Measuring the Effectiveness of Community Benefit Agreements: What Factors make a Successful CBA?

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Cities in the United States have experienced significant growth in the past twenty years. There has been an influx of foreign immigration and a trend of movement from suburbs back into the city. This has put stress on cities and has forced city governments to find a way to grow within the confines of the city itself. While this stress is put on the city, the city also looks to expand its infrastructure to cater to the different demographics. Cities have also started looking to expanding development, not only to cater to this new population but also to expand the cities revenue and infrastructure system. This has led to a golden opportunity for developers to build, partnering with cities creating a mutually beneficial relationship. While developers have played important roles in revitalizing city neighborhoods and old industrial sites which were once abandoned after industries left the city looking for cheaper land and cheaper labor, these development projects can also have a detrimental role in changing the fabric of a neighborhood.

The growth of cities has put an undue amount of pressure on marginalized and low-income communities. Because of these developers, residents are being priced out of their homes which they have lived in their whole lives, and the fabric of communities with a long history in the neighborhood is being torn apart. At the same time, there is a lack of government policies and initiatives to solve the very real issues of poverty and income inequality within cities. Developers pose as the almost perfect solution to this problem. Instead of creating large public projects aimed towards revitalization, developers can lift some weight off the city government back and provide real tangible benefits to communities. This can be achieved through the implementation of Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs).
Community Benefit Agreements are private contracts between community coalitions and developers looking to develop in certain neighborhoods. These contracts can consist of developers promising certain benefits such as affordable housing, labor and living wage stipulations, plans to create linkage organizations between the developers and the community, to the community and their coalition. CBAs first started in LA, the first prominent one being the LA Live Benefits Agreement. Community groups organized and protested the construction of the sports and entertainment district in downtown LA, resulting in the first successful CBA where the developer got to build their sports district, and the community gained jobs and housing. By studying CBAs, it is possible to further explore how to better this tool to counter the imbalanced influence developers can have on city governments and neighborhoods.

In this thesis, I will explore what factors make a CBA successful in creating actual change for communities. I will focus on two main aspects, the level of community involvement and strength of coalitions during negotiations and implementation, and the role government must play in supporting community groups. Navigating under the belief that CBAs can be effective under certain conditions, this thesis is guided by the simple research question of just how effective are Community Benefit Agreements, and what makes an effective CBA? I specifically focus on their effectiveness in providing tangible benefits for the community when answering this question. Throughout the course of this thesis, I argue that CBAs are in fact effective, specifically when a strong progressive government supports a strong community coalition.

I look at four case studies from across the country to make this argument. These case studies include specific CBAs from the cities of Los Angeles, Oakland, New York, and finally Philadelphia. I categorize these CBAs by labeling them with either strong/weak community coalitions and measuring the progressiveness of each city government. By using a comparative
approach, clear parallels and differences can be highlighted, which I hope can draw out what made certain CBAs successful, and others not so successful. This thesis aims to build upon existing literature to emphasize the important role government must play in order to create a fair playing ground between the developers and the coalition. This being said, the findings of this research also emphasize the important role strong community coalitions play within CBAs.

Chapters 2 and 3 lay out the foundation of the thesis. I discuss the three main schools of thought surrounding the effectiveness of CBAs which are the belief that CBAs are always effective, the belief that CBAs can never be effective, and finally the belief that CBAs can be effective, only if they meet certain criteria. Adopting the third school of thought, I then lay out my research design in Chapter 3 which serves as the schematic layout to the rest of my thesis. In Chapter 4 I look at the Los Angeles Lorenzo CBA, laying out the reasons why I categorized it as a CBA with a strong coalition, but not a largely progressive government. I conclude that this CBA was effective, even when the government played no role. In Chapter 5 I look at the Oakland Army Base Project CBA in Oakland, CA, categorizing it as an agreement with a strong community coalition, backed by a progressive government. I conclude that the Army Base Project was extremely successful, as the developers, coalition, and city government worked together. Chapter 6 deals with the Atlantic Yards CBA in New York City, which I labeled as having a weak coalition and no progressive government, concluding that this CBA was not effective. During Chapter 7, Philadelphia’s Temple University multi-use stadium is examined. Although the negotiations for a CBA fell apart, I look at how a progressive government and a weak coalition aided in the failure for a CBA to even arise in the first place.

Finally, Chapter 8 brings these four case studies in direct light, comparing the four while reflecting on my findings in relation to my original hypothesis and research question. I offer
some observations about the common factors that make a CBA successful and vice versa. I also
pose two areas that should be studied more in the CBA literature, the role governments can play
in a CBA negotiation, and what makes a developer likely to cooperate freely with community
groups. I then go to talk about the broader implications CBAs have on cities, offering them as a
solution for the many problems modern-day cities face.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

In the simplest terms, Community Benefit Agreements are agreements (either formal or informal) between developers and neighborhood coalition groups. There is debate among different scholars on the feasibility and effectiveness of these agreements. Some that believe that CBAs are not effective and have either negative or no outcome within the communities where the developers are moving into. Conversely, others think that CBAs are in fact effective and have positive outcomes for communities. Finally, the bulk of literature surrounding CBAs lies in between the previous two school of thoughts, where scholars celebrate the concept of CBAs, but offer solutions and suggestions where CBAs can in fact be effective under certain circumstances. Within this field of thought scholars fall into two subcategories. Some emphasize the important role local governments must play when negotiating and implementing CBAs. Others highlight different factors outside of the governmental scope that would make CBAs more effective. This subcategory is wary of government involvement and believes that the process and implementation should be left to the actors within the CBAs.

Community Benefit Agreements are Effective

One of the biggest arguments in favor of the effectiveness of Community Benefit Agreements is its positive effect on civic participation and the ability to use CBAs as a tool towards the redistribution of power. Murtaza Buxamusa (2008) links these two ideas essentially arguing that CBAs are effective because the process of creating a CBA creates an opportunity for local actors to wield influence which serves as an exercise in the redistribution of power that
challenges dominant power processes. Buxamusa begins with framing his argument within the “power-process tension” conversation, which talks about the significance of participatory processes making public policy decisions. To begin, Buxamusa highlights how CBAs are different than regular public-private agreements and public development regulations by teasing out four main ways they differ: 1) exactions on a developer do not need to related to the physical impacts of the project 2) agreements do not necessarily have to relate to existing plans or policies 3) communities directly negotiate with developers 4) can be changed without legislation. Because of this, CBAs are deliberations instead of negotiations. While negotiations are a back and forth between two parties, deliberations allow participants to adjust themselves through rational arguments to change their positions, adding to the participatory process nature of CBAs.

Buxamusa looks at the LAX Expansion in LA CBA and the Ballpark Village in San Diego CBA to put these ideas into effect. Using these case studies, he takes out some commonalities regarding the CBA processes and more importantly, how this serves as empowerment for community groups. He lists five ways CBAs serve as a way to empower organizations and challenge dominant power processes: 1) the nature of CBA negotiations make coalitions that create their own information not tainted by the information of dominant power structures; 2) coalitions grow as the CBA deliberations proceeds, allowing for their issues to be brought to the table; 3) coalitions organize on a wide variety of issues, which allow them to be in touch with a wide variety of people, giving them more longevity than if they were to be based solely on a single issue; 4) the mere fact of an organized entity gives coalitions more credibility and power; and 5) the CBAs make both the developer and organizations commit to the terms of the agreement. These five ways that CBAs empower coalition organizations then give them the
chance to challenge powerful entities (the developers) because it creates “uncertainty,”
undermining the developer’s power and influence. Buxamusa essentially argues that CBAs are
effective because they serve as a tool to redistribute power. He uses the LA case studies to back
up his claims. The LA cases resulted in the once powerful developers with ties to the city, be at
mercy to the community members, redistributing power balances.

Leland Saito in both his 2012 and 2019 journal articles argues under the same lines. As
opposed to Buxamusa, Saito uses regime theory to frame his argument in his 2012 article, talking
about the power balances between the private sector and the public sector. He argues that CBAs
serve as a tool for low-income communities to gain leverage and power against the private sector
and local government that typically guide development decisions in the “free market” by
associating themselves with a broader coalition of union labor groups and immigrant groups
(Saito 2012). Saito examines the history of growth interests and downtown development in Los
Angeles and concludes that that business elites partnered with local politicians had a dominant
hold on development, that is until the LA Live CBA. Using the Live CBA as a case study, he
concludes that the process set certain standards for CBAs and development within LA: that broad
coalitions were able to reach out to a wide range of constituents that directly represented their
broad interests in the process and finally that it was a legally enforceable document that
developers were held accountable to. In this manner, CBAs are effective because of the success
CBAs can have, which in turn give low-income citizens a new voice in public affairs

In his 2019 article, Saito essentially argues the same thing as his 2012 article, however he
looks at how progressive coalitions give representation to lower-income residents in a way that
regular government could not do. In his 2019 article he delves more into the history of Los
Angeles and looks specifically at the durability and influence of progressive coalition groups, asking why they have so much power in relation to the 2012 proposed National Football League stadium CBA. He concludes that these coalitions have survived due to diversifying the coalition’s background by including a wide variety of groups including unions and Latinx groups, combined with the growth of Latinx population resulting in greater electoral power. This survival has given them greater political clout. The backing of the city government gives these coalitions both credibility and power which leads developers to take the groups seriously and keep negotiating agreements with them. Once again, like he argues in his 2012 article, these coalitions within CBAs give low-income residents a durable platform that will create lasting change by providing jobs, housing, worker retention and living wage retentions, making CBAs effective tools.

In 2015, Saito partners with Jonathan Truong and changes his focus on CBAs to how they affect city government policies. They argue that the LA Live CBA has created a model for comprehensive CBAs which has shifted local power dynamics. Once again using regime theory as a framework, Saito and Truong examine the history of the LA Live benefits agreement, providing a historical explanation as to why the Live CBA was so successful. Like Saito’s previous articles, he concludes that the growing influence of unions and Latinx population created political opportunity. They take it a step further, however, and argue that because of this political opportunity, the coalition was able to fight for living wage ordinances and the passage of worker retention, paving the way for the eventual LA Live agreement. The CBA, in turn, was a clear turning point because the proposals that were negotiated in the CBA, are now being used involving larger projects involving the local government (such as projects involving significant
These strong coalitions have positively influenced the environment surrounding city growth by paving the way and creating a template for other community groups to follow, making CBAs effective in the long term.

Colleen Cain (2014) uses growth machine theory to frame her argument that CBAs present implications for pro-growth dynamics by holding developers accountable, empowering communities in the redevelopment process and lastly achieve value-conscious growth. Cain’s first two implications have been discussed in the previous literature, but her last one is helpful in further evaluating the effectiveness of CBAs. Pro-growth dynamics highlight the value of land and is usually the framework developers have in mind when building. Value-free growth on the other hand sees property as something more than a space that has monetary value. Because of empowered communities and the ability to hold developers accountable, CBAs achieve value-conscious growth, where developers are not just considering the monetary value of the land, but they also must consider the needs of the residents. She takes the Pittsburgh Hill District Neighborhood as an example, where community members successfully negotiated a CBA. Cain brings to light a new way of thinking about the power processes between developers and coalition groups within CBAs, focusing on the influence coalition groups have on changing how developers think about the land they are building on. Cain argues that CBAs are effective because of this change of thinking about land in a value-conscious growth framework.

Both Buxamusa (2008) and Saito (2012 and 2019) believe that CBAs are a powerful tool that aids participatory processes, but Saito focuses more on the effects of CBAs on lower-income residents, as opposed to Buxamusa who takes a broader view. They also believe that the creation
of coalitions representing a wide group of interests allows for citizens and residents who were overshadowed by the dominant power holders (the developers, and in Saito’s case, the developers who were partnered with the local government) to take back some of that power and create effective CBA agreements that will actually make a difference. Cain (2014) also highlights the importance of the empowerment of coalition groups but claims that this empowerment within coalition groups helps change the value of the land in CBA agreements, something which Buxamusa and Saito do not touch on. Virginia Parks and Dorian Warren (2009) also believe that CBAs are effective as a tool, but unlike Buxamusa, Saito and Cain who focus on the process and the coalitions inside of CBAs, Parks and Warren focus on how certain CBAs can lead to even greater economic justice strategies in the long run through specific provisions within CBAs.

Parks and Warren focus particularly on the job training, targeted hiring, living wages and labor peace provisions of CBAs. They use multiple CBA examples (including the Staples Live CBA) to show that monitoring and enforcement is possible when coalitions successfully last and have a continued organized strength. Because of this they claim that “the real success of a CBA lies not in its winnings but in realizing its benefits” in the long term. Once again using the example of the Staples Live CBA, they show that this long-term endeavor motivates coalition groups to stay together for a longer period of time, strengthening coalitions and giving them the opportunity to keep the developers accountable on their side of the agreement. Finally, the coalition’s willingness to fight moves forward economic justice strategies aimed at public regulation and oversight of development project, positively affecting the CBA environment for future agreements. Parks and Warren take a broader look at the benefits of CBAs, thinking about
their effectiveness in relation to the future, instead of solely in a participatory process way that is focused on coalitions. At the same time, their argument heavily relies on what role coalitions must play, something that Buxamusa, Saito and Cain also do.

