

# **Community Formation and Maintenance in Racially Integrated Neighborhoods:**

The role of local organizations in Chicago's Beverly and Irving  
Park community areas

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## **Abstract**

Local community organizations are important to the formation of neighborhood cohesion and social capital. However, neighborhood cohesion in racially integrated communities can be difficult to form and maintain, and it remains unclear how local community organizations can best promote interracial social engagement in racially diverse communities. This report looks at Chicago community areas that have recently achieved racial integration: Beverly and Irving Park. Using ethnographic data and semi-structured interviews with organization leaders, the data in this report implies best practices for organizations wishing to form a sense of community, outlines barriers to social integration that organizations face, and offers potential solutions to overcome these barriers. This report concludes with policy implications and recommendations for community organizations, and ultimately analyzes how Beverly and Irving Park community organizations assist and promote the process of social integration in their community areas.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Introduction**

In the late 1960s, federal policymakers formally recognized that racial segregation was a problem that affected all Americans (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968). Since then, legislative measures have been gradually taken to promote and enforce civic equality and housing accessibility (Denton, 1999). Policies such as the Fair Housing Act and its subsequent amendments have ameliorated systemic consequences of segregation, including housing discrimination and racial bias in mortgage financing. These policies were approved in a national bureaucratic push towards residential integration, where the government hoped that by getting people to share a common space, it could enforce a standard of cohabitation that would persist over time (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968). Although these policy measures succeeded in changing legal precedent and making the initial move towards residential integration, they failed to address the underlying trigger of segregation and resegregation in the United States, which is the internalized social structure surrounding racial discrimination.

True racial integration is *not* simply a matter of getting people to share a space; a second, more crucial stage of integration is to get parties to want to continue sharing that space. Policymakers have failed to recognize this and have instead opted for top-down policy measures, such as economic investment by the city, mixed income housing redevelopment, and community policing to reduce crime (Robert J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013). However, changing specific people's feelings and views about segregation and race is difficult to achieve through top-down policy measures, as they do not address the underlying currents that prevent social interaction from occurring, even when people are in the same space. Therefore, while housing policy is

imperative in achieving racial integration, I seek to discover what factors encourage people in an integrated space to ultimately decide to interact with one another.

The local realities that contribute to neighborhood interaction have been studied widely under the concepts of social capital and neighborhood social cohesion (R. j. Sampson & Graif, 2009; Granovetter, 1977; Putnam, 2000a). Researchers have established local neighborhood organizations to be imperative in the formation of community (R. J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013; Ostrom, 2015; Putnam, 2000; Coleman, 1988). However, they have also acknowledged that this process is much harder when groups of people have little in common, or when there is an underlying structure of prejudice preventing communication (Small, 2002). Analyzing barriers to integration from the other end, researchers have studied successfully integrated communities and have found that there are many relevant factors that contribute to stability, including the actions of community-based organizations in forming social ties between residents (Ellen, 2000). While the literature indicates the importance of local community organizations in the process of community formation, there is a gap in this literature regarding specific ways in which these organizations can enable social relationships between groups in an integrated community. There is a gap in the literature addressing the process of social integration and the role that community organizations have in it. In order to fill this gap, I look closely at two recently integrated community areas in Chicago, Beverly and Irving Park, and analyze how local community organizations have helped form and maintain social cohesion through racial transition. I believe that by analyzing institutions already present in recently integrated community areas, I will be able to shed light on practices that have had success in promoting social interaction, and hopefully begin to fill this gap in the literature I have presented.

In this paper, I investigate the role local organizations play in the formation and maintenance of community in racially integrated neighborhoods. To answer these questions, I first recount the history of segregation and integration in America and elaborate on the literature surrounding racial integration. Then, I outline the theoretical benefits of strong community ties and explain why local organizations are important to community formation. Next, I turn to the literature on the importance of local organizations in promoting stable integration. After, I discuss the difficulties of community formation between people of different racial and cultural backgrounds, as well as the social and political implications of segregation in an urban environment. I use two recently integrated community areas in Chicago as case studies to analyze the ways in which their local organizations contribute to community formation and social integration. I observe life in the community areas first-hand, and I conduct semi-structured interviews with both community organization leaders and residents of each neighborhood.

Broadly, I find distinct ways in which these organizations form community, experience barriers to minority participation, and find ways to overcome those barriers. I conclude by making recommendations for neighborhood organizations that want to assist the process of social integration and I outline policy implications derived from my research.

### **Background on Desegregation in America**

During the summer of 1967, racial tensions were high in the United States, and riots and disorder in the cities of Newark and Detroit quickly prompted the establishment of a commission by President Lyndon B. Johnson to figure out what was happening in America's cities, and why (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968). Through a series of investigations, the Kerner Commission found that poverty, violence, and social and economic isolation all

characterized what they came to understand as the racially segregated community. The Commission became concerned by the deepening racial divide of America, as they understood that racial segregation, and its outcomes, “threatened the life of every American” (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968). The authors of the document worked to find a solution for reversing the actions and regulating the institutions that allowed for such a deep divide to happen. After much deliberation, they settled on residential racial integration as their answer.

At the time, the Kerner Commission acknowledged the immense cultural and legislative barriers the process of racial integration would entail. Some of these barriers included nationwide discrimination, prejudice, and disparity of power between racial groups, which was manifested in policies and long-lasting practices such as redlining, zoning, and discriminatory real estate procedures (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968). The Fair Housing Act of 1968, and its subsequent amendments, helped ameliorate some of these barriers and created a legislative foundation of equality and opportunity for minority populations by prohibiting private discrimination based on race or national origin in the financing, sale, or renting of homes. This Act provided a legal platform for minority populations to expand their housing options and have more agency in the communities they create (Sander, Kucheva, & Zasloff, 2018). However, the Act’s legal changes alone did not succeed in altering the institutionalized social structure of segregation, and movements towards integration since then have not always been practical or effective (Denton, 1999).

While the legal basis against private discrimination helped levels of housing segregation to fall in the decades following, it was not sufficient to overcome the systematic avoidance of



Blacks by white populations around the US (Sander et al., 2018). Homeowners who wished to remain in segregated communities could legally choose to relocate to communities outside of the economic or social reach of minorities, even if that decision was based off of prejudice and fear. As a result, integration efforts became a confirmation of bias and an intensification of prejudice towards minority groups moving in (Oliver, 2010). This concept is exemplified in the phenomenon known as ‘white flight’ (Massey & Denton, 1993). ‘White flight’ occurs when white families in a neighborhood are concerned with minorities moving in and decide to abandon their neighborhoods in favor of suburban regions with higher incomes, white neighbors, and better schools (Massey & Denton, 1993). The process happens quickly, and is abetted by panicked residents. Real estate mechanisms, such as blockbusting, catalyzed white flight and further scared white communities into rapidly selling their homes.

Activist Saul Alinsky saw white flight as an inevitable epilogue to racial integration efforts, viewing integration as “a chronological term timed from the entrance of the first Black family to the exit of the last white family” (Alinsky & Sanders, 1970). He and his academic counterparts of the mid 20th century believed that integration was not an equilibrium that could be effectively maintained (Schelling, 1971). For example, economist Thomas Schelling created a model outlining the manner in which individual choice and incentives naturally lead to segregation, claiming that individuals’ ‘tipping points,’ in terms of the racial composition of their neighborhood, prevent homeostasis within integrated communities (Schelling, 1971).

The inability to enforce integration hence makes it hard for policymakers to affect real change in communities through top-down policies. This has led policymakers to become largely complacent in facing the aftermath of institutional discrimination (Massey & Denton, 1993).

However, contemporary theorists have challenged Schelling and Alinsky's prediction about eventual segregation, instead making claims about the social and organizational factors that play into fostering and maintaining a racially diverse environment (Ellen, 2000). These relevant factors include past history of change in a neighborhood, distance to the center of minority concentration, and the overall cohesion of the neighborhood community as demonstrated through participation in community organizations and activities, as well as through homeownership rates (Ellen, 2000). *More specifically, the actions of local community-based organizations are vital in the process of stabilizing racially integrated neighborhoods* (Ellen, 2000). This finding relates to the idea that if people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds are able to interact with one another on a regular basis, those interactions might combat prejudice and racism between the groups, changing residents' views and slowly improving the consequences of segregation (Sander et al., 2018).

Other authors support this view too, saying that neighborhood integration has the potential for providing positive contact between races, but that it is important to specify where the interracial contact is taking place and through which structured social situations (Oliver, 2010). Social interactions, however, cannot be forced, and there is a gap in the literature explaining how to best enable social relationships between members of an integrated community.

### **A Note on 'Race'**

While I understand the many nuances present in identity, the data I will be citing in this study uses the broad racial definitions provided by the census, categorizing populations into

groups such as “Asian,” “Hispanic,” etc. I follow this standard in order to discuss papers that have also used this broad categorization and in order to use census data itself. However, I dissect the consequences of this kind of categorization when discussing the policy implications of my research.

In this vein, I think it important to recognize that different groups at large have been recorded in the literature to have diverse reactions to the prospect of integration and to community participation; for example, white communities on average are more willing to accept Asians in their community over Blacks or Hispanics, while Hispanic communities are more willing to interact with whites over Asians and Blacks (Oliver, 2010). White and Black Americans are more willing to become involved in their communities, while Hispanic and Asian members are more hesitant to join (Oliver, 2010). The migration patterns of different ethnic groups, therefore, might heavily affect the ways in which members of a community interact with one another. These results indicate that there is not a uniform policy avenue for approaching ‘whites’ and ‘minorities’ during the process of integration. The actions to be taken can greatly depend on the demographic of the community one is hoping to help (Oliver, 2010), and existing research largely neglects to address these nuances.

