identification by creating socialization opportunities in neighborhood businesses. Councilwoman Haynes felt that the neighborhood-planning group could identify and design programs that would build on common denominators that crosscut the interests and identities of the various Park Hill constituencies.

The nature of the Park Hill political structure is changing with the demographics of the neighborhood. To the south are the "old money" residents who are primarily white and wealthy. To the north the residents are primarily African-American and poor. The center of Park Hill has long been mixed, both economically and ethnically, but the economic boom in the metropolitan area is changing the nature of this transitional zone. More and more upper-middle class families are moving in, driving up property values and threatening the balance of interests. The GPHC is a collection of conservative, longtime residents of the neighborhood, mostly representing the north area of the community and the churches. It has long been the informal political voice of Park Hill to the city, but it is facing a challenge from the newer residents who are more politically savvy than their opponents. These new residents are aware of the referent power that the GPHC has, but are unwilling to let the organization dismiss them as irrelevant. In order to resolve this conflict, common goals must be identified, and all of the residents must feel empowered to enact change (Smith et al. 1996).

Lost in many of the debates between the GPHC and the new activists is the realization that the long-term health of the community is certainly tied to the health of its businesses (Kleiner and Drury 1996). The closing of Stapleton International Airport may have had the most profound effect on the community. Now that there are not 100 jumbo jets per hour landing a mile away, the grand, historic homes are attracting new families to the neighborhood. These new residents are creating new business opportunities, with disposable income and an upper-middle class consciousness that equate community identity with a socially based community economy. Yet not all investment opportunities are consumer driven; some new residents are investing in neighborhood businesses. One concern for the businesses of Park Hill, both new and old, is how they can best capitalize on the current economic bounty to build a stable future. The closing

Table 1: Residential concerns; Open ended responses generalized for analysis. Percentiles are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

General category of comments: (n=422)	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Concerned
Concern about Crime and Safety (n=116)			100%
Sense of Community (n=55)	22%	44%	34%
Denver Public Schools (n=47)	4%	96%	
Concern for Property Values/Appearance (n=45)			100%
Business Development (n=39)	87%	13%	
Diversity/Gentrification of Neighborhood (n=37)		27%	73%
City Planning and Services (n=28)	3%	54%	43%
Concern about Speeding Vehicles (n=26)			100%
Interest/Concern in Stapleton Development (n=7)			100%
Interest in improving Public Transportation (n=6)			100%
Other comments (n=5)	100%		

Table 2: Educator's concerns; comments generalized for analysis.

General category of comments: (n=111)	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Concerned
Parental involvement in child's education (n=23)	26%	52%	22%
Sense of Community (n=26)	69%	27%	4%
Discipline (n=10)	20%	70%	10%
Diversity in Schools (n=16)	56%	25%	19%
Availability of Resources teach (n=11)	9%	82%	9%
Curriculum (n=12)	17%	50%	33%
Administrative Support (n=13)	38%	46%	16%

of Stapleton has not been beneficial to the entire Park Hill business community. Many businesses on the eastern edge of the neighborhood were dependent on the airport – hotels, warehouses, and machinists – and their future without the airport is unclear. During the pilot of the business needs assessment, it was clear that the businesses in this area expect the neighborhood to help them create opportunities to succeed (Kirwin 1997).

Each Park Hill elementary school has a Collaborative Decision-Making committee (CDM), which is composed of local business representatives, parents, teachers, and school principals. The CDMs are charged with making general budgetary and curriculum decisions for the schools. Responding to efforts to use schools as a focal point for community identity, and as a response to the end of federally mandated busing, Denver Public School administrators worked with the CDMs to modify the magnet school concept and created a Park Hill “mini district.” Funding for the project was cut after the first year, and there is currently little cooperative effort occurring between the schools.

As the surveys and interviews were analyzed, it became clear that rather than lacking programs or the resources to successfully complete the programs that could unify the community, what seemed to be lacking was the community’s ability to fuse its parts into a coherent whole. There were many successful programs addressing the needs and concerns of the Park Hill community, and there were commensurate numbers of community members interested in sharing their values with the community. However, the projects rarely diffused beyond the small group of activists who initiated them, and there was no flow of information outside of these groups. The dysfunction between the various interests in the community is not ideological, but rather is rooted in the lack of community problem-solving processes (Rothman 1987).

### **Results of Stakeholder Surveys**

Though the survey was randomly distributed, the returned surveys were tracked to ensure a defensible geographic representation of small neighborhoods. By tracking the geographic responses in one-square-mile blocks, the researchers, Councilwoman Haynes, and our other Park Hill informants felt confident that there was a fair representation of various formal and informal

Park Hill constituent interests. Whether the respondents work, teach, or live in Park Hill, we assumed that the various groups shared a common interest in having a safe, attractive, and thriving neighborhood. Of course there are differences, both major and minor, shaped by stakeholder expectations, backgrounds, previous experiences, and current environments. The findings from the three surveys clarified the commonalities as well as the diversity of community opinions.