Finally, Greg Leroy (2009) takes a historical look at the effectiveness of CBAs, focusing on factors that encourage the creation of CBAs. He discusses the current trend in migration to move back into cities which is creating an unprecedented growth in population and in development, focusing on Los Angeles. This superimposition of newcomers who are disrupting previous neighborhoods and their dynamics naturally causes conflicts. On one hand, developers will want to build in order to accommodate these newcomers, and on the other hand the previous residents will resist these drastic changes to their neighborhoods. Leroy also speaks about the broader political climate of the past twenty years pointing out a decline in federal aid, the trend towards devolution and the current polarization which creates a difficult environment for legislation to be passed. Because of these external factors, CBAs have the opportunity to be extremely effective because they offer a way to resolve tension within the cities through joint deliberation processes while working outside the public sphere, something which he argues happened in LA with the Latinx groups, community organizations and unions.

Most of the literature that believes that Community Benefit Agreements are in fact effective are centered around the importance of coalition groups within the process, and after the CBA is created. This differs starkly from the school of thought believing that CBAs are in fact not effective tools. This school of thought mainly focuses on the legal implications for CBAs and the negative implications for coalitions.
Community Benefit Agreements Are Ineffective (In Certain Ways)

In direct contrast with the literature focusing on the positive aspects of coalition growth, Steven Siegel (2014) examines the role unions must play within CBAs. He takes the case of the Newhallville-Amistad CBA in New Haven as his prime example. The Newhallville-Amistad agreement was negotiated in a public land sale to a charter school. By analyzing this specific CBA, he concludes that the unions within New Haven had an unfair advantage and more political leverage in the bargaining process since New Haven is a city with very strong and organized unions. He then uses this to argue more broadly that unions (especially when a city has a history of strong and organized unions) have an unfair advantage because of their position with more political leverage in coalitions negotiating with developers. This leads to a skewed outcome that heavily favors unions and undermines the CBA’s underlying goal to promote equality. Because of CBA generally loose structures and lack of constraints against judicial or administrative review, the negotiation process can be hijacked by a single powerful interest group (such as unions). In the New Haven case, the local teacher’s union skewed the CBA: the local community groups wanted to build a community center alongside the charter school, but the union insisted on using that money for the creation of the school. Seigel essentially argues then that because of the lack of regulation, CBAs are not effective as a tool for equity since they give certain interest groups an unequal amount of power during negotiations.

On a similar note, Greg Leroy (2005), Julian Gross (2008) and Vicki Been (2010), all argue that one of the pitfalls of CBAs involves coalition building. Although their articles do not solely deal with the problems involving powerful interest groups hijacking the deliberations
process, the three of them mention it multiple times. Leroy (2005) and Gross (2008), specifically
talk about the unfair advantage’s unions possess but do not give concrete examples, as Seigel
does. Been (2010) takes it a step further claiming that interest group activists will always
disingenuously bargain for rights, looking out for the good of their own organization, instead of
focusing on the bigger picture. These three scholars come to these conclusions through previous
theory on the problems regarding forming coalitions to gather diverse interests into a more
powerful group. Seigel essentially argues the same thing, but he brings the concrete example of
the New Haven case into light that supports these theories.

On a very different note, Nicholas Marantz (2015) examines the aftereffects of the Los
Angeles Sports and Entertainment District, measuring to see whether or not the CBA was
effective, and the provisions were followed. He particularly investigates whether the developers
have complied with the provisions listed in the CBA (jobs, affordable housing and parks and
recreation), and then looks to see if they have gone above and beyond the provisions. By
interviewing thirty individuals of the neighborhood and through extensive research he found that
it was a mixed bag. In the agreement, AEG (the developer) provided a living wage for workers
(something which the local government already provided) and constructed the bare minimum
amount of affordable housing units. However, AEG contributed fully to the restoration of parks.
Because of this mixed bag Marantz concludes that a CBA does not guarantee a solid outcome in
the following year. Marantz questions the overall effectiveness of CBAs but does not condemn
them entirely. He simply states that the current state of CBAs is not necessarily effective.
Like Marantz, Madeline Strieff Buitelaar (2019) looks at how closely developers involved in CBAs follow the provisions of the agreement. Unlike Marantz however, Buitelaar focuses specifically on a clause of a CBA in San Francisco called “community engagement with disadvantaged community members” clause. This clause, in turn, gives the companies a tax break. Buitelaar gets in contact with three anonymous companies who were a part of a CBA in San Francisco and reaches out to the “community liaisons.” She finds that each company has a very different way of engaging the community, but none of the companies engages in the way the CBA originally intended to (in a substantive and impactful manner). She also found that there is a deep divide between the companies and the surrounding neighborhoods, to the point where the community liaisons were sometimes completely disconnected from the community. Although Buitelaar’s findings are more condemning than Marantz’s, both articles point out an important flaw in CBAs, the lack of accountability and structure to monitor the developers to uphold their side of the agreement.

Finally, CBAs come with a host of legal issues, something we can see discussed below. Patricia E. Salkin and Amy Lavine (2008) give a detailed look at Community Benefit Agreements in their extensive law review. The authors give a detailed history of CBAs, and delve into various examples of CBAs in California, New York City and talk about upcoming agreements in the rest of the United States. Using this broad range of CBAs, Salkin and Lavine tease out four main issues with CBAs: 1) getting a broad based coalition is difficult and time-consuming; 2) developers may use bargaining tactics with their vast wealth of resources that break up and weaken these coalitions; 3) negotiating CBAs is costly; and 4) enforcement and monitoring are extremely hard to keep constant as community groups evolve and change.
throughout time. These issues are helpful for thinking about CBAs as not being entirely effective.

Salkin and Lavine (2008) then talk about the legal issues that inhibit CBAs. These issues include 1) the benefits developers offer vs the promises of community support do not equal each other, hence not making it a valid bi-lateral contract; 2) the person/coalition group in charge of enforcement is very unclear, and in certain states it “could not be enforceable against government officials elected in the future”; and 3) since it is a contract between a private entity and coalitions and the government gets involved the CBA might face a challenge from the government saying that the agreement is not authorized by the law.

Julian Gross (2008) similarly mentions the multiple legal problems that often arise when trying to go through with a CBA., while being more sympathetic to the rights of developers. Gross argues that public CBAs are not effective because of legal reasons: 1) there is pressure for developers to join the government, which would then lead to a wide range of legal structures and limitations; and 2) the difficulty of legal enforceability (also see Beach 2007). In this sense, Gross and Beach mirror much of what Salkin and Lavine (2008) have to say about the inherent legal inhibitions of CBAs, making them less than effective tools in creating any sort of equitable justice.

Although Salkin and Lavine (2008), Marantz (2015) and Buitelaar (2019) do not completely dismiss CBAs and label them as purely ineffective, they see many issues that still need to be addressed when negotiating and implementing CBAs. This brings the literature review to the last school of thought, where scholars are primarily focused on the inherent possibilities of CBAs, and how to create an environment where CBAs can truly be effective.
Community Benefit Agreements could be Effective if…

Many scholars within the CBA literature in the past ten years believe that CBAs could be effective under certain conditions. Most use previous examples of CBAs to figure out under what conditions the CBA was successful, or conversely not successful, and then take these factors into consideration when offering advice to make CBAs more effective. These scholars fall into two subcategories: one that emphasizes the role government must play in regulation (Laura Wolf-Powers 2010, 2012, 2014, Patterson et. al 2016 and Saito and Truong 2015) and another that stresses a non-governmental approach which includes encouraging a greater involvement on the local level with organizations and coalitions (De Barbieri 2017, Leach 2016, Rosado 2015). The governmental approach will be discussed first.

Laura Wolf-Powers looks at CBAs in Los Angeles, New York City, Denver, and Milwaukee to try and tease out what factors influence the creation of a Community Benefit Agreements. By a combination of research, open-ended interviews with public sector employees, advocacy group members and developers, and looking at local media coverage within these four cities she argues that there are certain factors within the public sector that are often not discussed in the previous literature surrounding CBAs to that point of time. These factors are: 1) the local development climate of cities has to be “robust” while CBAs are being negotiated, meaning that there has to be an environment of growth where developers want to actively build in the city, and 2) local political interests (such as the interests of city council members, the mayor, or local senators) must be aligned with labor and community groups that form the coalition, or else coalition groups will run into difficulty when trying to ask for job opportunities and sanctions that run against the political norms of the city. In LA, the city councilmembers supported the
community coalitions, specifically in the living wage ordinances clause giving the community coalitions power when trying to implement the CBA. The city councilmembers did nothing with the New York coalition groups, resulting in a lack of power when it came to implementation.

This second factor, the importance of norms within the local political environment, is something that Wolf-Powers introduces to the body of literature on CBAs that had not been spoken of before. Because of this, she argues that local elected officials and government agencies become implicit in the bargaining process, and CBA coalition organizers need to take this into account. Wolf-Powers essentially argues that CBAs could be more effective if organizers accept the implicit role of government and become willing to accept further cooperation with the government sector.

In her 2012 article, Laura Wolf-Powers builds on her previous research, looking at when the government should play a role in CBA bargaining in the value-capture context. Value-capture is defined by Wolf-Powers as “instruments that the public sector recovers for the use of the collectivity some portion of the land value created through public investment” (2012). By looking at the Gates-Cherokee CBA (which did not hold a formalized agreement), she observes the issues that occur when policymakers view CBAs through the lens of value-capture context, highlighting the distinction between just compensation and distributive justice with CBAs. In the Gates-Cherokee case, the city government put more of an emphasis on the current value of the land, instead of what the developers could do to help the community groups, leading the government siding more with the developer. The article raises more questions about the role of government as an implicit factor in CBA negotiations. However, she once again highlights the important role governmental actors play in CBA negotiations, and begins to ask the question of
how these actors view CBA agreements. Once again, Wolf-Powers allows for the possibility of
greater involvement within government to strengthen CBAs.

Finally, in her 2014 article, Wolf-Powers takes a step back from Community Benefit
Agreements as a whole and looks specifically at “community development.” Although this
article does not directly address CBAs, it is possible to apply its implications to coalition
planners of CBAs. In her article, Wolf-Powers looks at the motivation behind developers
building in neighborhoods to practice “community regeneration,” boiling it down to three
“theories of actions”: 1) restoration of common norms within communities; 2) restoration of
markets in neighborhoods where economic development has stopped; and 3) reversal of injustice
for the neighborhood. She concludes that by focusing on the third theory of action, coalition
builders will create institutions that perpetuate that idea and create institutions that support
restorative justice. Given Wolf-Powers extensive background in CBA agreements, it is helpful to
use this article as another way that CBA coalition planners can create a system where CBAs are
in fact effective for equitable community development.

Laura Wolf-Powers brings into conversation the important role local politicians and city
government must play in supporting community groups and coalitions during CBA negotiations,
and throughout her three articles suggests a few options that would make CBAs more effective.
Kelly L. Patterson et. al., Molly Ranahan, Robert M. Silverman and Li Yin (2016) also
emphasize the importance of governmental agency in CBAs but look specifically at shrinking
cities to do so.
Patterson et. al. (2017) argues strongly that grassroot coalitions have greater political leverage in negotiating CBAs compared to public and private sectors within the context of shrinking cities. Using data analysis, Patterson et. al. show that cities that are physically distressed are the least likely to negotiate CBA agreements since city government is more desperate for investment and new developments. Because of the poor economic state of cities, negotiating CBA is a “daunting task” (2016). They then look at a wide variety of CBA agreements both formal and informal ranging from private developers, developers from the non-profit sector and the public sector within the context of “shrinking cities.” They find that CBAs are the most effective within the context of shrinking cities when: 1) grassroot organizations take an early stand and create a linkage institution to the government, creating a direct connection between community members and government; 2) public input and advocacy were stronger; and 3) the public sector was actively engaged in the CBA negotiations process by showing up to meetings, petitioning and staying aware of the topic. Once again, like Wolf- Powers argues, government plays an implicit, but important role in supporting coalition groups during CBA negotiations.

Shifting the focus away from the role government must play in the effectiveness of the CBAs, Nicholas James Leach (2016) argues in his dissertation for the importance of robust civic participation within CBAs for effective implementation. Leach takes a similar stance to the previous literature (Buxamasa 2008, Saito 2012, 2019, Saito and Truong 2015) that describe the importance of coalition groups. This being said, he further offers a framework for understanding when CBAs can be effective, and how coalition groups can monitor and enforce these clauses. Leach examines the success of four different CBAs in their monitoring and enforcement clauses.
He finds that when clauses are worded in a concise and organized manner, it is easier to enforce them. More importantly, he finds that a healthy and robust coalition that does not die out after the agreement is made is crucial to successful implementation. When coalitions die out or lose their broad-based support, there is no one to hold the developers accountable. He concludes that strong community coalitions are more important than direct government involvement because the CBAs he looked at were solely between private developers, and community coalitions, and the government has no role or leverage to play.