### **Theory**

In this section, I review existing literature and terminology surrounding community formation and social integration. Although much of the available literature focuses on specific variables in relation to the concept of community, like crime and poverty, it nevertheless touches on many of the same theories that I wish to discuss in my analysis.

Community is loosely defined as the social condition under which ideas and information flow easily between individuals or groups of people (Granovetter, 1977). This condition can be formed in multiple ways and can be experienced simultaneously within different circles. Consistent information flow, and the benefits that result, parallel the theory of social capital, which is defined by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu as “the sum of the resources that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Social capital is essentially the benefits that come from forming relationships and connections with others.

At the neighborhood level, the benefits that come with social capital translate well into the concept of neighborhood social cohesion, which focuses on how people relate to one another in small residential groups, increasing their social capital as they do so (Small, 2009). In an ethnographic study, Small analyzed neighborhood social cohesion and identified ways in which social connections are made in neighborhoods, indicating that institutional forces in a neighborhood can shape the social connections one makes as a resident of a specific area (Small, 2004). In order to study neighborhood social cohesion, it is imperative to understand not only the ties which people form with one another, and the social capital they gain from it, but also the organizations and institutions in which those connections are embedded.

Cohesive neighborhoods indicate high levels of connectivity and social ties. High social ties factor into people’s decisions to stay involved in their community, as “family roots, community connections, and expressed satisfaction with a neighborhood are significant predictors of not moving” (Clark, Duque–Calvache, & Palomares–Linares, 2017). Conversely, according to the same study, low social ties in a neighborhood serve as a factor in the decision to

move to another community. When individuals form social ties in their neighborhood, they are more likely to feel invested in the population and the institutions, further increasing their instactions and social ties.

Additional studies have linked high neighborhood social cohesion to lower rates of crime, higher educational achievement, and better health outcomes, implying that the formation of community in integrated neighborhoods could be beneficial for all parties involved (Elliott, 2007). Yet, it is also important to note that increased social cohesion within small groups, such as neighborhoods, can sometimes lead to less useful accessibility to certain benefits and opportunities outside of the neighborhood (Granovetter, 1977). This finding relates to the differentiation between bonding and bridging social capital, where bonding is the social capital that takes place within groups that share some commonality with each other and bridging is the social capital that takes place between those groups (Putnam, 2000b). Due to this differentiation, it is imperative to look at not only whether community is being formed in a neighborhood, but also *between who* and *through which platforms*. Understanding these variables allows for further comprehension of the factors that enable social ties between distinct populations.

### **Racial Tensions in Chicago: Past and Present**

Chicago is one of the most segregated cities in America, and racial migration patterns across the city have varied greatly over time (Ellen, 2000). Chicago is also durably segregated (Massey, Condran, & Denton, 1987), and while it might seem that some areas of the city have gotten better over time, it is more likely that poverty has just been relocated, spreading outward towards the periphery (R. j. Sampson & Graif, 2009b). Population pressures that came with the migration of African Americans towards the city of Chicago in the time period after WWI led to

an expansion of segregated ghetto neighborhoods. In the 1970s, these neighborhoods, instead of being eradicated, were relocated towards the South and West sides of the city as whites fled ethnic working-class neighborhoods, leaving impoverished and underprivileged communities behind (Wilson & Taub, 2006). There have also been multiple migrations to Chicago from other countries, most specifically and recently, countries in Central and South America; Chicago's latino population grew by nearly 38% between 1990 and 2000 (Robert J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013).

There have been a few larger scale studies researching racial tensions at the neighborhood level in Chicago (Wilson & Taub, 2006; Sampson & Wilson, 2013). The first, "There Goes the Neighborhood" utilized ethnographic data to better understand racial, ethnic, and class tensions in four distinct Chicago neighborhoods (Wilson & Taub, 2006). The neighborhoods were chosen because of their diverse migration patterns and demographic compositions. Ultimately, residents of all four neighborhoods were most concerned about issues of crime and social dislocation in neighboring communities, and were scared to lose what they had worked hard to build. In response to racial tensions in Chicago, the authors call for solution of addressing Laissez-Faire racism prevalent today through coalition building between communities to "increase group interdependence, reduce racial and ethnic conflict, and enable diverse groups to live side by side in harmony, not fear" (Wilson & Taub, 2006). This is the solution because strong social organization tends to prevent white flight and disorder, but only in the sense that people living in the neighborhoods are able to organize against and resist invasions. Therefore, the study suggests, there is a "positive relationship between strength of neighborhood social organization and the length of time it takes to reach the tipping point after an ethnic invasion occurs" (Wilson

& Taub, 2006). Essentially, the authors found that the longer the most invested residents stay, the less likely it is that other residents in the neighborhood will leave. The authors also suggest that different racial, ethnic, and class tensions should be treated individually, and not in a sweeping effort to change the city as a whole (Wilson & Taub, 2006).

Another study, conducted in 2010 and called “Great American City,” established the existence of the ‘neighborhood effect,’ meaning that differentiation by neighborhood in Chicago has durable properties for the population living there. Chicago is ordered by a spatial logic that systematically yields social differences and shows that local community participation increases social capital (R. J. Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Community level intervention and a government policy focus on the interlocking social infrastructure in the neighborhoods could remedy these social differences and increase neighborhood cohesion (Robert J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013). This solution works off of Moynihan’s theory that the cycle of poverty can only be broken by the government or large organizations (Robert J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013). However, the authors argue that disadvantage is not a single characteristic, and rather “is a synergistic composite of social factors, so that neighborhood racial stratification continues to have a strong grip on the city” (Robert J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013). Here, the author does not analyze or explicitly call for integration, but he shows that it is vital to look to the neighborhood level for answers about social processes in the future. Different racial, ethnic, and class tensions should be treated individually, and not in a sweeping effort to change the city as a whole (Wilson & Taub, 2006).

The dominant policy approach to reducing inequality by place in Chicago has started with the premise of promoting individual choice (Robert J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013). An

example of this approach is the voucher movement, where the government advocates vouchers as a way to move individuals away from whatever bad school or bad community they are in and towards a more privileged environment. But more than just move individuals away, the policy has been to “eradicate the damaged community left behind,” which has been incredibly harmful for the well-being of the city as a whole (Robert J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013). So, if policies like the voucher movement have had such downsides, then maybe communities can serve as a unit of “holistic policy intervention that prioritizes the interconnected social fabric” (Robert J. Sampson & Wilson, 2013). Robert Sampson recognizes that physical infrastructure and housing are crucial to policy intervention, but so too is the social infrastructure, and that we should look for interventions at the social level.

I continue this research by using an ethnographic approach to analyze two case studies in integrated Chicago community area.

## **Data and Methods**

### **Field Sites and Data Sources**

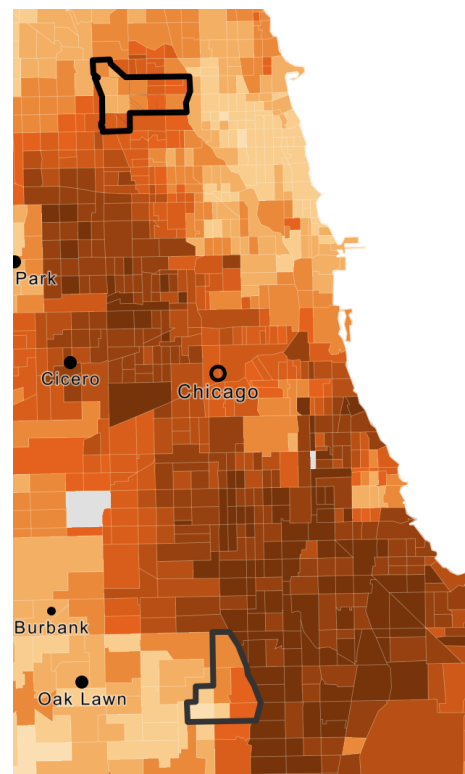
I limited my field sites to two Chicago community areas: Beverly and Irving Park. I chose to study community areas because it is how Chicago city officials have chosen to divide the city. Both areas are similar in population size and have achieved ‘integration.’ There is no single standard for the term *integrated neighborhood*, but for the purposes of this study, I have defined integration as “a condition where no single race comprises two-thirds or more of an area’s population.” I chose to use this definition because it was the definition used in a publication made by the city of Chicago’s public radio service, WBEZ. I justify this choice through similarity in definition in other literature (Ellen, 2000);(Oliver, 2010). I chose



community areas that have achieved integration in the past 30 years, and I chose this time frame because I wanted to study neighborhoods that were not still in transition, but that might have residents and community leaders who experienced racial transition first-hand.

Both Beverly and Irving Park were primarily white neighborhoods in 1980. As time went on, Beverly (in the South) saw an increase in its African American population, and Irving Park (in the North) saw an increase in its Hispanic population. This pattern of integration is common in urban cities, as white neighborhoods tend to be better-off and more desirable to move into than minority neighborhoods (Oliver, 2010). Therefore, each community area offers different perspectives of racial integration in Chicago. Beverly is a unified neighborhood with one prominent neighborhood association. Irving Park is more diversified in terms of neighborhood identity and community groups. By studying these two different patterns of integration, I expose nuances that might be present.

The data in this study was collected over a four month period, and consists primarily of semi-structured interviews with representatives from local community organizations. These semi-structured interviews were supplemented with observational fieldwork, which was focused on the ways in which residents interact with one another in public spaces, and also how they interact with their surroundings. I had also originally attempted a second set of interviews with non-involved



residents, but I was not able to find an efficient method for recruiting participants, and I did not have the financial means to offer compensation.