In demographics excluding race/ethnicity, Park Hill remains diverse, with 56.3 percent of Park Hill residents under the age of 50, and 35 percent between the age of 51 and 70. Similarly diverse is the length of residence in the community, with 48.2 percent of the residents reporting that they have lived in Park Hill for fewer than 15 years, (25.6 percent fewer than 5 years), and 40.3 percent reporting that they have lived in the neighborhood between 21 and 63 years. Responses to the structured portion of the survey suggest that there is overall satisfaction with life in Park Hill, with home ownership (88.5 percent) and friends/neighbors (73.5 percent) reported as the strongest connections residents have to the community. This affords great potential for both innovative and traditional approaches to community building, and the survey responses indicate that many preferred processes for building community are already in place. Residents reported that they preferred to participate in social activities (56.6 percent), neighborhood problem solving (55.6 percent), and volunteering (30.8 percent). When asked what discouraged residents from participating in community activities, 42 percent reported not knowing about them, though only 15.2 percent reported not being interested. Interestingly, openended comments solicited from both residents and educators indicate a deep concern about how the demographic shifts may be eroding the traditional community processes.

Feelings about the safety of the neighborhood seem to be mixed. The Denver Safety Office of Policy Analysis 1998 report on crime indicates that crime is dropping across Park Hill, and the survey suggests that residents recognize this drop (84.8 percent of resident’s report that they feel safe, and 75.2 percent report that crime is not a significant problem on their block). Paradoxically, though, concerns about gang activities and drugs were the focus of 116 open-ended comments, and another 26 comments expressed concern about unsafe traffic patterns.

The business survey showed that there is clear business identification with the locality of Park Hill, although there seem to be concerns that adequate ties between the businesses and the remainder of the community are lacking. 45.2 percent of businesses reported having 10 employees or less, suggesting that a significant number of businesses are locally owned and oriented, yet satisfaction with local workforce availability (47.7 percent of the respondents) is disconcertingly low.

There seem to be abundant entry-level employment opportunities for Park Hill residents: 79.8 percent of Park Hill businesses engage full-time employees, and 58.8 percent require only a high school diploma for employment. 31.8 percent of the businesses require less than a high school education -- which is a 90.6 percent cumulative response. There are also long term opportunities that residents could take advantage of -- to the benefit of both the community and the businesses. For example, employers indicated a strong willingness to assist their employees in gaining critical job skills: 60.3 percent indicated they would be willing to send employees to computer training; 41.4 percent indicated management training; 31 percent identified vocational training; and 20 percent indicated technical skills training.

There was a strong interest in forming a business association. 63.2 percent of respondents indicated that they would join an association. Businesses that were interested in such an association would use the dues for commercial beautification (39.7 percent), applicant training programs (24.7 percent), or a small business fund (22.6 percent).

Park Hill educators also indicated a strong identification with the locality of Park Hill, with 57.8 percent commuting less than 20 minutes to work. 72.2 percent report that they feel a part of the Park Hill community, though only 63.6 percent expressed the belief that the community supported their school. There is no clear indication of the strength of connections between educators and residents. For example, 51.5 percent of the residents indicated they would like to or do help in the neighborhood schools, while 90.1 percent of the educators expressed that it was important to have Park Hill residents involved in their classes, yet only 37.4 percent felt residents were interested. Some of this incongruity may stem from DPS policy of teacher assignments, as was suggested

in the educators comments: 70.6 percent of Park Hill teachers have been assigned to a Park Hill school for fewer than five years; 40 percent for two years or less. However, 35.3 percent have taught for DPS (in general) for six to fifteen years. Only 8.3 percent of the educators have been teaching for fewer than two years.

There are other indicators of discontinuity between educators and the broader community. For example, 98.9 percent of the educators expect parents to talk to them about their children, yet only 68.9 percent feel that the parents were interested in talking to them. Though there was general dissatisfaction with one job aspect or another, 91 percent of the teachers report that they enjoy their assignment.

## Conclusion

Overall, this research suggests that there are many active and concerned citizens within the Park Hill neighborhood who believe that Park Hill is a good place to live and work. The most effective way to improve the community's problem-solving capabilities will be to identify and build on the common denominators that cut across the interests and identities of the various neighborhood constituencies. Most of the respondents have indicated that the reason they are in Park Hill is its historical diversity. To make the neighborhood a "great" place, it is necessary to build and maintain a solid infrastructure that will protect the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of the community, enhance the quality of community institutions, and build positive, symbolic associations across the community.