Like Patterson et. al., Ralph Rosado (2015) also argues that grassroot organizations at the local level play a crucial role in the success of CBAs. However, he believes that due to the market-level factors that strongly influence CBAs, it is more important to achieve a good relationship with developers than allowing government greater regulation. Rosado looks at CBAs in California, New York, Wisconsin, and Florida and divides them into three different categories: 1) the “inclusive” CBA; 2) “political patronage” CBA; and 3) the “no CBA” scenario. By dividing these CBAs into three categories he seeks to understand which factors allow CBAs to happen and how differing local factors allow CBAs to be negotiated. By using this framework and his case studies he observes that CBAs with strong grassroot coalitions were more likely to succeed. Local level politics is extremely influential within the “political patronage” category, but not so much in the “inclusive” CBAs. Because of this, Rosado puts a premium on market level factors (which influence all three CBA categories), and in his conclusion suggests that a healthy relationship where there is constant constructive dialogue and understanding between the coalition groups and private developers is the most beneficial in making effective CBA agreements.
Taking it a step further, Edward W. De Barbieri (2017) argues that government involvement is harmful to coalition groups within community benefit agreements. Using a legal framework, he emphasizes the importance of CBAs as private contracts between two parties (the developers and coalition groups). De Barbieri gives an overview of the general arguments in the CBA literature for and against Community Benefit Agreements. He then looks at the 2013 Kingsbridge National Ice Center CBA in the Bronx as a case study to argue that CBAs are in fact beneficial for both communities and the economy under certain conditions. He offers a framework to measure when CBAs will benefit neighborhood. This framework includes the ability of agreements to resolve neighbor disputes, increase civic participation, and the ability to protect taxpayers with a binding enforcement mechanism.

Finally, De Barbieri discusses the issues that arrive when government tries to take an active role forming a legal agreement between the coalition builders and developers. Since CBAs are a private contract, government involvement would give the state a primary role during the bargaining process. De Barbieri argues that this role could legally open possibilities for constitutional protection towards developers, given the recent trend in court rulings to view corporations as people. These constitutional protections would put coalition builders at a disadvantage and give further power to developers in the long run if questions about implementation were to arise. He states that given the recent trend in CBA literature towards greater government involvement (as shown by the previous authors), CBA coalition builders should be wary of the legal dangers of bringing government into the fold.

It is possible to see the disagreements when thinking about the best way to make CBAs the most effective. As shown in the previous paragraphs, the scholars within this realm agree that
CBAs have the potential to be effective, but there must be further actions put in place to make them truly effective. They differ, however, how to make these CBAs effective. One group highlights the importance of government involvement (Wolf-Power 2010, 2012, 2014, Patterson et. al. 2016) while the other group prefers an approach more centered on community coalitions (De Barbieri 2017, Leach 2016, Rosado 2015).

**Conclusion**

Community Benefit agreements give residents of communities a chance to make agreements with powerful developers in their benefit. Because of this possibility, CBAs have been extremely popular in the past 20 years to promote growth in a way where developers and residents can benefit. The scholarly literature surrounding CBAs has focused on the effectiveness of these CBAs, both during the negotiation process and its subsequent application. Scholars have divided into three schools of thought: 1) CBAs are in fact effective tools because of their emphasis on participatory democracy; 2) CBAs are not effective because they either do not work or allow certain groups within coalitions to take over negotiation process; and finally 3) CBAs have the possibility of being effective if certain measures are put into effect, these measures being more government involvement or focusing less on government and more on the strength of coalition groups.
Chapter 3

Research Design: Effectiveness of Community Benefit Agreements

Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) are a relatively new tool that cities have begun to utilize to both please developers and obtain benefits for community members outside of development. Community Benefit Agreements are private agreements between community coalitions and developers looking to develop in certain neighborhoods. Cities have been rapidly changing so residents in communities (especially marginalized communities) are getting priced out of their own neighborhood. On the contrary, developers often have an extremely strong hold on local politics and many times do have free range to develop without any consequences. Because of this, it is extremely important to study CBAs because they can be used as an important tool to counter the imbalanced influence developers can have on city development. I will be researching just how effective are Community Benefit Agreements are, specifically focusing in on their effectiveness in providing tangible benefits for the community.

Answer to Research Question

Scholars have answered this in a variety of different ways. The first group argues that CBAs are in fact effective because they provide tangible benefits such as affordable housing, agreements to pay a living wage to their employees, agreements to hire employees from the local community, amongst other benefits. They also talk about how CBAs can improve participatory processes within these city communities. The second group argues that CBAs are not effective because the benefits are not real and tangible since CBAs are difficult to implement in practice and have the tendency to fall apart after the agreement is made. At the same time, they argue that during negotiations, certain groups within community coalitions (e.g. Unions) will have a
stronger stake, skewing the negotiations to their favor which leads to an unbalanced agreement where only certain groups will derive benefits. Finally, the third school of thought acknowledges that Community Benefit Agreements could be a powerful tool, but there must be changes for them to be useful. They fall into two subgroups, one arguing that there should be progressive government involvement that supports coalition groups, and the other arguing that there must be powerful coalitions that are durable when faced with the test of time. I find myself more interested in this third group of thought because it is very apparent that not every Community Benefit Agreement works in practice. That being said, there have been successful CBAs (such as the seminal LIVE Benefits Agreement in Los Angeles in 2001) that have proven to help communities.

Going with this third school of thought, I want to investigate how CBAs can be further effective by looking at government involvement combined with the role coalitions play during the CBA negotiations and its implementation. Within the third category, scholars have separately looked at the role coalitions have to play, and the role the government plays. There has been little to no literature that examines the role of both coalitions and government and their influence on the success of a CBA. Because of this, I want to look at how both variables impact the effectiveness of these agreements. Given the previous literature, it is undoubtable that strong coalitions play an important role in the overall effectiveness of CBAs (Saito 2008). The role of government, on the other hand, is more contested. Theoretically, a progressive government can give much needed support to coalitions, better leveraging the power dynamic between developers and community coalition (Wolf-Powers 2010). If there is a combination of progressive government, alongside strong coalitions, CBAs will be the most effective.
Hypothesis Formulation

The hypothesis is: If there are broad-based coalitions that have the resources to organize (independently from the developers) and be consistently active throughout Community Benefit Agreement negotiations and after its implementation, combined with a progressive local government that is able to communicate with and support these coalitions through policy and administrative review, then CBAs will prove effective tools for communities and local residents. The dependent variable is the effectiveness of CBAs towards communities where developers plan to build. The two independent variables then are the strength of coalitions and the role of progressive government. Using these dependent and independent variables, the hypothesis is:

Strong Coalitions + Expansive Progressive Government $\rightarrow$ Effective CBA

I am hypothesizing that the combination of the two independent variables will lead to the most effective CBA, where any other variation will lead to a less effective CBA.

Definition of Concepts

*Community Benefit Agreements*, or *CBAs*, are agreements (either informal or formal) between developers and various types of organizations and groups that form community-based coalitions (these groups could include unions, neighborhood civic groups and environmental groups) (Buxamasa 2008). These agreements attempt to offset the negative effects that developers may have in their respective neighborhoods and create new opportunities for the neighborhood such as jobs and housing. In an ideal CBA, the developers get to build their project with the support of the community members.

*Progressive Governments*: I will be using Pierre Clavel’s definition of a progressive city government that he lays out in his book *The Progressive City* (1986). Clavel essentially states
that a progressive city is the intersection of redistributive and participatory reforms initiated by the city government. In being redistributive, a progressive government must actively look for opportunities to enact equitable public policies where private money is channeled into public funds, or where there is a balance between the public and the private. Progressive cities also encourage transparency and citizen involvement in politics, actively reaching out to community members and asking them for their input in local policy and decision making. A combination redistributive policies and actions encouraging citizen participation make for a progressive city government.

Community Coalitions: Community coalitions are non-governmental community organizations that come together to make decisions about what the community needs, creating public policies that will support their constituents (Buxamusa 2008). There will be four main factors accounting for the strength of coalitions: 1) the ability to organize independently from the developers; 2) ability to reach out to different aspects of the community (how broad-based it is); 3) its ability to maintain this hold on the community for a lasting period of time; and 4) the access to valuable resources (such as legal advice, time and money). These factors stem from Leeland Saito’s research on CBAs and community coalitions (2008) and research suggesting that coalition efforts need to be maintained over an extended period to allow for positive effects in population-level changes (Steckler & Goodman, 1989).

Effectiveness of CBAs: I am defining the effectiveness of CBAs by measuring both the negotiation and the implementation of the agreement. For a CBA to be “effective” it must portray the needs and wants of a wide variety of community members during the negotiation process, and it will create tangible and long-lasting benefits for the neighborhoods and the surrounding communities. These tangible and long-lasting benefits should be both something
that can be seen through data showing an increase in jobs/affordable housing/community parks/recreation projects/other positive benefits towards communities, and the general contentment of community members.

Case Selection

I will be looking at four cases to test my hypothesis. These cases are the Atlantic Yards CBA in New York, New York in 2005, the Lorenzo Project in Los Angeles California in 2011, the Temple Stadium in Philadelphia PA and the Oakland Army Base CBA in Oakland, California of 2013. Since CBAs are relatively new (the first one ever being in 1998) there are only a handful of CBAs in implementation. I have chosen CBAs that are not relatively old (comparing it to the first few CBAs), but also not extremely new (created in the past five years). Part of my measurement for effectiveness is its lasting effect on communities, so looking at CBAs that are more recent would not allow me to look at the more long-term effects. In addition, the CBAs chosen as case studies have not been extensively researched by academics, so I am hoping to add to the CBA literature regarding these agreements. I also chose these cases because of the specific role community coalitions and local government play in each CBA. See below for a chart describing this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role of Progressive Government</th>
<th>Role of Coalitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Atlantic Yards (New York, NY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansive</td>
<td>Temple University Stadium (PA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oakland Army Base (Oakland, CA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measuring the Effectiveness of CBAs through the Role of Government and Coalitions
By using these three cases and this two by two model, I will be able to measure all the variables in my hypothesis, while seeing how the two independent variables interact with one another in relation to the dependent variable. As stated above, these two independent variables are the most important when looking at the effectiveness of CBAs.

Other variables that could influence the effectiveness of CBAs are a booming housing economy and the broader current political trend towards devolution (Leroy 2009, Gross 2007). One could argue that devolution is a trend that is happening throughout the entire country, so it would not affect one city more than the other would. On the other hand, Los Angeles, New York, and Oakland are all well-known cities with relatively strong housing economies. According to the HUD U.S. Housing Market Conditions report, the three cities had “strong economic growth” during the years the CBA was implemented (2005, 2011, and 2013). Since their economies are all relatively strong, this will control for the economic variable that some scholars argue affects CBAs (Gross 2007).

The two variables that will be tested were chosen because they are the most researched and highlighted in the bulk of literature surrounding Community Benefit Agreements. I also argue that these two variables are directly related to the outcome of a CBA (Community Benefit agreements are negotiated with coalition groups and there have been multiples instances of government involvement before and after the process), creating a causal relationship between the independent and dependent variable.

Measurement of Variables

The two independent variables will be broken up into two separate measurements. I will be measuring the “progressiveness” of a city government by ranking it not progressive,
somewhat progressive, and progressive. Using the definition given by Clavel (1986), non-progressive ranking would display a city government that does not participate in redistributive or participatory reforms. A progressive government would be a city that actively seeks out redistributive and participatory reforms. A somewhat progressive city in turn would be a city government that has progressive policies and has undertaken some reforms, but overall does not actively seek out to be progressive. Within this scale, I will rank the four cities where the case studies are based and assign them a category.

Coalitions will be categorized into the categories “weak” or “strong,” using the four criteria for a successful community coalition: 1) ability to organize independently; 2) broad-based; 3) long-lasting; and 4) access to resources. If a coalition has three or four of the criteria, it will be classified as “strong.” If it has zero to two of the criteria, it will be classified as “weak.”

By using the two-by-two model to compare the case studies, it is possible to see how these four variations of the two independent variables will interact with one another in reference to the dependent variable. According to my hypothesis, the case study that has both a progressive government and strong coalitions will lead to the most effective CBA. Conversely, the case study that has weak coalitions and a non-progressive government should be the least effective. The other two case studies that mix the different variations could result in a few different outcomes, including a CBA that in theory looks promising but fell short during the implementation process, or a CBA where there was only marginal benefits for the community, both in the agreement and implementation.

Following the definitions laid out, future research can find different case studies with progressive government and strong coalitions and measure its effectiveness, giving the variables its reliability. In addition, the outcomes of the two independent variables in the particular case
studies chosen are controlled against other possible variables, providing the validity of the measurements. The data collection and analysis will also further give both reliability and validity to the measurements.

Data Collection and Analysis

To collect data I plan to look at a variety of different sources including the Community Benefit Agreements of the four cases, transcripts of meetings between developers and community coalitions during negotiation processes, data from city government such as transcriptions of town halls regarding CBA negotiations and oversight boards, newspaper articles, and finally interviews with developers, community coalition leaders and current members of the oversight board. I will also look at previous research done to complement these sources of data. By looking at the language of the CBAs and of the meetings I will be able to determine if the CBAs in the case studies were effective at portraying the needs and wants of community members at the outset. The data from city government and oversight boards will measure the long-term effectiveness of the CBAs by giving tangible results after the CBA has been implemented. This will be complemented by interviews which will help further delve into the effectiveness of CBAs both at the outset and its implementation.