The organizations I reached out to included neighborhood associations, churches, historical societies, art centers, and gardening initiatives. I researched and reached out to all of the organizations I could find in each community area via email, and I sent follow-up messages if they did not reply to me within a one-week timeframe. For the first round of organizational interviews, I scheduled either phone or in-person interviews with those neighborhood associations. After that, I was connected to additional community organizations by the past interviewees, and I interviewed many of them as well. I had an email exchange with one organization, where I sent the representative a list of questions and she replied with answers. I gathered data from 14 people affiliated with 12 organizations. All of the interviewees held a leadership or office position in these organizations.

At the beginning of each organizational interview, I presented my interviewee with the consent form for this study and obtained verbal consent. Then, I asked each interviewee if they felt comfortable with me audio-recording our conversation. All of my interviewees said yes, but one of the audio recordings was not usable due to sound interference. During these interviews, I asked each interviewee about their organization's programming and opportunities for social interaction, as well as about how their role in their community area has evolved through the racial integration process. A list of interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

For my observational fieldwork, I observed resident interactions in public spaces, such as coffee shops, parks, and on the street. I conducted 4 days of observational fieldwork in each community area. All of my observational notes were taken either on my computer or with pencil

and paper. I spoke to a few shop owners during my field work, but I did not directly quote any of those conversations in my analysis.

In summary, the data in this study was collected in two distinct ways:

1. Interviews with local organization leaders
2. Ethnographic observation of typical neighborhood interactions

### **Data Analysis**

Throughout my research, I transcribed my interviews and produced analytical memos from my field observations. After the initial data collection, I hand-coded the transcripts and notes I produced from my fieldwork and analyzed it in order to find general themes and patterns in my data. I used a census mapping software, social explorer, to better understand the micro-organization of the community areas I studied. All of the picture maps included in this paper were created using social explorer.

Additionally, I reorganized segments from all interviews and formed an oral history of each neighborhood to pair with my qualitative analysis.

### **Researcher Positionality**

As almost all of my data was collected in-person by me, a young Latina middle-class woman, I feel it important to consider how who I am affected the ways in which my participants interacted with me. The two neighborhoods I collected data from have distinct racial compositions. Beverly is primarily a white/Black neighborhood and Irving Park is primarily white/Hispanic neighborhood. As I researched a topic closely involving racial identity, my own race was something I was very conscious of going into the field. Although I primarily identify as Hispanic or Latina, I can sometimes be considered white-passing or racially ambiguous. Because

both neighborhoods have significant white populations, my presence did not significantly change the behaviors I documented in either neighborhood. However, being read as white in either community could have affected the ways in which both the white members and the Black or Hispanic members opened up to me, whether that be revealing more to me because they felt comfortable or holding back because they didn't. I did not notice any unusual apprehension towards me based on race during my data collection. And during my fieldwork, in order to avoid standing out in any other way, I wore nondescript clothing without obvious brand names or affiliations.

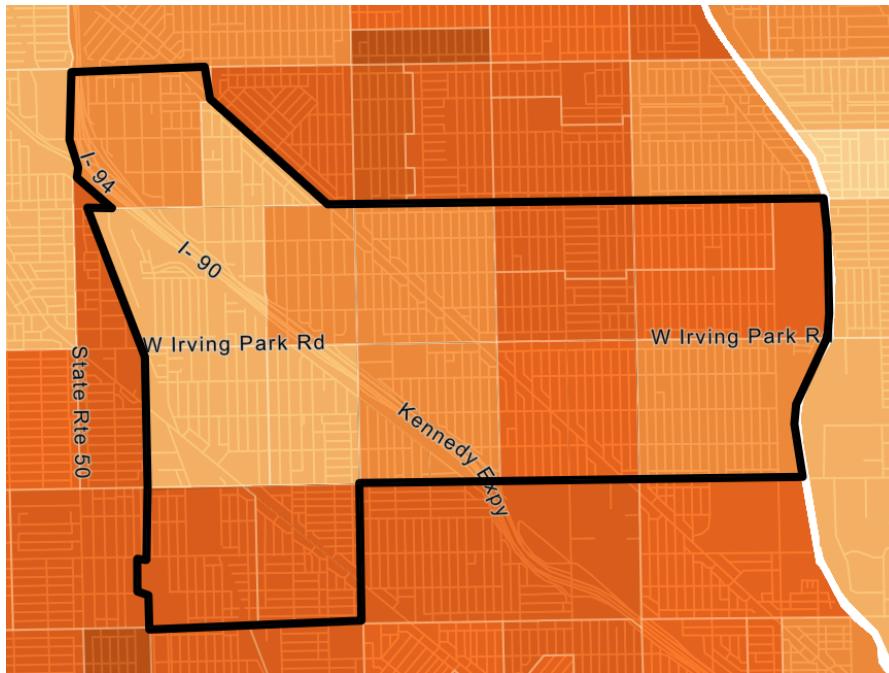
Furthermore, the institution which I conducted this research for, The University of Chicago, has a controversial reputation in certain areas of the city, so I recognize that my academic affiliation might have further impacted my interactions. When scheduling my interviews, I revealed to all the participants that I am a student gathering data on community in recently integrated neighborhoods. Most of them asked me further questions about the institution I am conducting research for, and there were moments during interviews where I noticed hesitation to say the wrong thing, but this appeared to be more due to the fact that they were being audio-recorded than with my affiliation to the University. I generally found that interviewees were afraid to be taken out of context, and some even double-checked my intentions with the data I was collecting.

### **Limitations**

I recognize three limitations in my methodology that I believe affected the scope of my analysis and recommendations. The first is that I was not able to speak to a significant amount of residents who are *not* involved in the community organizations, as I had originally planned to. I

still believe it would have been helpful to speak to more people in order to answer the question I put forward in this paper. However, I support that the conclusions I make in this paper are within the scope of the data I collected. Second, since I focused my data collection on people who hold leadership positions in their organizations, I recognize that the data may be skewed favorably towards the organizations they represent. I make note of this in my analysis. Third, all of the organizational leaders I interviewed in my research were either white or white passing. I discuss this limitation and the possible reasons for it further in my analysis section. However, I find it important to note that the resulting lack of racial diversity in my data may have affected interviewees' responses. I was conscious of this skew during my analysis.

## Irving Park



## **History**

Irving Park is located on the northwest side of Chicago. This community area's development began in 1843 when its founder, Major Noble, established a farm on a 160-acre tract of land. Four men from New York purchased the farm from Mr. Noble in 1869 and expanded it by purchasing even more land in the surrounding area. The intention of the men was to continue farming, but after seeing the profitable success of nearby suburban communities, they created the Irving Park Land Company and decided to subdivide their land into lots and create an "exclusive settlement" (Old Irving Park Association, 2016). The men reached an agreement with the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad lines, paying for a depot and allowing their trains to stop in Irving Park if the developers built a station. This station, still at the same location, continues to serve neighborhood residents today through the Metrarail.

The Irving Park Land Company created advertisements promoting the area's easy downtown access, diverse architecture, and large lots: attractions that are still advertised today. The area attracted many wealthy residents and middle class families looking to get away from the dangers of the city, and resulted in Irving Park being settled by primarily "native-born, Protestant, and white-collar" residents ("Encyclopedia of Chicago,"). Originally part of the Jefferson township, the area was annexed to Chicago in 1889, as residents began to miss some of the advantages they left behind in the city.

The first wave of immigrants arrived in Irving Park in the early 1900s, mostly of German and Swedish descent. In the 1930s, those immigrants were replaced by Polish and Russian immigrants, and over the following decades, the racial composition of the area remained relatively stable. In the 1980s, immigrants from Central and South America began settling into Irving Park. This population has slowly grown over the past 30 years, and by 2000, the population of Irving Park was 43 percent hispanic ("Encyclopedia of Chicago,"). In 2017, Irving Park's population was 43% Hispanic, 43% white, 3% Black, and 8% Asian (*Census-Data-by-Chicago-Community-Area-2017.pdf*, n.d.).

### **Present Day**

The characteristics which drew people to Irving Park during its settlement continue to attract new residents to the area today. Presently, Irving Park is accessible by the Metra rail, CTA trains and buses, and the Kennedy expressway: a benefit which many of my interviewees highlighted as a reason for why they moved to the area. This easy access to transportation is important to the people of Irving Park because it allows residents to easily hold a job in the city, while still being able to live far enough to afford a nice house or to rent a cheap apartment. This

reasoning produces a dichotomy between the two largest populations in Irving Park: generally white middle class families who wanted to own single-family homes and immigrant populations who wished to rent cheaply and have accessibility to a job in the city. These two populations have remained socially segregated to some extent in Irving Park, despite living the same community area.

This division between immigrant populations and middle-class homeowners is further exemplified in the housing-stock and closer block-by-block inspection of Irving Park. The census tracts of Irving Park with the highest hispanic population also have the highest population of renters (“Thesis Project,” n.d.). This finding is backed up with data from my interviews, in which participants stated that renters in their neighborhoods are more likely to be Hispanic and that home-owners are less likely to be recent immigrants.<sup>1</sup> Having walked through the community area of Irving Park myself, it is easy to tell which parts have higher Hispanic populations than others because of local ethnic businesses, restaurants, and shops located in the areas near the apartment buildings, rather than on the long blocks with large single-family homes. One of my interviewees acknowledged this difference during the interview, saying “different sides of Kimball Avenue are different and some of it has to do with like apartments, condos, the style of single family home, things like that.”<sup>2</sup> Single family homes in Irving Park have great historical significance, and there were even a few clusters of blocks designed by developers to be micro-communities in themselves.<sup>3</sup> So, although the community area of Irving Park is recognized under one name by the City of Chicago, the people living in the area tend to

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<sup>1</sup> TRIP (2019, February 4). In person interview.