It does not appear that there is a need to create new programs, but rather there is a need to provide continued support for existing programs and a concerted effort to better coordinate the needs of disparate groups. Many efforts are being duplicated, which minimizes the effectiveness of these efforts. Volunteers are not effectively recruited or maintained, and target groups are becoming cynical about programs that duplicate each other or never progress. Indeed, the surveys we distributed were often met with resignation, if not hostility, in all three subgroups. The most common comment was, effectively, "Why should I fill out another survey that will disappear? Nothing ever comes from these, anyway." Comments from the residential surveys indicate that the most common concerns involve traffic control in the residential

neighborhood and providing kids with “distractions.” The business surveys, along with random interviews, indicated a strong desire for a business association. Such an association is perceived as a method for gaining better representation to Denver, and for meeting mutual needs of the businesses, residents, and educators. The greatest concern about the association is the perceived need to structure it in a manner that will not give unbalanced voice to one or two business owners. The comments on the educational surveys indicate a strong desire for more interactions with residents and business people, yet there is a concern about already being burdened with non-teaching duties. To be effective, programs that involve educators need to focus on supporting their mission of teaching our children, rather than bureaucratic exercises.

There is currently no clear mechanism within the community to unify disparate goals of the various stakeholders in the greater Park Hill neighborhood. The GPHC does not have a decision-making structure that includes all its members, much less the majority of Park Hill stakeholders. The council districting imposed on the neighborhood has fractured the formal political structure of the community and complicates political solutions. The community needs leadership and vision, and I have identified three possible solutions to establish some form of structure that may accomplish this.

The first would be to acknowledge the current political reality, and encourage northeast Park Hill to form a bond with the remainder of Council District 8, while the southern Park Hill areas act through District 11. This would essentially focus community efforts in a manner that allows for a single political interface between the community and the city. Council representatives would need to be more accountable, and issues could be more coherently addressed to the proper agencies. Unfortunately, this runs counter to the stated objective of increasing diversity where possible, and maintaining diversity everywhere else in Park Hill.

The second option is to petition the City to establish Greater Park Hill as its own Council district, which would create a single political interface between the community and the city. The downside to this option is that it is dependent on too many outside factors, any one of which would unbalance the system

and create a weaker organization than before. The petitioning and approval process would delay effective organization until it won approval, which is an unlikely prospect. If approval were granted, the representative would have little oversight, and the overall good of the community would be vulnerable to any representative who lacked the vision, or skills, to lead such a diverse neighborhood.

My sense is that a more feasible approach is the third solution, to build a representative, effective community organization constituted of representatives from the major community stakeholders, who will commit their resources to develop and meet broad community goals through specific projects. This approach requires less outside adjustment to communal needs and builds on the existing nature of the Greater Park Hill, which is that it already has the nature and grounding of a “small town.” Most important, it allows the community to maintain its diversity and build a plan around existing community resources. The membership of the organization might include community stakeholders from multiple key community sectors, including the Park Hill Mini-District and a business association.

Such an umbrella organization could benefit the community in various ways, not the least of which would be developing communication channels for coherent lines of community action such as the implementation and support for specific goals and projects. The community development corporation model (Berndt 1977; Center 1979; Ford 1973; Twentieth-Century 1971) seems to be an ideal starting point for designing the organization. As a group with linked interests, they would be in a good position to seek private and public grants, and to distribute resources to projects as prioritized to meet the needs of the overall community. They could work to improve greater coordination of efforts between stakeholders as well as access to the resources necessary for each interest to be successful among their constituents. Ideally, the umbrella organization would be well positioned to coordinate Park Hill projects and to represent Park Hill to the external community. Logically, the organization would seek some type of institutional legitimacy, which may be through the formal constitution of a community corporation. A more formal organization should be proficient at private and public fundraising and advertising and could act as an unbiased clearinghouse for projects and volunteers.



Park Hill is extremely fortunate in that it has a diverse population with a strong identification to the neighborhood and at least a foundational identification with each other that is unrelated to ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or purpose. This is not to say that at individual interactional levels there is no conflict or bias, but rather that the Park Hill community identity is strong and positive enough to serve as a solid foundation for locality development.

Clearly, Park Hill has some enviable "problems." Property values are increasing across the neighborhood, including northeast Park Hill. This is allowing for decreasing rentals of single family residences, which directly improves property maintenance and decreases criminal activity. The increasing number of middle and upper-middle class parents is forcing the public schools to offer more attractive and effective education opportunities to compete with private schools. Businesses are increasingly successful at attracting the disposable income these residents have, too, effectively establishing a customer base that will weather the next economic downturn. Yet it is the gentrification of Park Hill that is the source of some real and potential community problems. Increasing property values directly effect property taxes and many of the lower income residents may feel themselves forced out of the neighborhood. This has already affected the diversity of the neighborhood, mostly socioeconomically, but also, to a lesser extent, ethnically. Some of the long-term residents feel embattled by this shift in demographics and have already begun to frame their resistance in terms of racial division. One solution we have offered is to develop new communication processes that will strengthen and build a whole-community identity.

#### Notes

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