The interview questions will differ depending on who is being interviewed. For the local government agents, the questions will focus on what they have done to hold up to their part of the agreement and what the negotiation process looked like when dealing with community coalitions. Some questions could be “What resources are you employing to follow through with X part of the CBA,” “what were some concerns/difficulties you had at the beginning of the process,” and “what are some difficulties you are facing now related to the implementation of the agreement.” On the coalition side, I will ask similar questions such as “what were the biggest
obstacles negotiating and implementing the CBA” “what were some tactics you used to negotiate within the coalition, and make sure the coalition worked together”, “do you feel that all the voices of the community were heard” and finally “what contact, if any did you have with the local government during the process and the implementation?”. These are just a sample of the types of questions I would ask, however by asking these questions I will get an insider look on the process and implementation of CBAs, beyond solely looking at the data.

By using this research design, the hypothesis that expansive government combined with strong coalitions will result in an effective CBA will be further explored, adding a new light to the effects of both government and coalitions to the existing literature.
Chapter 4

Lorenzo Project in Los Angeles California

Overview of Urban Development and Evolution of Community Organizations from the Late 1980s to the Present

During 1980s, Los Angeles experienced a rapid influx of mostly Latinx and Asian immigrants. The city had always been a center where immigrants and white Americans have mixed, offering a wide array of jobs ranging from high technical/high paid labor to blue-collar low wage jobs (Davis 1990). With the influx of these immigrants, certain neighborhoods started changing, creating majority dominated neighborhoods based on where the immigrants came from. This puts stress on the job market, as these immigrants would normally pick up these blue-collar jobs while at the same time segmenting different industries along ethnic lines. This influx of immigrants also led to a decline of power for the African American community, who held much of the power in city hall through Tom Bradley who served as mayor from 1973 to 1993 (Ebner 1997). During this time there was also a rapid downtown development, as the government was trying to compensate for the loss of manufacturing jobs. Money was being poured into developers and real estate agents to build new sky-rises. (Rohlrich 1998)

The job landscape was rapidly changing alongside the demographics of the city. By the 1990s there was a large stratification between high wage workers (such as engineers, business executives, entertainment industry) and low-wage workers, as the middle stratus manufacturing jobs were disappearing (Ebner 1997). The stress on the job market came to an all-time high in 1992, with an unemployment rate of 10.7% (FRED). The high unemployment rate mixed with the rising ethnic tensions brought about protests and general unrest within the city, such as city-
wide riots (Roco 1996). Before 1992, unions in LA had slowly been experiencing a shift in organizing, focusing in on grassroots tactics and bringing in different demographics to include the recent influx of Asian and Latinx immigration. They also started communicating directly with immigration activists, eventually creating a solid Latinx/Union coalition. The 1992 unrest gave the unions that had been slowly changing and increasing their power a chance to mobilize community organizations from different demographic and religious backgrounds, creating a non-profit called Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) (Saito and Truong 2015). LAANE was primarily funded by the healthy Los Angeles citizens, and enjoyed heavy fundraising tactics. LAANE oversees conducting research, formulating policies, developing campaigns, building coalitions, and advocating for the interests of low-income workers in Los Angeles, bringing together different demographics.

As LA was developing its downtown and bringing in more and more developers into play, LAANE successfully negotiated the first Community Benefits Agreement of the country in 1998. This CBA provided living wage and local hiring provisions for a shopping center in Hollywood. LAANE achieved this without the support of the current mayor at that time, Richard Riordan, a Republican who was dead set on allowing developers to build without any problems (Liegeois, Baxa, and Corkrey 1999). This first CBA set a precedent for the LA Live benefits agreement to follow and proved that the Latinx – Labor coalition was a powerful force. Shortly after that LAANE was the primary leader in negotiating the La Live benefits agreement, which has become the standard example of a successful CBA today. LAANE, alongside the group Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE) spearheaded a total of five unions, twenty-one community organizations and around 300 residents in reaching an agreement to build the Staples center, successfully creating a new land trust, the contribution of $6,435,000 in loans and grants
for 181 housing units, creating 120 units of affordable housing, and establishing a hiring program
targeted low-income individuals of the area (Saito and Truong 2015).

These accomplishments have paved the way for other successful CBAs and have given
different community groups a solid template for organizing and negotiating. The success has also
allowed local lawyers to grow in expertise for dealing with developers, especially the Legal Aid
Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA). Some actors involved in the original LA CBAs used their
expertise and knowledge to help United Neighbors in Defense Against Displacement (UNIDAD)
successfully negotiate with Geoffrey Palmer Developer in the Lorenzo Project.

*South Central Los Angeles and Geoffrey Palmer*

There has been a long history of activism within South Central LA. Between the 1960s
and the 1970s, South Central was a black-majority district, and it was a hub for activist groups
such as the Congress for Racial Equality and the Black Panthers (Pastor et al. 2015). In the
1980s, the demographics started changing with the influx of immigrants from Central America,
increasing from 23% to 63% over twenty years (2015). According to the 2000 census, South
Central is now comprised of 83% identifying as Latinx, 10% as Black, and 1% for both white
and Asian ethnicities (Census 2000). The already strong presence of community and activist
groups translated into the new Latinx population, as older predominantly black organizations
such as the Watts Civic Organization, started including Latinx leadership, and new Latinx
organizations such as UNIDAD were created (Pastor et al. 2015).

The neighborhood also started changing during the late 1990s due to its proximity to
downtown LA and the University of Southern California. The redevelopment of downtown
brought about higher housing prices and the influx of immigrants made for a scarcity of jobs,
putting stress on an already historically disenfranchised neighborhood. During the 2000s, USC started expanding more and more, and students started pouring into South Central once again putting even more pressure on housing rates (Pei Wu 2011).

Geoffrey H. Palmer and his company H. Palmer Associates have a long history of upscale apartment developments in Los Angeles and have been known to fight against the affordable housing requirements when constructing a new development. Palmer sued the city twice, once in 2001, arguing that LA’s affordable housing rules violated a 1995 law. In 2009, he successfully sued the city again, making it illegal for cities in the state of California to compel developers to include affordable housing (Tinoco 2016). Palmer decided to capitalize on the combination of a booming downtown and USC students looking for housing, proposing the “Lorenzo Apartments.” Advertised as “upscale student housing,” it would appeal to both young residents recently out of college looking for a place to stay near downtown and current students who could afford to pay for the luxury (The Lorenzo). The land that Palmer was proposing to develop on was zoned for medical or educational purposes and was clearly not looking to build housing for the actual residents of South Central neighborhood. Because of this, UNIDAD and other community members decided to push back against these plans.

UNIDAD and Community Organizing: A Strong Coalition

When H. Palmer Associates first announced its plans to build the Lorenzo Apartments, UNIDAD had already organized to fight against the recent University of Southern California’s plan to build student housing in the South Central neighborhood. They had been organizing with SAJE and The California Endowment (TCE) against USC. The establishment of this connection facilitated these core groups to work with one another. They also brought in Esperanza Housing
Committee whose location was directly across from where the apartments were supposed to be built and who had experience within the community through a community health promotion program, the Building Healthy Communities (BHC) initiative (Pastor et al. 2015).

In 2010, Palmer went public with their plans, and a hearing date before the Los Angeles County Planning and Land Use Commission was scheduled for December 9th in San Gabriel Valley, far away from South Central. UNIDAD managed to petition to move the date to January 13th, 2011, closer to South Central in downtown LA. On December 10th, 2010, the mobilization began: nearly one thousand community members, activists, and members gathered at the Lorenzo Project site to protest and demonstrate against the loss of health services in place of the luxury apartments (Pei Wu 2011). UNIDAD was able to accomplish this due to the strong leadership provided by certain community groups such as SAJE and Esperanza Community Housing. Robert Rubin, executive director of Vermont Village states that “the organizers act as mediators between developer, legal system, the city, and the community” because they dealt with the more complicated legal and development processes with their experience that the smaller more grassroots community groups would not have the time or resources to deal with (personal interview 2020). Rubin then goes to state that “the community was aware and got involved because of the coalition” (2020). On the day of the petition to City Hall, the coalition arrived and made clear that they were not happy with the proposal, bringing in their legal team as backup if the developer tried to pull any legal tricks with the groups and community members, successfully pushing G. H. Palmer associates to negotiate with them (Martinez interview 2020). In the next month of negotiation, UNIDAD reached out to the community members and continued to organize, successfully negotiating a CBA.
UNIDAD and its coalition can be considered a strong coalition. Firstly, they were able to organize independently of the developers. G. H. Palmer did not reach out to any community organizations because they wanted to proceed with the project without having to negotiate a CBA. It was the pressure that the coalition put on Palmer through constant protests and threats to file lawsuits which made them cave in (Pastor et al. 2015). Being able to organize independently of the developers gives coalitions a chance to truly reach out to community members to listen to their concerns while progressing the goals of individual community organizations without the influence of the developers. The coalition was also able to reach out to different community groups, getting signatories on the final agreement by eleven organizations: Community Development Technologies Center, Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, National Resources Defense Council, Playa Vista Job Opportunities and Business Services, St. Francis Center, St. John Well Child and Family Center, SAJE, TRUST, United University Church, Vermont Village Community and Coalition for Responsible Community Development (GH Palmer and Associates, 2011). These organizations included environmental groups, religious institutions from South Central LA, local civic neighborhood groups, local medical centers, community members from South Central LA and LA job bank organizations. The diversity of these groups that cover different aspects of civic life shows just how broad-based the community was.

Alongside its ability to organize independently of the organizers and its broad-base reach, the coalition had access to valuable legal resources. Partnering with the coalition were the legal group’s Public Counsel, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Chatten Brown & Carstens, Natural Resources Defense Council and Community Benefits Law Center (UNIDAD 2011). These organizations have had previous experience negotiating CBAs for different coalitions in
LA and had previously developed a relationship with the group representing G. H. Palmer (Lathame and Watkins LLP) because of their previous involvement in other CBAs on the developer’s side (Martinez interview 2020). Finally, the coalition has had a lasting impact on the community: Esperanza group still has its offices in front of the Lorenzo complex and all the community groups that participated in the CBA still exist today. The UNIDAD coalition has gone on to negotiate other CBAs for the South Central neighborhood, the most recent being with USC (Pastor et al. 2015).

Local Government Involvement: A Progressive City, to a Certain Extent

In 2001 LA elected James Hahn (D) as mayor, following Richard J. Riordan, the city’s first Republican mayor since 1973. Hahn won with the support of a moderate coalition including centrist Republicans, moderate Democrats, and a majority of the Black vote (Rainey and Krikorian 2001). Although he did not help push any overtly progressive policies during his term, he was known to push back against developers especially when it came to education and building schools (2001). Finally, in 2005 with a multiracial (mostly the black and Latinx community) and the moderate Democratic coalition to back him up, Antonio Villaraigosa became the mayor until 2013 (Meyerson 2013). Villaraigosa ran on a progressive campaign promising educational reforms and a safer more equitable city. Although he ran on a progressive campaign, his policies concerning housing and gentrification were less than progressive.

In 2007, alongside Jan Perry, the council member responsible for South Central LA, Villaraigosa enacted the Safe Cities Initiative (SCI) in Downtown and South LA. This initiative was set to clear the streets of homeless citizens and find them a new place to stay. What seems like a progressive policy turned out to be a policing measure, which displaced many of these
homeless people forcing them to leave all their possessions, or even in some instances arresting them (Blasi 2007). There are complaints by various newspaper organizations and community groups that critique the SFC led by Perry and Villaraigosa because it opened up a path for developers to gentrify and build in the historically impoverished area (Blasi 2007, Los Angeles Catholic Worker 2007).

Villaraigosa’s campaign also received contributions by certain LA elite businessmen and developers, including Geoffrey Palmer (Tinoco 2016). Finally, the court case stating that city governments could not mandate affordable housing stipulations to develop their properties in combination with these other policies made for an environment not conducive for CBAs, especially in the downtown/south LA area where Villaraigosa and Perry were conducting non-progressive policies that focused on policing instead of reaching out to the community and enacting equitable policies to help the homelessness problem (Zavis 2012).

In LA, city council members and The Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM) oversee issuing the permit to developers, and they play a critical role in choosing who develops in the council member’s respective district. During the Lorenzo Project negotiations, UNIDAD had to form close ties with Ed Reyes and Jan Perry, the two respective council members. Robert Rubin states that it was difficult at first since both the developers and UNIDAD were vying for their attention, which created conflict at first, but ultimately states that “it was not a hard decision for her to support us because these constituents were in our district” (personal interview 2020). It is also important to point out that before the first city hall meeting where UNIDAD organized and showed up with a strong legal team, the developers had been in contact with the council, and they were ready to accept the permit (Pei Wu 2011). Although council members ended up supporting the community groups, giving them extra time to negotiate the
CBA and only granting the land permit when the two parties were content on the agreement, it was the unceasing effort of the coalition that brought the CBA to light. The council members Perry and Reyes, prior to the approval process, did not try to reach out to the community, even though they had known about the project since 2007.