<sup>2</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

<sup>3</sup> The Villa. (2019, January 5). In person interview.



identify more with their immediate neighborhood and neighboring streets.<sup>4</sup> One of my interviewees said that “as an individual house owner, it surprises (him) a little bit how insular neighborhoods can be.”<sup>5</sup> He added that his sense of ‘neighborhood’ was even smaller than the already reduced boundaries of his organization: it could consist of a few streets banding together and giving themselves a name. Further, when speaking of the wealthier areas of Irving Park, this same interviewee said that they are “almost all double wide lots and single family, which has had an impact because the housing stock is more expensive. You get smaller lots of smaller houses as you go north of Elston. Elston Avenue is a very powerful barrier on a certain level, which I think is unfortunate.”<sup>6</sup>

The Irving Park community area is represented by at least six different neighborhood associations, and not all of the geographic area is covered under an association. For the purposes of my research, I was able to interview Old Irving Park Association (OIPA), Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA), West Walker Community Association (WWCA), The Residents of Irving Park (TRIP), and The Villa. I also spoke with the Merchant Park Community Garden (MPCG) and Carlson Community Services: two organizations trying to fill diverse needs in the community.

### **Overview of organizations**

Although all the organizations I spoke with identified with the Irving Park community area, they each primarily focused on the immediate population of residents within their ‘boundary.’ Each association and organization had different boundaries, and there were some

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<sup>4</sup> This finding is consistent with Sampson’s “neighborhood effect”

<sup>5</sup> WWCA. (2019, January 23). Phone interview.

<sup>6</sup> WWCA. (2019, January 23). Phone interview.

sections of Irving Park that remained outside of the geographic scope of all of the organizations I interviewed.

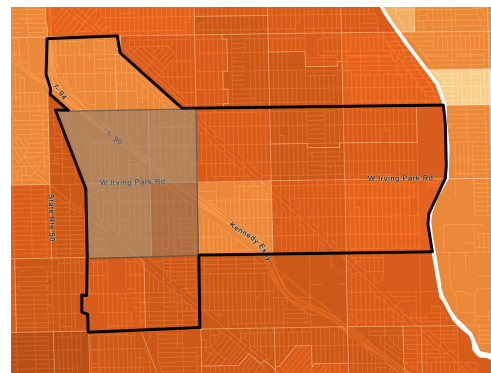
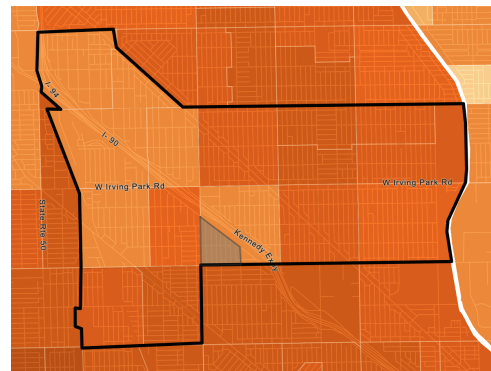
The first organization I spoke with was The Villa Improvement League, which is a housing association located in central Irving Park. The Villa Improvement League limits its membership to people who live within the boundaries that were drawn at the conception of the neighborhood. The Villa, as the official neighborhood is called, was developed in 1907 and was designed to be a close-knit community of 126 houses

(pictured on right). Because of its current historical designation, those houses are more expensive and there are many limitations to reconstruction and alteration for the residents. Because The Villa Improvement League strictly serves a closed geographic area and hasn't

experienced a significant change in terms of integration over the past thirty years, they were not a focus of my analysis.

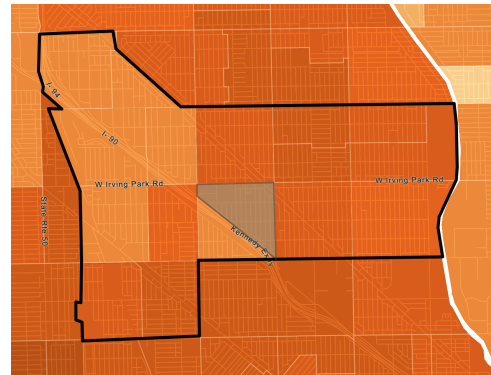
Next, I spoke to the Old Irving Park Community Association (OIPA), which was founded in 1983 in response to the tear-down of historic buildings and deterioration of housing stock in the area. Like the Villa Improvement League, OIPA also serves a certain geographic boundary. However, its boundaries are not

closed and OIPA allows membership from residents who live outside of the boundary. OIPA's

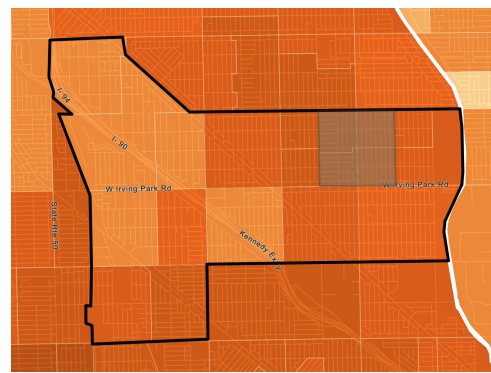


mission statement is “to maintain and improve quality of life,” and it works closely with neighboring organizations.<sup>7</sup>

The Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA) is another community association in the area with a distinguished boundary different from the boundaries of Irving Park. GIPNA started out of opposition to predatory business development that drove local entrepreneurs out of business. GIPNA works to address crime, beautification, and other projects like the recent construction of a library within its boundaries. GIPNA provides a newsletter, new member package, and monthly meetings to its members.



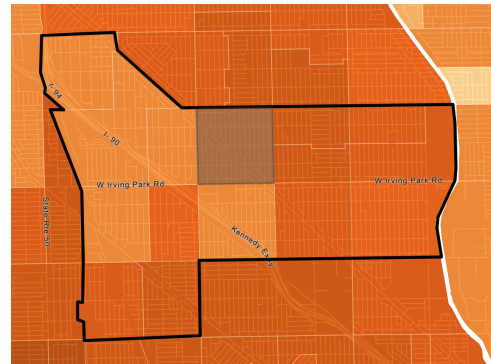
The Residents of Irving Park (TRIP) is yet another community association I spoke with that serves a specific, defined geographic boundary. Although serving a heavily Hispanic area, TRIP has had difficulty recruiting and retaining Hispanic members primarily due to language and culture barriers. They used to do monthly meetings and publish and distribute a newsletter, however, that got expensive and time-consuming and now they just officially meet a few times a year at festive parties and maintain a Facebook presence and email list.



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<sup>7</sup> OIPA. (2019, January 9). Phone interview.

The West Walker Civic Association (WWCA) defines its function as to promote the residential, business, and entrepreneurial interests within the confines of West Walker. About 15 years ago, WWCA put together a vision statement which attempted to “articulate how the people who lived there wanted to see a change implemented in the neighborhood.”<sup>8</sup> The pursuit of the West Walker Civic Association is to make their ‘diverse’ neighborhood the best it can be by “securing the services, safeguards and improvements the West Walker community is entitled to have.”<sup>9</sup>



Another organization I interviewed was Carlson Community Services. Carlson Community Services is different from the other organizations in that it is not an association where membership is based on housing. Carlson Community Services was started in 2006 by Irving Park Lutheran Church when they sent a survey out to their surrounding neighborhood asking what sort of programs or services people wanted to see. The representative I spoke with told me that the top three things that were mentioned in the survey were after school care for kids, a community gardening initiative, and something related to the arts. Their mission is to “enrich and engage the Irving park community with programs that enrich lives through education, culture, and service.”<sup>10</sup>

Similarly to Carlson Community Services, the Merchant Park Community Garden (MPCG) started out of a recent need in the surrounding community. MPCG started in 2010 on an empty tract of land, when the founder had the idea to expand her small garden and beautify a

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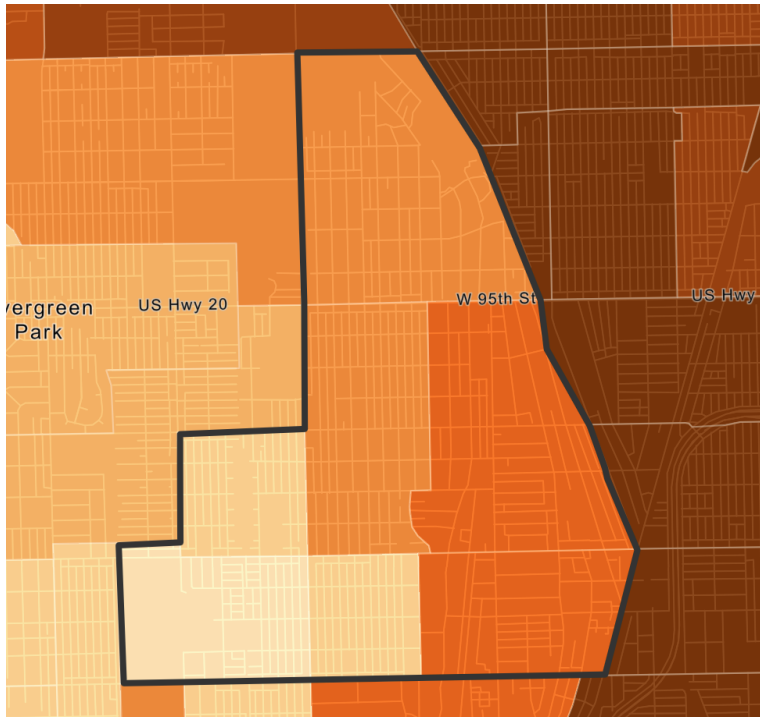
<sup>8</sup> WWCA. (2019, January 23). Phone interview.

<sup>9</sup> West Walker website. <https://www.westwalker.org/>.

<sup>10</sup> Carlson Community Services. (2019, March 18). Phone interview.

small plot of unused land in her neighborhood. She asked her Alderman if she could use the land and she asked the local church if she could borrow a space for meetings. Now, MPCG serves the surrounding neighborhood.

## **Beverly**



## **History**

Beverly is located on the Southwestern border of Chicago. This community area sits atop and along the Blue Island Ridge, which was one of a handful of actual islands that arose out of ancient Lake Chicago (the ancestor to Lake Michigan) after the last glaciers melted.<sup>11</sup> Beverly, officially named Beverly Hills, was eventually annexed to Chicago in 1890, followed by neighboring area Morgan Park in 1914.

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<sup>11</sup> Ridge Historical Society. (2019, February 7). Email exchange.

A historian of the area informed me that “for all practical purposes, the two really form one community” and that “it would be difficult to separate what happened in Beverly from what went on in Morgan Park.”<sup>12</sup> Both community areas evolved together and are even covered under the same civic association.

Beverly and Morgan Park were community areas originally settled by arriving Protestant groups, who were later displaced by an incoming Irish-Catholic population in the 1920s. This displacement did not occur smoothly; the Catholic Church had to purchase land under a ruse in order to be able to settle itself within the bounds of Beverly.<sup>13</sup> This religious struggle created animosity between the Catholic and Protestant populations, and eventually the Protestant populations resettled and Beverly remained Catholic for a few more decades. In the 1960’s, civil rights and fair housing laws were granted to minorities, and there was a panic along the South Side of Chicago. Beverly was one of the only community areas on the South Side that did not succumb to white flight, and they were able to do this because of the strength of their most prominent community organization: the Beverly Area Planning Association (BAPA).

The history of BAPA is integral to the history of Beverly because of a sequence of events that occurred in the 1970s that set the foundation for how BAPA and the entire community area operates today. At its conception, BAPA was an organization dominated by local real estate interests, concentrating on physical improvements and commercial developments (Stanton, 2014). However, in the 1960s, Chicago neighborhoods were re-segregating due to white flight. “There was a big problem on the south side,” one of my interviewees told me, “unscrupulous real estate developers were using blockbusting techniques and it was all aimed at scaring white home

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<sup>12</sup> Ridge Historical Society. (2019, February 7). Email exchange.

<sup>13</sup> Ridge Historical Society. (2019, February 7). Email exchange.

owners out of neighborhoods, and that is very well documented across Chicago.”<sup>14</sup> Some residents began to flee Beverly in anticipation of a racial change. A highly respected urban research institution, at the time, predicted total turnover within a five year timeframe; and although most people in the area knew about the prediction and the departure of some of their neighbors, there was no open discussion about the likelihood of such change (Stanton, 2014). Some residents saw the lack of conversation as a problem, and a local parish developed a council and set of committees in order to initiate conversation about the potential changes in the area. One of the members of the committees was Mr. Patrick Stanton, a Beverly native who was passionate neither about preventing nor fostering change, but rather about preparing positive responses to change. Mr. Stanton had many ideas for this process and presented a 10-page letter and a 20-page flip chart as an attempt to reach the entire community. He called his plan “Beverly Now” to stress its urgency; Beverly Now rested on four pillars: public relations, area-wide education, control of real estate practices and planned business activity. The plan called for central organization under one umbrella organization, and after weeks of meetings and gained support from influential residents, Beverly Now was able to get the funding it needed to operate under BAPA’s umbrella.

Due to Beverly Now’s influence, BAPA was reorganized with a specific set of purposes. Through further community involvement and the implementation of Beverly Now, integration happened naturally in Beverly “by making sure that people who were looking for properties got to see properties all over the neighborhood, not like the classic block by block re-segregation.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>15</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

BAPA additionally continued the efforts by opening up a phone line for concerned residents and creating further opportunities for interaction and conversation.

In 2017, Beverly's population was 37% Black, 55% white, 3% Hispanic, and 0% Asian (*Census-Data-by-Chicago-Community-Area-2017.pdf*, n.d.).

### **Present Day**

Now, Beverly is a generally isolated community area, as no Buses or CTA trains pass through, and so it is quiet and resembles a suburb that has easy car access to the city. It is common to see multiple generations living in Beverly, and beautiful single-family homes (often with historic designation) are characteristic of the area.

It is clear to see the positive foundation that BAPA laid for integration in Beverly. Housing prices have remained consistently strong, and local businesses line the main avenues. As Mr. Stanton told me, "we stayed here because there's no reason it should've changed. You know, we thought if they (Black residents) are going to pay the housing values, it's going to work out well. And it did, of course. And there continues to be a demand for the housing in the market too."<sup>16</sup> Beverly was one of the only community areas on the South Side to achieve this kind of diversity at the time.

In my research, I was surprised to find that BAPA has considered Beverly to be integrated since the 1970s, when Black residents only made up about 20% of the community area. This finding indicates that once the attitude towards racial integration improved in the

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<sup>16</sup> Stanton, Pat. (2019, March 18). In person interview.



1970s, it has remained the same despite changes in the racial makeup. This is supported by the fact that many current residents chose to move to Beverly because of its diversity.

A unique characteristic of Beverly is that the community area has a high amount of resident police officers, firefighters, and Chicago Public School (CPS) teachers. This resulted from requirements that necessitated individuals in these professions live within city limits.<sup>17</sup> Community organizations in Beverly generally have positive relationships with their police district. One organization told me that they have active community policing meetings and that “criminals don't like Beverly, because the people are always reporting crime. People feel like they can report crime and trust their police officers.”<sup>18</sup> This statement may not be universally true of the residents of Beverly, but I found it significant that the local police station interacts with the community in programs such as community policing.

Additionally, it is interesting to note that Beverly underwent a similar integration transition decades before ‘Beverly Now,’ when Catholics began moving into the Protestant dominated community area. One of my interviewees said she knows someone who “had to go next door and say, ‘we're thinking of buying this house and I'm Catholic.’<sup>19</sup> Is that going to be a problem?”” She said that people getting to know their neighbors back then also helped them not be afraid of the neighborhood transition from majority Protestant to majority Catholic.

## **Overview of Organizations**

The primary neighborhood association in the Beverly Community Area is the Beverly Area Planning Association (BAPA). As outlined in the previous section, BAPA has a 70 year

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<sup>17</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>18</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>19</sup> St.Barnabas 'You are my Neighbor'. (2019, March 9). Phone interview.

long history of being active in its community, particularly in the face of racial change and community panic. BAPA restricts membership to the people within its boundaries. When speaking with BAPA, I found that the organization focuses on quality of life issues and on keeping the area strong and open. BAPA presently holds monthly meetings, distributes a monthly newspaper, and believes that communication is an essential part of bringing people together and keeping people together. They have a few events a year, which they say are attended by almost everyone in the neighborhood and accurately reflect the racial composition of the community area.

In Beverly, I also spoke to the Beverly Arts Center (BAC), a non-profit arts venue and organization, founded in 1967, that serves the Chicago metro area with high-quality programs in dance, visual arts, music, film and theater. The Beverly Arts Center offers the Beverly community a platform for expression and artistic participation. BAC is currently in the process of promoting diversity in the programming and on the board. The organization is trying to broaden the demographic of people who attend the performances and participate in the programs.

Further, I spoke with two representatives from the Beverly Arts Alliance (BAA), another arts organization in Beverly. The BAA started about six years ago when its two founders decided to plan an art walk through their neighborhood in order to engage the local business community and get people into local shops. Since then, the organization has grown to have an artist network all over the South Side of Chicago, and it has been able to bring people together who would have otherwise likely not crossed paths. BAA works closely with the business community in Beverly.

Additionally, I spoke with a resident of Beverly involved in St. Barnabas Catholic Church's "You are my neighbor" program, which is a program that links people from affiliated

churches in conversation about social peace and justice in their neighborhoods. They host several small events throughout the year and disseminate any info regarding projects that deal with social justice: marches, letter writing, volunteering, etc. Their main focus areas are immigration policies and violence in Chicago.

Lastly, I spoke with Pat Stanton, one of the pioneers of the ‘Beverly Now’ movement under BAPA. I spoke with him about the transition his community has undergone since the 1970s and his opinion about it.

### **Findings and Analysis**

My interviews with the organizations of both community areas ultimately revealed three things:

1. There are factors that facilitated these organizations in forming cohesion and a general sense of community. These factors are commitment from residents, connections and resources, communication and outreach, and proactive engagement.
2. There are various barriers to social integration that have prevented parts of each community area from participating in these organizations and socially interacting with the rest of the community area. These barriers are socioeconomic inequality, implicit racism, homogenous leadership, and language and cultural barriers.
3. There are ways to overcome these barriers, and some organizations are already implementing them. In order to overcome barriers to social integration, these organizations have made social integration an institutional goal, have strengthened and invested in their schools, have activity based programming, and program for a diverse audience.

## **How These Organizations Achieve Their Goals**

Each organization I interviewed had its own distinct mission statement and goals that it worked to achieve. Despite the diversity in these stated missions, however, all of the organizations I interviewed desired to create and maintain strong communities. During the interviews, I inquired which factors each organization felt were the most essential to creating and maintaining a strong community. The following factors appear to contribute the most: commitment from residents, connections and resources, communication and outreach, and proactive, rather than reactive, engagement.