It is important to note LA has enacted many progressive redistributive policies such as a $100 million-dollar annual municipal housing trust fund, anti-sweatshop policies and strict environmental policies that aim to help low-income neighborhoods (Dreier 2005). The city is certainly more progressive than most cities within the United States, supporting unions and progressive labor laws. However, policies like the Safe Cities Initiative still get implemented and local politicians accept money from developers and elites, disproportionately affecting low-income and marginalized citizens. A wholly progressive city is utterly impossible because there will always be punitive policies put in place. So overall, LA does a good job of actively passing redistributive progressive policies, it gets more complicated when taking into consideration the other aspect of progressive cities: participatory reforms.

As stated before, a progressive government must actively look for opportunities to encourage transparency and local involvement in politics, actively reaching out to community members and asking them for their input in local policy and decision-making. The city council members failed to do this. However, LA is home to strong community groups who are experienced in organizing and have the resources to mobilize effectively who were able to successfully lobby the council members. In the Lorenzo Project, the council members did not take any active steps in reaching out to community members, rather, the coalition had to reach out and fight for the council members’ support. LA’s council members could have been more progressive.
Since LA has participated in redistributive policies (to an extent) but has not partaken in participatory reforms (especially looking at the Lorenzo Project CBA), the LA government can be labeled as a somewhat progressive government.

**Effectiveness of the Lorenzo Project CBA**

After a month of negotiations, the parties agreed on a CBA that would provide $9.5 million in community benefits. These benefits include a 7,500 square foot community health clinic operating rent-free for the first twenty years. This would provide important health benefits for the community, giving them access to a close and reliable clinic. Secondly, sixty percent of permanent jobs in the Lorenzo development complex would be living wage and 40 percent of the hours would go to local hires. Thirdly, Lorenzo promised to foster community engagement by creating special groups and activities in the development just for neighborhood residents. Forth, Palmer promised to set aside five-percent of units for low-income tenants (forty-six apartments) and ten percent of discounted retail space for local businesses. Alongside the discounted retail space, Palmer would establish a small business revolving loan fund. Finally, Palmer would provide support for local job training and health promotion (McDonnell 2011). In 2015 the Rev. Warner Traynham Health Center opened its doors, with around 223,000 patient visits (from South LA area) ranging from medical, dental, and behavioral health services in the first year (St. John’s 2015).

As stated before, this negotiation has a broad-base reach to different members of the community, providing medical benefits, living wage jobs and opportunities for small business owners. Finally, the legal team backing the coalition has the resources and is powerful enough to threaten G. H. Palmer with a lawsuit if it decides to not follow its side of the agreement.
(Martinez personal interview 2020). The successful negotiation between Palmer and UNIDAD also gave the coalition a platform and experience to negotiate a CBA with USC, providing even more benefits to the community such as a large increase in affordable housing. The Lorenzo Project made USC take the coalition more seriously in negotiations (Pastor et al. 2015).

The Lorenzo project was successful because of the power the coalition held. They were able to successfully mobilize different factions of the community while having the resources and experience to do so. Although the local politicians and the city council never went against the coalition and became supportive of UNIDAD, it was the tenacity and perseverance of the coalition that resulted in G. H. Palmer Associates, a developer company known for bulldozing over anything remotely progressive, caving and negotiating the CBA. In the Oakland CBA the coalition, although still considered a strong one, had the full support of the local government and politicians, resulting in a much smoother and more rewarding process for their CBA.
Chapter 5

The Oakland, California Army Base CBA

Historical Background

Throughout much of the 1900s, Oakland was one of the biggest ports in the United States, importing raw goods while exporting manufactured goods made in the city. This changed slowly, as jobs decreased and suburbanization drove out the predominantly white middle class. Between the years of 1970 and 1990, Oakland’s population declined by 90,000 people (Rhomber 2004). In 1978, California passed Proposition 13, impeding Oakland from raising property taxes and making the city much more dependent on private business and investment, and less on redistributive policies (Rhomber 2004). On top of that, Oakland lost around 12,000 jobs between the 1970s-1989, and as gangs, crime and drug wars started blossoming because of the poor economic downturn, developers and major retailers started leaving the city (Rubin 1998). While citizens were moving out, a wave of Latinx and Asian immigrants were arriving to Oakland, putting pressure on the job market, and adding to the unemployment rate (Rhomber 2004).

The combination of Proposition 13 and the suburban flight of both citizens and retailers left downtown scarce. Oakland developed an “imaging problem,” where companies were afraid to invest in development because of two reasons: the way the negative light of Oakland might reflect on the business, and from the fear of the business not producing the income needed to operate (Rhomber 2004). To add heat to the flame, the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake decimated the city, destroying the downtown and forcing the government to make costly repairs to many of the buildings (Rhomber 2004). Things did not get much better in the 1990s. The mayor tried multiple times to bring developers and new investment into the city, failing consecutively and in
1993 the federal government announced it would close the federal army base which provided around 12,000 jobs and affected 60,000 military members (Rhomber 2004). The stagnation that lasted from the 1970s until the late 1990s would shortly end with the rapidly expanding growth of the technology sector of the Bay Area eventually pushing housing prices up because of the housing shortage in the Bay Area.

Jerry Brown, the previous governor of California and a past presidential nominee, ran for the Mayor’s office in 1999 and won by a majority. As Mayor, Brown enacted the 10K Plan which planned for the arrival of 10,000 new residents to downtown Oakland by encouraging the development of housing, while also an eighty-unit affordable housing complex (City of Oakland 2012). Aside from the affordable housing complex, these units served mostly middle- and upper-class San Francisco commuters, raising rent by 40% in the area and tripling eviction rates (Salazar 2006). The failure of private and government investments in downtown Oakland during the 1990s created a vacuum for non-profits and community groups from West Oakland to take advantage of federal grants and loans, essentially forcing them to be creative and provide housing for a large low-income and homeless population in the area. Because of this Brown’s 10K did not sit well for many of the original community members, and they mobilized creating new coalitions including the East Bay Housing Organization, Revive Oakland and Coalition for Workforce Housing, managing to squeeze out more affordable housing units from the project.

In 2007, Oakland elected long-time progressive Ronald V. Dellums. As Mayor, Dellums was a previous member of congress, unapologetically identifying as a socialist and becoming the first socialist to be elected to congress. It was during his time as mayor, that the city of Oakland started a bid for developers to build on the Oakland Army Base land. Included in this bid was the stipulation that the developer would have to create a CBA. The Economic and Workforce
Development Department reached out to the Revive Oakland coalition to generate a good jobs policy framework which includes labor policies, before even going into negotiations with the developers. In 2012 the three parties came to an agreement, signing the Oakland Army Base CBA.

**Community Organizing in West Oakland and Beyond**

Oakland has had a long history of community organization, rooted in the Black Panther movement of the 1960s. Areas like West Oakland, a historically black and impoverished neighborhood, have been organizing for years for civil rights, housing, jobs and fair pay, which has created a solid backbone of community groups in the area (Self 2000). Along with the strong ties within West Oakland, the community groups have ties with each-other across the city. The Oakland Community Organization founded in the 1970s is a church-based coalition that reaches out to over a dozen member congregations in the East, West, and North Oakland (Rhomber 2004). As Latinx and Asian immigrants moved to Oakland, they also integrated themselves into these coalitions, and in some cases created their own organizations. As part of the 10K Plan, Revive Oakland! was formed. Revive Oakland! gained important experience that would translate into the Oakland Army Base CBA.

In 2010, the Oakland city government contacted local community organizations to assist with the development of the Army Base. Revive Oakland! consisted of thirty different local organizations from East Oakland including neighborhood civic organizations, faith, and labor groups, spearheaded by the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE) and Partnership for Working Families (PWC). Working alongside Revive Oakland! were West Oakland residents, representatives from the Building Trades Council of Alameda County, and
OaklandWORKS. The coalitions had very different ideas and perspectives in the outset. Revive Oakland! focused more on the bigger picture, including the passage of Labor Laws that would become policy, and providing work for their community members. Oakland Works on the other hand was worried about the direct environmental effects the Army Base would have on their neighborhood, which was only blocks away.

During the negotiations process, tension arose between the two groups because Oakland Works was much more skeptical about the development. Works was focused on the direct impact the Army Base would have on the wellbeing of their neighborhood, since pollution and contamination is an unavoidable byproduct of large construction policies. This being said, the community organizations and the government really worked hard to include them in the agreement, essentially going back to the basics by reiterating the importance of coming together for the common goal of sustainable jobs and benefits (Auletta personal interview 2020). There was also some conflict within the coalition and the government; an environmental group sued Oakland city government and the Oakland Maritime Support Services (one of the local businesses allied with the project) in the midst of negotiations, making coalition meetings tense (personal interview 2020). Although the lawsuit made negotiations tense, the coalition was able to surpass the tension and come together to make a unanimous decision on the stipulations of the CBA in 2012. From there, the coalition and the government brought the agreement to the developer’s table.

There are two main developers who signed the original agreement, Prologis (a large multinational developer) and the more local Oakland Redevelopment Successor Agency (ORSC). ORSC had already worked with some community groups and the local government on the Fox Theater Renovation downtown (part of the broader 10K program Brown implemented).
project and was supportive of implementing a CBA that would benefit the community. Prologis followed suit realizing that the only way to successfully develop would be to comply with the CBA (Monnetta personal interview 2020). To help with the negotiations with the developers, the coalitions and governments hired the law office of Julian Gross based in Los Angeles to work on the project. Gross is one of the leading legal experts in CBA in the country, having worked on big cases like the LA Live benefits agreement, the LA Lorenzo Project, and the Ballpark Village CBA. Al Auletta, the Redevelopment Area Manager of the project, states that the government specifically channeled extra money into the project in order to hire Gross and his law offices. The two developers took to the plan without issue. From the start, the developers agreed to having the CBA be negotiated as a precursor to the final agreement. They realized that the opportunity to develop in Army Yards was invaluable, and would essentially agree to almost anything (Monetta personal interview 2020). The developers however were not completely cut out of the agreement. The city acted almost as an intermediary, keeping the developers in the loop about the agreements, and acting on behalf of their needs and interests (Al personal interview 2020).

The Oakland community coalition consisting of West Oakland residents, representatives from the Building Trades Council of Alameda County, community coalitions like East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBase), OaklandWORKS and Revive Oakland! is broad-based. It included labor unions, community organizations from both East and West Oakland, small local businesses, environmental groups, and job banks from all over Oakland. Although there was the tension stated above, the different groups were able to get past that barrier and sign a joint agreement, without any of the groups backing out. Since the bulk of the CBA was negotiated before the developer even came into the picture, the coalitions were not influenced at
any point by the developers. This way of negotiating is extremely unusual, as developers tend to negotiate directly with the coalitions. These coalitions still have a lasting impact on the community. In 2015, the Revive Coalition won a job's agreement with AC Transit on its Bus Rapid Transit project on International Boulevard (EBASE 2016).

The Army Base CBA also stipulates that a commission oversee the Job Resource Center created, to make sure the developers are holding to their part of the agreement employing workers. This commission is made from a combination of government employees and members from the local community groups (Oakland 2013). Finally, through a combination of a long history in community organizing and access to government funding, the coalitions had a plethora of resources at their disposal. These resources included the top legal aid of the country for CBAs, access to a large broad-based coalition that were able to communicate despite differences and space to openly communicate with their local politicians on the weekly. Because of these reasons, the coalitions of Oakland during the Army Base were exceptionally equipped to handle the developers, making them a strong coalition.

**Oakland: A Progressive Government**

The Army Base passed to Oakland’s hands in 1999 from the federal government. It took seven years to transition the property into the hands of the local government. Between 2006 and 2009, the city government optioned the property up for a bid to developers. Because of the 2008 financial crisis, the city was not able to find a developer until 2010. From 1999 until 2007, Brown was mayor of Oakland. Brown originally was supported by progressives and black leaders, however, as time went by, he lost this support due to his policies such as the 10K Plan which catered to developers and left little room for the community (Elinson 2010). In 2007
Oakland elected Ronald V. Dellums, an ex-representative from Oakland and Berkley, and the first socialist to be elected to congress. Although Dellums did not provide any strong leadership during his term, he was a supporter of the Army Base development. Dellums kept the project alive by pushing for it during the recession, whereas other government members were ready to give up on it (Debolt 2018, Auletta personal interview 2020). Finally, in 2011, Jean Quan, another progressive, was elected mayor.

In contrast to Brown and Dellums, Quan actively engaged in progressive politics. She helped build a record number of 1,700 affordable housing units and most importantly, co-led the CBA negotiations for the Army Base Project (Jones 2014). Jane Brunner led the Army Base Project alongside Quan. Brunner was elected city council member of district one in 1998 and served until 2013. More than anyone Brunner was the main proponent of the Army Base project. Although Quan was more of a figurehead, Brunner actively participated in the process as the chairmen for the Oakland Community and Economic Development Committee. Using her expertise as an attorney specializing in labor laws, Brunner facilitated creating the labor policies that came out of the CBA (Auletta personal interview 2020). She also worked directly with the coalition (meeting with them nine times in the span of a year) to create a community benefits package before bringing it to the city council to vote on it (Phillips 2012).