### *Commitment from Residents*

All of the organizations I spoke to who considered themselves successful in forming community informed me of the importance of member participation. I was told time and time again about the core participants of their organizations and how committed these people were to making the programming happen. One of my Irving Park interviewees even listed member commitment as the most important factor a community organization can have:

One of the things that really got me into it (the organization) and I think got a lot of people into it, is that we have a core group of committed lifers. You know, there's nothing that's going to happen. We're going to be here all the time and, you know, when you start something like this out, you can do flyers or emails or and you should be inclusive and I think if you can do things in several languages, by all means do that, but when you find that core group, number one, don't burn them out, because they're THERE and once you have that, you can kind of do anything.<sup>20</sup>

This interviewee understood the foundation of her organization to be the people who were the most present and contributed the most time to it. She said that commitment is the only real way

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<sup>20</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

that an organization can be strong and grow, because if organizations have a core group, then it is possible to expand from there. Other organizations agreed with this statement, some even adding that a commitment to the physical area can contribute to the investment of the residents.

Those residents who are willing, and able, to make a commitment to an organization and an area are usually “homeowners, individuals who have a stake in the neighborhood for whatever reason, and people who have the time, who maybe are not working crazy hours and just trying to keep food on the table.”<sup>21</sup> And as another organization put it, “the best neighborhood associations occur if you can find somebody who either works out of their home or doesn't work and is really good at organizing things.”<sup>22</sup> Homeowners with time to spare are the backbone of community commitment because they are committed themselves, and because they help to spread a sense of investment in their neighborhoods, serving as a resource to community organizations.<sup>23</sup> Further, commitment and time-investment are beneficial to have not only from leaders and administrators of organizations, but also from the population at large. For example, BAPA relied on its volunteers during the 1970s to assist with rumor control, St. Barnabas relies on constituents to run events and programs, and GIPNA relies on community members to maintain its outreach operations.

Additionally, in order to give this commitment and investment, it is not enough that residents have time availability, they also have to feel confident that the organization they are committing their time to has similar goals and interests in mind. This factor in the commitment process can limit the participation of some individuals. For example, residents need to feel that

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<sup>21</sup> OIPA. (2019, January 9). Phone interview.

<sup>22</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

<sup>23</sup> I address this stereotype of community involvement further in my ‘Barriers to Integration’ section, but it is worth mentioning here that whether an organization has these kinds of members or not, it is generally agreed that member investment and commitment makes organizations stronger and more cohesive.

the people in these organizations are like them in some way or that they care about the same things.<sup>24</sup> If they do not feel a connection to the organization or its members, they probably will not want to spend their free time participating in the organization. This variable might be a contributor to why micro-communities have formed at the block level in Irving Park; if your immediate neighbors are organizing with goals and interests in mind, chances are that it also benefits you, and that you will want to give your time to them.

### *Connections and Resources*

The participants of my study revealed that just as important as investment from residents are the connections and resources that leaders of their organizations have access to. Many of the organizations I spoke to acknowledged that part of their strength came from being connected to organizations in the area. For example, when discussing their newsletter, BAPA recounted that they not only promote their own programming, but that they also try to inform residents of everything else that is happening in the neighborhood.<sup>25</sup> They interact with other organizations and they “don't work in a vacuum, because what happens two miles from here (Beverly) affects what happens right here.”<sup>26</sup> Similarly in Irving Park, organizations have the same practice of connecting with each other in order to increase awareness and strength in the area. One interviewee told me that “people who are in the administration of these groups have frequent contact and share information. Everybody has an email blast and everybody liberally cuts and pastes from the others, so that all the information gets out to everybody.”<sup>27</sup> This practice of sharing information between organizations contributes to residents getting involved in more than

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<sup>24</sup> BAC. (2019, February 13). In person interview.

<sup>25</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>26</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>27</sup> WWCA. (2019, January 23). Phone interview.

one organization, and also to residents interacting with different sections of their community area.<sup>28</sup>

Political and business connections have also proven imperative to the organizations I interviewed. One participant informed me that if she could give any recommendation to another organization that was just starting out, she would encourage them to work with the Alderman's office in their community “because they can help pave change, enable us (them) to do the things that we (they) need to rely on the city for, and can make introductions to other organizations that might be helpful to connect to.”<sup>29</sup> Another organization in the same community area also stated that political connections were important, whether that be Mayor, congressman, or alderman. The representative from this organization told me that their political connections arose because “at one point, our (their) one square mile had four alderman, with one alderman having one square block,” proving it important for the organization to be politically involved.<sup>30</sup> This political connection has also led the organization to develop very strong ties with all the surrounding neighborhoods groups because they tend to share elected representatives.

Lastly, one of the organizations I interviewed in Irving Park has made it a point to connect with the developers of new properties in their area, which they claim is important because if there is a problem, they know who to call in order to solve it.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, a few other organizations stressed the importance of local business connections in their neighborhoods. Business connections allow them to interact further with their residents and exchange resources

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<sup>28</sup> Aids the social integration process

<sup>29</sup> Carlson Community Services. (2019, March 18). Phone interview.

<sup>30</sup> OIPA. (2019, January 9). Phone interview.

<sup>31</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

and promotional materials. For example, a local restaurant can provide free food to an organization in exchange for advertising.

### *Outreach and Communication*

In order to get residents involved, and keep them involved, organizations have to do a fair amount of outreach. One of my interviewees stated that what keeps her neighborhood (Beverly) “cohesive, integrated, and open to everyone” is that everybody knows what’s going on.<sup>32</sup> This organization makes an effort to provide simple avenues of communication so that residents are able to stay informed and engaged. Similarly, in Irving Park, one interviewee emphasized that in order to keep residents involved, there needs to be consistent outreach:

Once someone like picks up the phone and says, ‘I’d really like you to come, could you volunteer?’ as opposed to just waiting for them to call you, it’ll happen. So being a little bit more proactive, making a personal call, whether it’s on the street or something, ‘hey, we’re doing this, can I count on you to do that?’ And that personal invitation brings them in.<sup>33</sup>

This kind of outreach occurs not only in the form of phone calls, but also in email blasts, newsletters, social media posts, or even in-person ‘new neighbor’ programs where organizations introduce themselves to new residents. Different mediums work better for different organizations, as smaller organizations might be better off solely using social media, and more resourced organizations might prefer to print flyers and go door to door; but all organizations have agreed that it is imperative to keep people informed and to make sure potential new members are not being overlooked.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>33</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

<sup>34</sup> BAA-1. (2019, March 11). Phone interview.



This factor relates to the first factor for success: commitment and investment. If you don't keep people engaged and connected, they are less likely to form a connection and a commitment to the organization. As one interviewee told me, "You can't just rely on people renewing. You have to always be inviting people to join. You feel need to make them welcome."<sup>35</sup>

### *Proactive Engagement*

The final factor common to the organizations that considered themselves successful was that they aimed to provide positive experiences and proactive opportunities for their residents. Although negative experiences, such as crime or tragedy, are powerful in bringing people together, positive experiences help cohesion last and enable new connections to form that aren't associated with negative occurrences.

If organizations only congregate in opposition to something, or in response to something, it can prove difficult to maintain participation once the crisis is over. For example, one of the organizations I interviewed has experienced that "if there's a crisis, people come out in droves and get involved and stay involved. However, once that negative experience has passed, participation goes down."<sup>36</sup> In order to prevent this decline in participation, other organizations have realized that it is important to have positive experiences to keep residents engaged and invested in the community. One such organization, located in Irving Park, recounted the story of how they were founded and how they were able to turn a negative experience around:

I also think it's important, that the inciting incident (of the organization) was to protest against something, which often brings people together in a community. But, I would say, you have to always find some positives to work together, because that's much more reinforcing for people. So it's like the gardens, the farmer's market, a fundraiser for your school.... whatever you can. People can see that. So in addition to the difficult things, the

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<sup>35</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

<sup>36</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

hard things, people can get some rewards and reinforcement, some satisfaction from how they're building their community. Something physical.<sup>37</sup>

This same representative recognized that there are some organizations that are constantly negative and don't grow because people don't want to always experience the same negative problems, they want to have opportunities for positive experience. Otherwise, "there's no life there. It's never gonna work."<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, part of keeping events proactive is having a reliable feedback system. As one of my interviewees put it, "if you are hearing what people are fearing or what they are loving, then you have a much better way of organizing and keeping people engaged and being proactive."<sup>39</sup> If organizations hear what exactly their residents are concerned about and afraid of, they are also able to better address the negative problems, and paint the right solutions in a positive light. For example, Pat Stanton did just that with 'Beverly Now' in the 1970s. He encouraged people to talk about impeding racial change and he spoke publicly about integration as a solution, rather than something they should all be afraid of.<sup>40</sup> If he had presented only the problems of racial change, and not what positive experiences could result from it, Beverly might be a very different community area now, and BAPA a very different organization.

### **Barriers for Minority Participation**

Although the aforementioned factors all contributed to the organizations' strong sense of community, the community that these organizations have formed are not necessarily representative of the entire integrated population. Therefore, there are two measures of success

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<sup>37</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

<sup>38</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

<sup>39</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>40</sup> Stanton, Pat. (2019, March 18). In person interview.

that need to be differentiated in my data: the first is the ability of each organization to form and maintain community and the second is the ability of each organization to adapt social integration to residential integration. In an attempt to address this second measure of success, I asked each organization about possible barriers to social integration they might be facing. After analyzing the interviews again, I found that the most prominent barriers to social integration in these community areas were: socioeconomic inequality, implicit racism, homogenous leadership, and language and cultural barriers.