A range of labor policies were enacted thanks to the Community Benefits Agreement. Since the development would be used for warehouse and laboratories, there was no option of enacting housing benefits. Because of this, the coalition and the government opted to concentrate all their efforts on labor and training programs. This includes the Construction Jobs Policy for Public Improvements, Construction Jobs Policy for Vertical Construction, and the Operations Jobs Policy. These jobs cover both public and privately funded construction at the base, and non-
construction jobs in developers and tenant’s future operations at the base. The construction jobs include local hire, disadvantaged hire, and bans employers from asking the job applicant whether they had been imprisoned. The operation's policy covers this and includes living wage agreements to all workers, both permanent and temporary. The policy also covers restrictions on the usage of temporary workers, focusing on jobs that would become permanent (City of Oakland 2013). These policies are monitored and enforced by the Community Jobs Oversight Commission, a governmental institution that can force the developers to pay liquidated damage if they do meet their local hiring quota. The agreement also includes an owner control loan policy, making it possible for small contractors within Oakland (who are non-union) to take out loans to be a part of the development process.

The city of Oakland from 1999 until 2010 enacted a fair deal of progressive policies, however, the city still catered to developers, and gentrification and displacement became a huge problem. The city’s handling of the Army Base agreement shows a shift towards much more progressive policies. The landmark labor policies that came out of the agreement were policies that enact equity, providing job opportunities for disenfranchised members of the community, especially citizens who had previously been incarcerated (City of Oakland 2013). The Jobs Commission also makes sure that the private developers do not over-step their boundaries and there is a balance between the public-private agreement. In addition to creating a wide array of equitable policies that now serve as a template for current CBAs in Oakland, the city actively reached out and cooperated with community members and the coalitions in order to create a joint agreement. Jane Brunner worked directly with the coalition, and the government actively backed up the coalition with important resources such as hiring the best lawyers that allowed strong leadership and funds to hire good lawyers. The Army Base agreement showed a significant shift
towards a more progressive city by Oakland both enacting progressive policies that provide opportunities to disenfranchised groups and locals, and by actively reaching out to the community, being as transparent as possible in negotiations and providing them valuable resources. Due to these factors, Oakland’s city government can be considered progressive during the Army Base CBA time period.

Army Base CBA: A Long-Lasting Project still Benefiting the Community Eight Years Later

After three years of deliberations, the City of Oakland, the community coalitions and the developers agreed on a CBA that would guarantee that fifty percent of all construction jobs would go to locals from Oakland, construction work will be covered by project labor agreements outlining job quality standards, living wage for every worker on the site, fifty percent local hire for operation jobs, the creation of a jobs resource center in West Oakland, and finally the creation of an oversight board comprised of the different actors involved in the negotiations. The CBA also includes over $300 million in public resources funding and has created more than three thousand construction jobs and two thousand operations positions (EBASE 2016).

The negotiation process included a very broad-based plethora of different community, religious, labor and youth groups. Despite the inner tensions, none of the groups backed out and the community groups essentially came together to sign the agreement which gave a wide degree of job opportunities to different types of Oakland citizens (previously incarcerated people, workers part of unions, independent contractors, regular unemployed citizens). The city of Oakland made sure to include these community groups. Al Auletta states that at some point OaklandWORKS came into the negotiations very late in the process, but the government and the
rest of the coalitions made room for them and started the negotiations almost from scratch with OaklandWORKS (personal interview 2020). This shows the commitment to paying attention to the community members and making sure they get a say in the agreement.

The creation of the Jobs Resource Center in West Oakland and the Community Jobs Oversight Commission has forced developers to implement the job hiring quotas. Every economic quarter, the developers must send a report to the oversight board, proving that they are keeping up with their quotas. The government can enforce a fine, paying liquidated damage to the state. The oversight board consisting of community organizations, labor, employers, and the City of Oakland, also serves as a tool for further involvement with the project. Keeping community members in the loop while the CBA creates jobs and opportunities for the neighborhood and their surrounding communities.
Chapter 6

Atlantic Yards in New York, New York

Historical Background

New York City has changed drastically over the past forty years. Recovering from a major fiscal crisis in the 1970s that left the city with no money combined with the rescinding of Federal Aid, the city passed the Tax act of 1981 providing generous benefits for real estate development (Sites 2003). This was the start of aggressive campaigns to revitalize and build up New York to make it more palatable for companies and wealthier citizens. New York had lost its prestigious title at that point, as it was labeled as one of the US’s most dangerous cities at that point in time (Shepard 2008). The current mayor of the time Ed Koch set a ten-year housing plan, focusing on developing Manhattan while ignoring the rest of the boroughs. The stock market crash of 1987 left NYC scrambling as projects were left abandoned and offices around Manhattan were not being used. Koch further increased emphasis on development in Manhattan, creating tax-incentive programs to encourage developers to build projects such as Worldwide Plaza (Lueck 1989). New York consistently started turning to private development and set a trend for the incoming years.

While Koch was focusing on Manhattan, the other NYC boroughs like Brooklyn and Queens were left in the dust. These boroughs consisted of low income black, white, and Latinx residents, and rising resentment and income inequality led to social unrest and riots (Siles 2003). This led to the election of David Denkins, the first black mayor of NYC. Although he ran on a broad coalition and stated that he would adopt a more progressive stance, he still heavily handed aided developers in NYC (2003). Denkins, however, backed off his more progressive stance as
the 1987 recession lasted into the early 1990s. By 1992 roughly 20% of office space was vacant in Manhattan, and Real Estate, which had been New York’s biggest business since WWII, had been hit hard (2003). This led Denkins to give further concessions towards the industry such as direct access to government processes to approve development plans (2003). This was the beginning of a much larger trend in NYC towards privatization and greater power to developers.

The 1980s and beginning of the 1990s were characterized by economic hardships, racial tensions, and the move towards large swaths of privatization, especially in the housing industry. While Koch and Denkins, symbolize this, Rudy Giuliani paved the way for even greater concessions for developers. During Giuliani’s term as mayor, public-private groups such as the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) and the Emergency Financial board (EFCB) were created, directly linking the government to the private sector (Brash 2011). Giuliani also spearheaded an aggressive campaign against crime and homelessness, clearing up the streets in a campaign called “Reclaiming the open space of New York” (Siles 2003). This campaign consisted of aggressive policies towards kicking out the homeless from areas all around NYC, clearing the way for development. Policies like these focusing on policing and privatization led to community groups in Brooklyn organizing and protesting against Giuliani, however, although these important bonds were formed, they proved fruitless against the powerful private-public coalition in city hall (Berman and Berger 2007).

By the late 1990s, New York experienced an economic boom, bringing jobs and business back into the city. This boom, however, increased income inequality and mainly benefited middle to upper-class citizens. This trend continued into the 2000s, culminating with the election of Michael Bloomberg, the “CEO mayor”. Bloomberg used the mayor’s office and corporatized it, backing large development projects such as the NYC2012 bid to bring the Olympics to New
York City in Hudson Yard (Brash 2011). The privatization and public-private coalition continued through his time as mayor.

Downtown Brooklyn and Atlantic Yards

While the 1980s to the late 1990s focused on redeveloping Manhattan through big development projects, Brooklyn largely got left out of the conversation. Brooklyn had fallen from being an industrial center of NYC, the home of the Dodgers and home to the booming Cooney island, to a borough with high racial tensions and a high unemployment rates (Sokol 2014). Although there had always been racial tensions, the general economic unrest mixed with Giuliani’s aggressive policing tactics brought protests and discomfort to light (Siles 2003). By the 1990s however, Brooklyn as a whole was starting to face gentrification. Bloomberg plays a key role in developing downtown Brooklyn, priming it for more development projects. In 2004 the New York City Department of Planning rezoned downtown Brooklyn allowing for denser residential growth (paving the way for high-rises and new office developments) (Jay 2016). A year before the rezoning Bloomberg set forth a hundred-million-dollar plan to “revitalize” downtown Brooklyn which included new apartments, condos, malls, and parking spaces (Cardwell 2003). Alongside these plans, in 2003 the company Forest City Ratner (FCR) introduces their plans for the Atlantic Yards project.

Community Organizing: A Divided Brooklyn

The Atlantic Yard project consisted of a large development that would include a new stadium for the Nets (the Barclay Center), surrounded by high-rise luxury apartments, a new subway, and a railway. In 2004, the plan to build Atlantic Yards was approved, with backing from some local groups (with the promise of a CBA). This was spearheaded by the Association
of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and Brooklyn United for Innovative Local Development (BUILD), and backed by the Downtown Brooklyn Oversight and Advisory Committee (DBOAC), alongside smaller community member groups representing low-income residents and a faction of local church leadership led by Rev. Dr. Herbert D. Daughtry SR. (Markey 2009).

ACORN had unsuccessfully dealt with Forest City Ratner before during their Atlantic Center Mall development, losing a housing lawsuit to FCR (Angotti 2004). BUILD also had previous ties to Forest City Ratner during the Atlantic Central Mall development. According to James Caldwell, president of BUILD, Forest City Ratner gave BUILD and ACORN personal calls in 2004 to be a part of the CBA because of their previous contact (personal interview, 2020). Forest City Ratner essentially hand-picked the community groups involved in the agreement, shutting out other community groups. One of these community groups that was actively shut out was the Downtown Brooklyn Leadership Coalition (DBLC), a dynamic and sizable group of local clergy and politicians. They claim that they had reached out to the developer with a CBA already drafted but were not allowed into the private meetings with the other community groups and developers (Wisolski 2004).

There is some controversy regarding Forest City Ratner’s involvement in financing these community organizations. The 501(c)s filings of Brooklyn United for Innovative Local Development (BUILD) stated it would receive $5 million from Bruce Ratner's company in exchange for support. FCR also paid $50,000 to Reverend Herbert Daughtry to support the project, claiming to use that money to organize the community (Wisolski 2004). When asked about the money, Caldwell skirted the topic claiming that the figures were exaggerated and that the money mainly went to helping organize the community (personal interview, 2020). It is
important to note that in most successful CBAs (particularly the LA model), the acceptance of money from developers is not allowed (Oder 2008). FCR made it a point to speed up the CBA negotiations, accomplishing an agreement in only eight meetings (Markey 2009). This limited timeline, alongside the handpicking of community groups and possible conflict of interest due to financial reasons, made it that the community groups involved had very little room to maneuver independently to create a solid case against FCR. The lack of transparency as to what happened and the closed-door meetings shows that the community groups involved did not have much autonomy, caving into Forest City Ratner’s request without the support of other groups.

One of the most striking features about the Atlantic Yards CBA was that while around eight community organizations signed the CBA, around fifty local groups organized against the CBA (NYC Bar 2010). A large concern of the project was that this expansive development would encroach upon downtown Brooklyn’s more neighborly style, with low-rises and brownstone aesthetics while displacing residents living in the surrounding areas and drastically hiking up rent (deMause 2012). The construction of Barclay’s Stadium as part of the project also raised huge concerns having to do with traffic and pollution (Angotti 2004). Although the project was approved by the government in 2004, and the CBA was signed into effect on June 27th, 2005 (Oder 2006), construction on Barclay’s center (the main part of the project) did not start until 2010. This is mainly due to the activism of anti-yards community groups such as Develop Don’t Destroy Brooklyn (DDDB) and ‘Brooklyn Speaks’. These groups pressured FCR with a variety of lawsuits, the most famous being Daniel Goldstein with DDDB suing the city against eminent domain for having to be evicted from his condo (Harris 2012). It is clear that the agreement was incredibly one-sided, excluding most of the community in Brooklyn.
Most of the groups part of the coalition were small, local community groups with very little organizational capacity. James Caldwell states that these groups mostly consisted of middle to lower-income community members with day jobs that would come to the negotiation meetings after their regular jobs, exhausted and without experience (personal interview 2020). The two exceptions were ACORN and BUILD. At that moment ACORN was a national organization with chapters all over the country. Founded originally in Little Rock Arkansas in 1970, the New York chapter (founded in 1981) had come to be the second largest in the country and dealt with a large variety of issues including housing, economic justice and education (Simon and Pickron-Davis 2002). However, in 2010 the nonprofit filed for bankruptcy amidst claims of voter fraud (Urbina 2010). BUILD, on the other hand, had no previous history in Brooklyn. It was created in 2003 by the Assemblyman Roger Green for the specific reason of providing job training at the Atlantic Yards. They quickly created the pre-apprentice training program (PATP) to train workers for the upcoming development project and FCR made them (alongside ACORN) in charge of oversight in the CBA (Oder 2015). This all fell apart, however, when in 2010 BUILD went bankrupt and disbanded unexpectedly.

This bankruptcy was largely due to the lawsuit workers had filed against FCR and BUILD for not going through with all the benefits listed in the CBA and promised from PATP (2015). Caldwell claims that the cause for bankruptcy was simply due to the non-profit nature of the organization, where there were little funds to support its employees and an exorbitant amount of outside pressure and scrutiny (personal interview 2020). He also claims that a large failing of the community groups was the inability to hire “fancy lawyers” due to lack of funding, and consistently brings up the difficulties of having little funds and local support during negotiation processes (2020). Regardless of whether or not these community groups received money from
FCR, it is clear that they received an astounding amount of outside pressure, and lacked the funds, support, and experience to properly deal with them.

The Atlantic Yard's community coalition was extremely weak. The amount of autonomy the groups had at the beginning of negotiations is extremely questionable and is shrouded by the non-transparent measures taken by FCR to exclude different parts of the community. The eight community groups seem to have been hand-picked by Ratner, as Ratner initiated the invitation to these groups to participate. The coalition was also not at all broad-based, there was a clear divide in the community between the community groups who supported Atlantic Yards, and the community groups that fought against the development. This is plainly shown in the quantity of the community groups making up each coalition: fifty vs. eight. Finally, the Atlantic Yards coalition fell apart around 2010 mainly because of a lack of resources and support. The collapse of ACORN and BUILD led to all the accountability measures set up in the CBA against FCR to dissolve, leaving FCR to do practically what it wants and not adhere to the original CBA.

**New York Politics during Atlantic Yards: Catering to Developers**

By the early 2000s, New York’s economic sector was starting to grow again, but its citizens were still wary of the fiscal crisis of the 1980s that left the city in disarray. Giuliani had created racial divisions during his time as mayor, especially because of his aggressive policing tactics. This being said, republicans and wealthier upper-class New Yorkers were content with him because he brought back business and navigated a period of economic instability (Siles 2003). When Giuliani’s term in office was ending, Michael Bloomberg, a Wall Street CEO with no previous background in politics, decided to run as mayor of New York City on the Republican ballot. With the backing of Giuliani, Bloomberg formed a coalition of republican,
business elites, liberal “professional culture” elites, and even managed to gather the support of Latinx and black voters who were upset over Green Ferr getting the democratic ticket for the election (Brash 2011).

Bloomberg’s style as mayor was focused mainly on managerial politics, focusing on running government as he would run a business. Exemplifying this was his move to make the mayor’s office into an open-space workplace, much like the Wall Street offices he used to reside in (Brash 2011). His policies also focused on milking out efficiency. In the education sector, he took control over city schools, dismantling the bureaucratic local school boards and implementing a new system focused on testing, all the while pushing the growth of public-private charter schools as an alternative for better schooling (Staff 2019). After the 9/11 attacks, Bloomberg rebranded the city and poured a large amount of money into marketing the city as a safe place where businesses, tourists, and residents could come. Bloomberg also revamped the tech sector, creating important jobs and opportunities for tech companies to invest (2019). Finally, Bloomberg drastically changed housing policy, specifically in Brooklyn.

Throughout his time as mayor Bloomberg heavily encouraged development throughout the city, especially in Brooklyn. Bloomberg pushed for over 120 rezoning’s, covering about 40% of the city (Staff 2019). These rezoning’s included the 2004 rezoning of downtown Brooklyn, and other sites on the Brooklyn waterfront such as Williamsburg (Jay 2016 and Staff 2019). Bloomberg almost single-handedly reshaped the development of Brooklyn and allowed developers to construct a wide variety of projects such as high-rise luxury condos in Williamsburg and Atlantic Yards. As a way to try to offset the rising of prices, Bloomberg created a program that would let developers build higher in rezoned areas if they met a certain affordable housing percentage, however this was not mandatory and the percentage was quite
low (Staff 2019). While Bloomberg did a lot of good for the city, his policies were far from progressive. Bloomberg’s “apolitical” approach to politics distanced him from community groups and grassroots organizations, while he focused more on the business aspect of running a city (Brash 2011).

Bloomberg was a staunch supporter of the Atlantic Yards Development from the beginning. Bruce Ratner, the head of Forest City Ratner recalls that when he first presented the plans to build Atlantic Yards, Bloomberg looked at it and after a while stated “I want to get it done… Get it done no matter what” (Barclay’s Center Ribbon Cutting Full Video 2011). Alongside Bloomberg’s support, the city pledged a two-hundred and thirty-six million dollars in direct subsidies for infrastructure, gave city property to Ratner, and pushed the state transportation authority to relax its deal with Ratner (Oder 2019). Alongside Bloomberg, there were two main Assembly District Members supporting the Atlantic Yards, Roger Green (the founder of BUILD) and Hakeem Jeffries, both democrats (Confessore 2006). They both state that the project could bring good jobs into Brooklyn and offset the income disparity that is slowly growing every year (2006). While these two assembly members supported the project, Leticia James, the assembly member where Atlantic Yards mainly resides in, opposed the project and joined the anti-navy yards coalition, stating that the development would be an encroachment on the neighborhood, and would make the real estate value of the area skyrocket, among other negative factors (2006). In 2007, Public Authorities Control Board (PACB) — consisting of Governor George Pataki, House State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno — voted unanimously to approve the Atlantic Yards project.

New York City cannot be considered a progressive city. While there were some local political actors such as James that supported their community and fought against the
development, much of the city was on the developer’s side. Bloomberg’s mayoralty consisted of policies that encouraged the growth of the private sector, especially within developers and real estate. Bloomberg did not necessarily provide direct opportunities to disenfranchised groups and locals using redistributive policies. The Assembly members were more in touch with their community and their needs; however, their influence only reached a certain point. During the CBA negotiations, there was no direct government involvement. The meetings happened behind closed doors and were not at all transparent. The government also did not provide the community groups any legal, monetary, or expert assistance, letting FCR and the coalition work things out between themselves.

Effectiveness: A Toothless CBA

The CBA that was signed into effect in 2007 consisted of eight sections. The first one consisted of employing 35% minority and 10% of women construction workers including job training, referral, and hiring. BUILD created the PLAP to cover this section of the Agreement (FCR 2005). The second section states that 20% of the contracting practices will go to minority-owned firms and 10% to women-owned firms (2005). Thirdly, FCR promises to make 50% of the residential units built at Atlantic Yards affordable to low and moderate-income families and “If it turns out that it is not possible to provide affordable housing under the lowest income target mix scenario once further information is available about the costs of developing the affordable housing, the government subsidies available for that development, and the profits realized from the sale of market-rate units, the CBA specifies that the parties will step down to higher-income mixes” (2005). Fourth, The Project Developer seek[s] to create a vibrant community . . . by providing needed community benefits which will include, but not be limited to . . . a community health center, a senior citizens center, parks and open spaces and Arena related programs.” The
developer also states to make the arena available to the entire community, and create programs for the incarcerated population. Fifth, the developer seeks to establish a “Committee on Environmental Assurance” to mitigate environmental damage while constructing (2005). The sixth and seventh sections of the CBA aims for FCR to establish a “Good Neighbor Program” to provide benefits to the community for libraries and schools and focuses in on youth development in the surrounding area (2005). Finally, the last section requires the developer to create an “independence compliance monitor” to oversee the implementation of the CBA.

The CBA in itself provides ample benefits, however, the language is broad and non-specific. In a report analyzing the agreement, The New York City Bar states that the CBA was not specific enough in its language, legally leaving ambiguity in many of its sections and allowing for there to be wide flexibility on the side of the developer (2010). Alongside its ambiguity, the independent monitoring board and job training program which was supposed to be run by ACORN and BUILD has fallen short because of the bankruptcy of the two organizations. To this day there are no oversight mechanisms in place looking to keep the company in check. Furthermore, due to economic troubles during the 2008 recession that Ratner was never able to fully recover from, the project got passed onto the China-based developer Greenland Holdings (Solomont 2015). The new developer has made no effort to implement the CBA and has even instituted a gag order on the price of the newly made luxury condos for the companies selling them (Oder 2019). Because of this, there is no way to know whether the developers are holding to section three of the agreement.

The reason the CBA was not successful was due to the weak and divided community coalition which could not muster up the strength or the resources to follow through with the agreement, and a government that refused to be a part of the agreement.
Chapter 7

Temple University Multi-Purpose Facility/Stadium in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Historical Overview: City Development and Universities

In the 2000s, Philadelphia started experiencing rapid population growth. For the first time since the 1950s, Philadelphia’s declining population started to turn around and by the 2010s population growth started increasing (WPR 2020). This growth spurred the city to begin developing. Mayor John F. Street enacted the 2001 Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, a three hundred-million-dollar program to demolish fourteen thousand vacant buildings, cleaning vacant lots and revitalizing neighborhoods as “an effort to reverse fifty years population loss” (Vitiello 2007). During his mayoralty, development on the Delaware River waterfront started budding, and in 2006 Street decides to sign a plan to develop the waterfront. Faced with community backlash, Street turned to Penn Praxis, a community group that had been founded during Penn’s Landing development of 2002, to help with the development by making it more accessible to community members and creating transparency within the process (McGovern 2009). Street, while focusing on development, was also pressured to include community groups and accountability measures into his planning.

Michael Nutter followed suit and pushed development in Philadelphia further. He laid out the “Nutter Plan for Zoning and Planning Reform” which included re-establishing the Planning Commission as the “nation’s preeminent city planning agency”, standardize the community review process and reforming the zoning board and code allowing for more development and making it more transparent and accessible for community involvement (Nutter 2007). Nutter also oversaw the construction of Navy Yards, a development project that would bring big businesses to Philadelphia while revitalizing the old Navy Yard, a project that continues growing to this day.
(Zito 2020). The last twenty years of Philadelphia have been characterized by expansion, with new city projects and developments appearing throughout the city. This city growth also spurred the growth and expansion of Philadelphia’s universities, specifically Temple University.

**Temple’s Expansion into North Philadelphia**

Universities have always played an essential role in Philadelphia city politics and the economy. The University of Pennsylvania is Philadelphia’s number one private employer, yearly generating over fourteen billion dollars in Philadelphia’s economy (Penn Today 2015). Alongside Penn, Temple University has become another important actor in city development. In the past twenty years, Temple has moved from being a commuter campus, to the creation of an urban campus. This was achieved by the heavy-set reforms and projects from 2000 to 2009 Temple conducted to make their campus more “pedestrian-friendly” and “campus-like” (Hilty 2010). Amongst these projects that got completed were a brand-new art center, and an expansion into North Philadelphia that included new dorms. This expansion included 1.5 million square feet of new residential and commercial space including six large-scale student housing projects and the conversion of the old box company building into rental apartments coming to the price of around two hundred million dollars (2010). These projects that encroached upon North Philadelphia’s neighborhood created clashes between the community and Temple.

North Philadelphia has historically been a majority black and low-income neighborhood. These projects drove up rent and housing prices, and upset local community members when communities started receiving an influx of students. An example of this is the proposal of the development of the Liacouras Center. The Liacourous center is a large sports and entertainment complex consisting of a basketball stadium, movie theater, and space for retail and restaurants
(Pulley 1995). When these plans were announced, the city council facing pressure from community groups in North Philadelphia stated that Temple would have to contribute five million dollars towards housing for local residents, however, it only ended up contributing 1.5 million towards the community (Hyatt 2010). In 2015, Temple once again announced that it would be creating a new stadium, this time a brand-new football stadium. This football stadium would have around thirty-five thousand seats, projecting to cost upwards of one hundred and thirty million dollars (Easterling 2018). Although announced in 2015, Temple kept these plans secret from the community for two years. Consequently, community groups started to organize.

Community Coalitions and Organizing in North Philadelphia

Community groups had only partly dealt with Temple’s expansion into North Philadelphia in the past. They were not able to successfully negotiate an agreement, and the city council had to get involved resulting in Temple only contributing 1.5 million, which were sparse pickings (Hyatt 2010). Given the previous history of Temple and its expansion into North Philadelphia, community groups were wary when Temple announced the new football stadium, without first reaching out to the community (Newman 2019). As time passed, and there was still no word from Temple regarding details surrounding the plan so students, local community members and faculty formed the group Stadium Stompers. Stadium Stompers pressured both city hall and Temple University to have a town hall meeting to discuss plans.

Backing the Stadium Stompers are the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity; Philadelphians Organized to Witness Empower and Rebuild (POWER), the National Action Network, Philadelphia chapter and the Philadelphia chapter of the NAACP, all groups mainly based out of North Philadelphia (Bailey 2018). This being said there were certainly members of
the community who supported the stadium. The Temple spokesman for the stadium states that
the university has been having “fruitful” interactions with nearby neighbors, and claims that
there is support for a stadium (Moselle 2018). Temple University however does not specify any
organizations or community leaders they have been talking to.

The Stadium Stompers group was created for the sole purpose of fighting against the
football stadium. Barbara Ferman, a professor at Temple University and a member of Stadium
Stompers states that at the beginning, the organization’s mission was open to negotiating with
Temple to create a CBA between the community and Temple. However, after being constantly
shrouded in the dark and ignored, the group found it impossible to deal with Temple and took a
harder stance against the project (personal interview 2020). Ferman states that a possible reason
for this was the newness of the group. Although it had backing from groups that had a long
history in North Philadelphia such as the NAACP chapter of Philadelphia, the Stadium Stompers
simply were not experienced enough. Ferman also states that the coalition also lacks resources,
mostly being the connections to access Temple University’s board of Trustees (2020).