### *Socioeconomic inequality*

Many of my interviewees who considered their organization to meet the first measure of success explained an important caveat to their community's strength: in order to achieve member commitment and grow their network, these organizations needed to have leaders and residents who were able to give up a certain amount of time, resources, and care to their organization. This means that the organizations who created a sense of community were the ones who had leaders and residents who could afford to take the afternoon off work to volunteer, or residents that were familiar with local politics and could connect their organization to the Alderman, or even residents who were able to afford a home in the area in the first place. For example, when asked about this aspect of their success, BAPA informed me:

People are well educated here (Beverly), people are middle class and middle upper class here, and people are comfortable here; they can take care of things, they can go out to dinner, they can enjoy their lives and be social. And I think that kind of takes a little edge off for people in general across the board, when they're more relaxed and not worried about stuff.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

If almost all of the people in an area are able to make the organization's meetings and take the time to get to know other members, then there is further opportunity for the organization to include diverse opinions and cater to the interests of the entire community. However, if there are some people in the area who can't come to the meeting because they work two jobs, or because they have to take care of a family member, or because they can't afford the membership fee, then that means that their opportunities for social interaction within the context of the organization will be severely limited, and their interests will not be represented.

Socioeconomic inequality in a neighborhood heavily affects which people are making organizational decisions and which people are able to interact with each other through the social platforms organizations provide. Residents who are struggling financially will not have the time and resources needed to participate in the organization to the same extent as others will, and therefore will miss out on opportunities for social interaction that could have otherwise resulted in further social integration.

This issue of socioeconomic inequality is often, but not always, a racial problem (Massey & Denton, 1993). As one of my interviewees in Irving Park told me:

It's sort of a time and cost thing, right? Because I see this at my kid's school too, which across the entire school is probably 40 or 50 percent Latino, but all the parents, almost all the parent leadership is white people.<sup>42</sup>

The white residents of his community area are the ones who have more time and resources to give to community organizations, and as a result they get to make decisions for a part of their community area that they do not socially interact with. This inequality between race groups might be present for many different reasons, but it affects not only where people are able to live,

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<sup>42</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

but also how much time they are able to give to their community and what kind of social ties they are able to form, making it a barrier to social integration.

### *Implicit racism / Making people uncomfortable*

Similarly to the socioeconomic inequality barrier, implicit racism is a barrier that heavily affects social situations in physically integrated spaces.<sup>43</sup> When people make assumptions about one another, whether consciously or subconsciously, it can limit their interactions and social ties to only those who fit in their idea of people they would like to connect with. When implicit racism occurs, it can alienate the population being prejudiced against. For example, one of my interviewees told me that there are still plenty of places in her area where her Black friends don't feel comfortable going, "because you just feel the vibe, you know?"<sup>44</sup> So, as a result of implicit racism and prejudice, minorities in her community area might not be comfortable participating socially with their neighbors. They might opt out of opportunities for social interaction because they don't want to deal with the feelings that go along with being prejudiced against. For example, this same interviewee told me:

I think it has gotten better (the racism), um, you know, much better. But you still have a little bit of those kind of like, you know, less overt, um, ways of excluding people. And you know, it's weird. Um, because our blocks are very integrated. I lived in two different houses on both blocks and had very integrated people on the block, but we'd have block parties and like, only white people showed up. Right? Even though everybody was reached out to you.<sup>45</sup>

This kind of voluntary separation is indicative of something deeper happening than just access or opportunity for interaction. If minorities feel uncomfortable inhabiting social spaces, then it will

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<sup>43</sup> Implicit racism includes biases and expectations that are not necessarily conscious or self-aware

<sup>44</sup> BAA-2. (2019, March 13). In person interview.

<sup>45</sup> BAA-1. (2019, March 11). Phone interview.

be difficult to achieve positive social interaction. Even jokes that people make can have an effect on participation. For example, an interviewee in Irving Park told me disapprovingly that one of his neighbors always says the reason they don't see a lot of Latinos because “they're all illegal.”<sup>46</sup> And whether this neighbor meant his comment as a joke or not, it clearly shows a deeper level of prejudice in the community that might be affecting social interactions.

Stereotypes and prejudices are forms of implicit racism that promote apprehension and fear of racial change. They are not always conscious and they are difficult to separate from reality because they are often rooted in systemic consequences of the social, economic, and political oppression experienced by minority populations in this country (Massey & Denton, 1993). This often leads the ideal community that individuals picture to be one that is not minority dominated. For example, many of the community organizations' beautification goals, while objectively positive, also inherently imply discrimination towards certain groups. High housing values, manicured lawns, good schools, and working with the police are all goals that might allow for prejudice and discrimination against Black and Hispanic members of a community, simply because they are associated with different conditions. This possibility does not mean that beautification should not be an objective, but it might mean that there is still work to be done in addressing stereotypes and prejudice, and promoting a more diverse community in the long run.

Moreover, one participant in my study explained that “people are apprehensive (of racial change) because their greatest asset is their home, they don't have a 401k, they don't have a pension, that's all they have. And they're going to defend it, they will do everything possible to defend that value and if they feel it's being threatened, they will sell it and go.”<sup>47</sup> This fear of

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<sup>46</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

<sup>47</sup> OIPA. (2019, January 9). Phone interview.

change is understandable in terms of personal loss, because at the end of the day it is reasonable to expect that people will do what is best for them. However, the balance between addressing a fear and letting a fear consume oneself is a delicate one, and self-interest can promote a system of discrimination without necessitating prejudice on a personal level: for example, when individuals aren't necessarily afraid of the people of a different race coming into their neighborhood, but they are afraid of the consequences that might occur if their neighborhood becomes a traditionally minority neighborhood.

### *Homogenous Leadership*

As outlined earlier in this paper, it is common for white members of an integrated community to be the members who have the time and resources to take a leadership position in their community organization. This likely homogeneity in leadership can be a barrier to social integration in itself if the leaders of an organization all represent one subset of the general population. If there is no diversity, there is a high chance that leaders might be overlooking the interests and needs of other members of their community.

To expand the scope of programming, organizations in Beverly and Irving Park have actively tried to promote diversity in their leadership positions.<sup>48</sup> One organization has also broadened the scope of who their audience is, experiencing success in promoting further social interaction and participation:

I think it (their success) is because of how we program and that we program for a diverse audience. And, um, places that are not as successful is because they program for a specific group of people, right? So they're not as inclusive and they more look at their

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<sup>48</sup> BAC. (2019, February 13). In person interview.

own interests of what they want to do rather than what people want, you know, what the community needs.<sup>49</sup>

If minority members of the community feel that they are being acknowledged, then they will have an incentive to participate further and socially interact with people they would otherwise have not interacted with. If, on the other hand, they have no representation and no stake in the community at large, then it will be more likely that they will keep to themselves in order to advocate and keep identity.<sup>50</sup>

Additionally, if the leadership of an organization is not diversifying along with the population of the neighborhood itself, then it is very possible that outdated values and prejudices will remain at the top levels of community organizations. For example, one of the interviewees in Irving Park told me that that “in the old days, community leaders vouched for each other in order to earn positions of leadership and be trusted by the residents.”<sup>51</sup> Under this framework, if incoming minority populations do not have anyone to vouch for them, it is unlikely that they will gain access to decision-making in their organizations. This distrust further prevents social integration.

### *Language and Cultural Barriers*

Language was a barrier that came up many times during my interviews, especially in Irving Park, where much of the Hispanic population consists of new immigrants. One of my interviewees recognized:

I think there is a population of Hispanic people who perhaps don't participate as much as we would like because they don't, we don't do bilingual, it's just never been easy for us.

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<sup>49</sup> BAA-1. (2019, March 11). Phone interview.

<sup>50</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

<sup>51</sup> OIPA. (2019, January 9). Phone interview.



We do it once in a blue moon on some flyers, some events. So for people who don't speak English, there's probably not as much participation as there could be.<sup>52</sup>

This is a hard barrier to overcome, not only because of the time and resources that translation takes, but also because even if Spanish speaking members of the community show up to events, there might not be much they can actually converse about and they will be limited to interacting with people from their own sub-communities who speak their own language. This probable scenario is a reason why organizations might not try harder to accommodate different languages. However, it is not always the case that the inability to communicate lies solely on the foreign member of the community, as sometimes even when minority populations try to speak English, they are met with impatience and rudeness. As an example, another one of my interviewees told me:

Years ago, I went to a community policing meeting, and this Latino middle aged mom had some complaint and her English wasn't very good, and the people were so rude to her. She was making a perfectly valid point. But they were like, 'can you speak better?' She was clearly frustrated and I felt so badly. And so, we try to have translators and put information out in both English and Spanish. Um, but it's clearly a barrier.<sup>53</sup>

This apprehension towards and impatience with the foreign language speaker created a hostile environment and probably discouraged that mother from trying to form social ties with others at the meeting. Similarly, apprehension to foreign languages can also extend to apprehension to foreign cultures. In this same community area, "people get angry every single year that they don't get enough warning about Latin American cultural parades. The previous Alderman used to apologize for it because he didn't have veto power over the parade routes."<sup>54</sup> However, the interviewee commented, the entire city shuts down for St Patrick's Day and people do not

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<sup>52</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

<sup>53</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

<sup>54</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

complain because it is a cultural event that is more familiar to them. If distinct populations in a community area are not able to relate to each other's cultures and events, then it might make it more difficult for them to form lasting social bonds that promote the process of social integration.

### **What Community Organizations Have Done (and Can Do) To Overcome These Barriers**

Solutions to social integration barriers are not one-size-fits-all, but the organizations I spoke to outlined a few methods through which they have tried to overcome them. They also listed recommendations for other organizations wishing to overcome these barriers in the future. I have included these recommendations in my analysis. Possible ways I found to overcome barriers to social integration fit into three categories: updating institutional goals, strengthening schools and activity based- organizations, and addressing inequality and prejudice head-on through programming for a diverse audience.