Although the coalition was able to organize successfully outside the influence of Temple
University, the coalition would still be considered weak. Because of the lack of transparency on
Temple’s sided, it is questionable whether the Stadium Stompers and their coalitions can be
considered broad-based. If Temple is telling the truth then there are sections of the community
that support the development, going against the Stadium Stompers coalition. Finally, the lack of
experience and access to important resources such as connections delegitimizes the group in the
eyes of the developer and makes them less capable of dealing with negotiations.
Philadelphia: The Progressive City

Philadelphia for the past twenty years has been a majority blue city. Both John F. Street and Michael Nutter ran on progressive campaigns, and their policies regarding development focused on including community members. During the development of the waterfront at Delaware river, Penn Praxis alongside a wide array of community members and groups protested the development. Streets then decided to include them in this process, making the development more transparent and accessible to community members (McGovern 2009). Nutter’s policies also put an emphasis on community participation. His rezoning plan included communities in the processes, creating a commission made of community members specific to each neighborhood (Nutter 2007). He states in his plan to make city planning as transparent as possible and includes the city council every step of the way (2007).

In 2016, current mayor Jim Kenney was elected after serving on the city council for twenty-three years. Kenney had a progressive background, backing policies including voucher programs to allow parents to send their kids to private schools, being an advocate for gay rights, supporting the “ban the box” initiative which bars employers from asking about a criminal record, and introducing a bill to decriminalize marijuana (Otterbein 2015). As mayor of Philadelphia, Kenney returned the School Districts to local control and enacted the sweet beverage tax to fund pre-K, community schools, and city park renovations (McCrystal and Walsh 2020). In 2019, Kenney introduced his “Growing with Equity: Philadelphia’s Vision for Inclusive Growth” which includes a bottom-up approach to creating inclusive growth throughout the city (Cox 2019).
Finally, Philadelphia’s city council has a stronghold in local politics, and tend to heavily lean towards the progressive side, especially in recent years (Walsh 2019). Just recently, in June 2019, council president Darrell L. Clarke introduced an ordinance that would require developers receiving city investment and developers of “high-impact projects” to work with residents and create a CBA for the development project (PHL 2019). Previously, the council had amended the Philadelphia Code by changing the definition of “diverse workforce”, designating the Economic Opportunity Review Committee (EORC) to oversee enforcement and implementation, requiring to report the execution of First Source Jobs Agreement and authorizing City Council to hand out fines and penalties for noncompliance with the building code (PHL 2016). Introducing this new ordinance would codify the reforms passed earlier, wrapping it up nicely in the form of a CBA (PHL 2019).

Regarding the Temple Football stadium Darrel L. Clark, the council member of North Philadelphia, has come out and stated that he does not support the current plan Temple has laid out, unless it smooths out its relationship with the community groups (Sasko 2018). He also states that Temple “missed a great opportunity to repair its relationship with residents while preparing its proposal for the stadium” (2018). For the Temple plan to go ahead, it would need the approval of the city council, something which at this current moment they do not have. This being said, it is important to note that Clark took a while coming out with a position and made no attempt to help out the coalition at an early stage, where negotiations could have happened between the Temple and the community.

Philadelphia can be classified as a progressive because its policies in the past years, especially during Mayor Kenney’s term have actively sought out to implement redistributive and
participatory reforms. The city council also sided with the community groups, supporting them and their desires for the Temple project to not go through.

**Effectiveness: A Mixed Bag**

After three years of secrecy regarding the plans for Temple University multipurpose stadium, Temple unveiled its plan in 2018. Included in their plan was a section entitled “caring for our community”, listing the community benefits. These benefits include updated rules on student off-campus behaviors initiating a no-tolerance policy on noise trash and misconduct. Secondly, the University claims to create a Special Services District (SSD) that would oversee maintenance and services for the benefit of the local community. Thirdly, the university has instructed stadium designers to minimize the facility’s impact when it comes to height, lights, and noise, calling for the north end of the stadium to be no higher than the adjacent row homes on Norris Street. Finally, they leave the section open for further discussion with the community to address their concerns (Temple University 2018).

The Temple University stadium agreement is a mixed bag. On one side, the weakness of coalitions led to a missed opportunity for bargaining in the beginning stages of the project, and Temple reached out too late with too little on to offer. But on the other side, the coalition was able to pressure the developer with the help of the city government and stop the project from happening, making it an overall win for the community. In the context of this thesis, this case study would have to be rendered as ineffective since ultimately there was no CBA implemented, and as Clark states, a perfect opportunity to provide important benefits to an impoverished North Philadelphia and mend community relations. The coalitions missed a crucial opportunity to
create a bond between Temple and themselves, being the main reason why the agreement eventually fell apart.
Chapter 8

Conclusion: What Makes a CBA Effective

Findings

By looking at the four case studies side by side we can garner what exactly makes a Community Benefit Agreement effective. My hypothesis states that:

**Strong Coalitions + Expansive Progressive Government = Effective CBA**

I divide the four case studies into categories which are: 1) progressive government + strong coalition (Oakland, CA), 2) progressive government + weak coalition (Philadelphia, PA), 3) non-progressive government + strong coalition (LA, California) and 4) non-progressive government + weak coalition (NYC, NY). Using my hypothesis, the Oakland Army Base CBA should be the most effective. Throughout my research, I found that this was true, for the most part. I will go into further detail in the following summaries of my case studies.

*Lorenzo CBA (Los Angeles, CA)*

The Lorenzo CBA was the only exception to my hypothesis. Although the community members did not have the explicit backing and support of their local government, they still came out successful against the developer Geoffrey Palmer. What accounts for this is the CBA’s exceptional community coalition. The UNIDAD coalition was broad-based and had strong ties to the neighborhood. The organizers were passionate and competent, many having experience in negotiating CBAs with previous developers. The coalition also had a large pool of resources to tap into. This is due to the city’s general environment for community groups and the long history of the implementation of CBAs. It is important to note that Los Angeles is the birthplace of
CBAs, and many cities across the United States use LA CBAs as templates for their own. Moreover, Los Angeles is home to the law practices of Julian Gross, the premier litigators in CBA contracts. The Lorenzo project hired Julian Gross to aid in the development and negotiation process of the CBA, giving them the upper hand. Finally, the UNIDAD coalition still exists today and has strong roots in the community. This allows for continuous oversight of the project during construction, and afterwards. I believe that the level of LA’s community coalition strength may be unrivaled in other US cities. If anything, it is the strongest coalition within my four case studies. The unique strength of the UNIDAD coalition is why the Lorenzo Project CBA was so successful and effective. Given this, this strength is unique and can hardly be expected to be seen replicated in other parts of the country, making the LA case study unique of its own. This leads me to the Oakland CBA.

*Army Base CBA (Oakland, CA)*

According to my hypothesis, the Oakland Army Base CBA was the CBA that would be the most effective. My research proves this hypothesis correct. The Oakland coalition included a wide spread of community groups from all over Oakland. The community groups that participated were also deeply rooted in the community because of the grassroots nature and longevity of these groups, allowing them to organize independently outside the local government and developer context. The coalition still exists today, and still plays an active part in the implementation of the CBA as part of the oversight board. Finally, the coalition had access to important resources. Like the LA CBA, they hired the law offices of Julian Gross to help with the development of the project. Most of these resources were provided by the local government, as they footed many of the bills all while organizing and connecting the different community groups. The government of Oakland had a major role in the creation and implementation of the
CBA. Its progressive policies aiming to reach out to marginalized communities and redistribute wealth alongside an emphasis on transparency and community participation made the perfect environment for their heavy-handed participation in the negotiations. Unlike the LA government, the government provided important resources for the coalition and enacted important living-wage legislation as a result of the CBA. By working together with the coalition, they were able to create a powerful alliance resulting in an effective CBA.

*Atlantic Yards CBA (New York City, New York)*

While it is possible to see the benefits of a progressive government mixed with a strong coalition, New York shows us the opposite. Forest City Ratner essentially hand-picked the eight groups that would be in his Atlantic Yards CBA, while essentially denying other groups entry into the CBA. Because of this, the coalition was not able to organize independently. The Atlantic Yards coalition was extremely narrow, while the anti-Yards community coalition consisted of over fifty groups from Brooklyn showing that the community was clearly divided, and not on the side of the CBA. This is completely unlike the previous two case studies, and this division clearly affected the CBA. BUILD, one of the main groups of the coalition eventually went bankrupt because of the lawsuits community members filed against Forest City Ratner and BUILD. The sudden bankruptcy of the other main group, ACORN, left a hole in the implementation and oversight processes. The New York City government did nothing to aid the community in this respect. Bloomberg was focused on bringing in development, no matter the cost, as reflected by his rezoning policies. His managerial “apolitical” style of politics is distinctly different from progressivism, and there was no attempt to reach out to the community during and after negotiations.
Although New York and Los Angeles are in the same governmental category in the context of this thesis, the Los Angeles environment at the time was considerably more progressive-leaning than New York. Ultimately neither government played a part in the creation of the CBA. It is also important to note the clear differences between the coalitions. In the LA and Oakland case studies the coalitions were privileged to have all four aspects from the definition I provide of a strong coalition, whereas the New York coalition had zero. It is possible to see this disparity at play, especially when focusing on negotiation processes for CBAs.

Temple University Multi-Purpose Stadium (Philadelphia, PA)

This agreement never came to light. The Stadium Stompers and their coalition missed an important opportunity to try to connect with Temple University. Although the Stadium Stompers and their coalition were able to organize independently of Temple University, they lacked the resources in order to create the necessary connections with the Temple University Board of Trustees early on. By not making this crucial connection when the plan was first discussed in 2015, the Stadium Stompers missed an important opportunity to create a CBA with Temple that would benefit North Philadelphia. The coalition also lacked experience because they had been created in 2015, as a response to the Temple plans. Their fledgling status made them inexperienced and once again missed opportunities to connect with Temple. Because of this, they had to take a harsher stance on the project. In 2018 Temple finally came up with a project proposal, which included a section aimed towards aiding the community. This section, however, was extremely sparse and was made without the involvement of Stadium Stompers and their coalition. The Philadelphia city council was largely on the side of the community coalition. Darryl Clark, the president of the council, one of the progressive members of the council and
council member for the North Philadelphia district gave his backing to the coalition. The progressive environment of Philadelphia city politics allowed for this to happen.

The backing of the Stadium Stompers decision by the city council shows that if the coalition had begun negotiations with Temple, they most likely would have supported the coalition. It is also important to note the differences between the weak coalition in New York and Philadelphia. Their main difference was the ability to organize independently. The Philadelphia coalition was able to organize on their own accord, and eventually put pressure on Temple to stop the project. Although labeled as a weak coalition in the context of this thesis, they were still able to achieve something even without having resources, a broad-based coalition, or general political/social clout. The New York coalition, on the other hand, had nothing and were essentially able to achieve the same.

On the terms of progressive governments, it is possible to speculate what would have happened if, like Oakland, the Temple Stadium had a strong coalition. Would it have been as successful as Oakland’s? Further research should be done specifically looking into the successes of CBAs where the local government has an active role. The widespread implementation of these types of CBAs could prevent the fallout of CBAs like New York’s Atlantic Yards.

**Final Thoughts and Further Questions to Research**

The research done in this thesis supports my argument that when you combine a progressive government alongside a strong coalition, the result will be an effective CBA. The Lorenzo Project case study, however, is an example of the strength community coalitions can hold. The coalition still came out successful against Geoffrey Palmer, even without the help of the government. The important role community organizations must play is further highlighted in
the Temple University case study. A progressive government was not enough to create a successful CBA, whereas in LA, just having a strong coalition was enough to create a CBA. The role of strong coalitions is crucial to the success of the CBA, however, it is important not to forget what the influence of a progressive government that supports these strong coalitions can do to further make CBAs benefit the community. Like in the Oakland case study, governments can provide crucial resources to community groups because they have much more financial power than any community group. Governments can also provide laws that set up oversight boards to make sure the developers follow through with their promises and implement penalties for developers when they do not.

Like stated earlier, more research should be done on CBAs where the city government plays an active role in the CBA. The role of developers is also something that should be explored further. In all four case studies, the developers had very different attitudes towards CBAs and varied on their level of compliance towards negotiation. It would be interesting to further explore what makes a developer keen on collaborating without issue on the CBA (like in the Oakland Case Study), or what makes a developer fight tooth and nail to avoid a CBA (such as Geoffrey Palmer in the Lorenzo Project case study). By doing this it could be possible to further tweak CBAs to incentivize more developers in adopting these measures.

The four cities discussed in this thesis are all experiencing rapid growth and immigration. Cities are increasingly looking to create policies to attract developers to increase growth and house the new wave people coming to live in the city. This sudden growth, however, has caused housing and rent prices to rise, changed the fabric of neighborhoods and has dislocated residents. This specifically affects marginalized and low-income residents more than anyone, as they bear the brunt of the negative impacts of developments. Community Benefit Agreements can be a
way of offsetting this weight while improving the lives of these groups. By researching what makes a CBA effective, we can hopefully improve on CBAs and provide greater benefits for these people, redistributing the dominant power structures and providing them with hope.
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