#### *Make social integration institutional goal*

When organizations recognize the changes in their community areas and update their policies and operations to match, it can lay a foundation for future programming and practices that end up being conducive to integration and foster a welcoming environment for a wider population in the neighborhood. The clearest example I have of this in my research is the fundamental shift that BAPA made in the 1970s regarding impending racial change. The 'Beverly Now' movement changed the bylaws of its parent organization and created programming specifically designed to make the residential integration process smoother. After recognizing new goals, BAPA took steps to address people's fears, foster open conversation, and

offer educational opportunities about the realities of race relations in America. Because of this foundational shift in how BAPA understood its mission, and because the administrators of the organization were on board, “people back then were very mindful of working together as realtors, and banks, and homeowners to stay in the neighborhood and let integration happen naturally.”<sup>55</sup> Today, Beverly is not perfectly socially integrated, and there is still work to be done to address barriers and prejudices. However, if it were not for this initial shift in mindset that ‘Beverly Now’ promoted in BAPA, then it is very probable that the area would have re-segregated shortly after the scare of impending racial change.<sup>56</sup>

Today in Beverly, as the physical integration process has already successfully occurred, organizations have recognized that diversity in leadership and membership are important to set as institutional goals. One of the arts organizations I spoke to, BAA, maintains a code of conduct on their website and at their events. The leaders of the organization do not tolerate racist speech or actions and really try to accommodate new interests and to reach out to diverse factions of the community area. When they first started out, they told me that they didn’t recall seeing a lot of people of color, but as their reputation grew, all of their events have become “much more integrated, um, and diverse.”<sup>57</sup> When asked what advice they would give to another organization facing a diversifying community, they said:

Anything you do, you just need to create opportunities for people to come together and you need to be conscious of the vibe that you're trying to create, and the environment (you're trying to create). Because, you know, whether they're fully aware of it, people are conscious of it and they can feel it, and then it just attracts other like-minded, compassionate people. So I don't know, I guess you have to start at the top so that the organizers have to have that attitude and then look at how it's being conveyed, you know, look at how things are being presented. And are you inviting people of color to

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<sup>55</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>56</sup> Stanton, Pat. (2019, March 18). In person interview.

<sup>57</sup> BAA-1. (2019, March 11). Phone interview.

participate? Are you reaching out to them? Are you, you know, trying to make sure that everybody feels welcome? And so, you know, I guess you just have to try to create opportunities for people to come together and create the right vibe and then it just sort of grows on its own. It breaks down barriers.<sup>58</sup>

Having diversity, acceptance, and social integration as stated goals has let residents and participants of BAA programming understand that there is a code of conduct and that it is a priority for people of color to feel comfortable in these spaces. If there is a goal, the rest of organizational decisions can mold around it, and this is extremely helpful in overcoming the barriers to social integration.

### *Strengthen schools*

Schools came up many times during my interviews as vehicles for social integration, due to their public nature and the inherent platform they provide for social interaction. One of my interviewees said that in Beverly, the most effective integration has occurred, and continues to occur, through schools because “when you have kids in school, you're always really active with everything that is going on.” For the interviewee, a lot of her friendships with her African-American neighbors really developed because her kids went to a public integrated school.<sup>59</sup> So, if in a certain area, the schools are integrated in-themselves, then there is opportunity for further neighborhood social integration to occur through PTA meetings, children’s events, and other instances of social interaction. However, if the schools are segregated, then opportunities for social integration become less likely. For example, in Irving Park, there is a high school that is about 90% Hispanic, and hardly anyone from the (Old Irving

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<sup>58</sup> BAA-2. (2019, March 13). In person interview.

<sup>59</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

Park) neighborhood itself attends there, for low academic reasons.<sup>60</sup> Because only a very small amount of people from the neighborhood choose to attend the public high school, more and more people from outside the neighborhood attend every year, limiting opportunities for parents of children in the community area to get to know one another through the school.

Additionally, lack of community investment in the children attending the public segregated school further alienates the community from that school. In order to remedy this, many of the neighborhoods in the Irving Park community area have ‘friend’s of’ groups, where parents from the neighborhood will raise money, organize events, and volunteer their talents to the schools in order to “turn them around,” even though their children do not attend the school. Residents of the area will typically get involved in ‘friend’s of’ groups if they have smaller children who they hope will be able to attend these schools, or if they want to make sure that the property values in their neighborhood stay high and that the quality of life improve.<sup>61</sup> These reasons can seem selfish, but programs like these are well intended if residents are in a position to help the students currently attending the school, as well as their own children. By strengthening and integrating schools, community organizations create further opportunities for social interaction and social integration. For example, GIPNA told me:

We work with the schools and the schools have a lot of fundraisers and we meet a lot of people from outside. Murphy has a very large Hispanic population and so we've met a lot of people that come in and, and the thing is when we do fundraisers it's to support the school. So the school also supports GIPNA and it's mutually wonderful.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> OIPA. (2019, January 9). Phone interview.

<sup>61</sup> There are aspects of this improvement process that are problematic in the same way neighborhood beautification can inherently encourage discrimination against a certain group of people, but I address this further in my policy recommendations section.

<sup>62</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

Therefore, schools are an excellent vehicle for social integration, and investing in them aligns with investing in the well-being of the overall community. Investing in public schools helps overcome socioeconomic difference and provides a platform for social ties to be formed.

Strong schools also provide excellent meeting places and focal points for a community. GIPNA, for example, likes to have meetings at their local public school because it is a “neutral kind of spot, and the school includes a wide range of incomes of people who live in the community.”<sup>63</sup> In other parts of Irving Park, schools have been the one common thread between the residents, and have given them a reason to come together and get to know one another, despite the lack of other community features to organize around.<sup>64</sup>

#### *Support activity-based organizations*

Activity based organizations are spaces that provide an opportunity for residents of a community area to come together based on their hobbies and interests, rather than just because they live near one another. This added layer of social ties has been effective in promoting social integration in both Irving Park and Beverly. Activity-based organizations have given reason for new groups of people to come together, and for them to focus on creating or experiencing something that they all can enjoy together. For example, one of the founders of the Beverly Arts Alliance told me that she loves living in Beverly even more after she started it because she has met so many creative, interesting people that she would not have met otherwise.<sup>65</sup> She added:

And we all lived in the neighborhood, but we didn't know each other. So it really has brought people together. And I didn't even realize how many artists and creative folks live in the neighborhood. It's just contact and, and you know, giving people opportunities to express themselves, whether it's artistically or storytelling or food or music. I think for

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<sup>63</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

<sup>64</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

<sup>65</sup> BAA-2. (2019, March 13). In person interview.

me, like those are the primal ways of storytelling and bringing people together to break down barriers.<sup>66</sup>

Art organizations, and activity based organizations more generally, break down barriers of interaction and allow people to get to know one another in low pressure environments. The people who join these organizations join because they are interested in the topic at hand, and as one of my interviewees put it: “when you bring people together and they have an opportunity to see the humanity in another person, you know, the, the, any racist bullshit, it just can't stand up to that, you know, to the reality.”<sup>67</sup> When people have a chance to interact with each other in a positive environment, prejudice barriers can be overcome.

Similarly to the arts organizations in Beverly and Irving Park, MPCG expressed similar results in terms of new social connections being formed in their community. Since the Merchant Park area does not fall under the jurisdiction of any civic association, the community garden has given members a unique platform of congregation and positive experiences.

#### *Program for a diverse audience*

The most straightforward way for a community organization to overcome social barriers is to directly address them with the residents of their community area and to understand what could be missing from their programming. Carlson Community Services, for example, is a community organization in Irving Park that set out to provide services that were missing in their community area. By looking honestly at what was needed, and receiving feedback from a broad audience, the organization settled on providing “after school care for kids, some sort of community gardening initiative, and something related to the arts.”<sup>68</sup> As a result, they have

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<sup>66</sup> BAA-1. (2019, March 11). Phone interview.

<sup>67</sup> BAA-2. (2019, March 13). In person interview.

<sup>68</sup> Carlson Community Services. (2019, March 18). Phone interview.

helped close the socioeconomic gap in their area through their low-cost after school program where “ somewhere around 65% of the kids enrolled in the program come from low income families” and of those low income families, most of them are Hispanic.<sup>69</sup> This program helps close the gap because if participating residents have peace of mind that their children have a safe and productive place to be after-school, then it is possible that those residents might have more time available to participate in their communities in ways they were not able to before.

Additionally, programs like these give further opportunity to low-income/minority residents to interact with other groups who may also be participating. So, by programming for a diverse audience, CCS is directly addressing inequality, providing a service needed in the community, and helping overcome barriers to social integration.

Other organizations programming for diverse audiences have also experienced positive outcomes in terms of social interaction and fostering integration. For example, BAA told me that people come to their events from all over the community area because they program for a diverse audience. Conversely, places that only program for a specific group of people are “not as inclusive, and they more look at their own interests of what they want to do rather than what people want or what the community needs.”<sup>70</sup> Because of this observation, BAA recommended that organizations always try to solicit feedback from their community.

Along with hearing the feedback, though, is making sure that new voices feel comfortable and encouraged to speak out. This can be done by directly addressing inequality and prejudice if it occurs. For example, one of my interviewees from GIPNA told me a story about a

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<sup>69</sup> Carlson Community Services. (2019, March 18). Phone interview.

<sup>70</sup> BAA-1. (2019, March 11). Phone interview.



time when a resident spoke out against prejudice at a meeting and changed the community's perspective on an issue:

At the meeting someone is like, 'I'm just very worried about having, you know, this element (subsidized housing) in the neighborhood' and another woman goes, 'you know, I own a six flat across from this housing complex and charge a lot of rent, and I have the hardest time with my tenants, getting rent on time or having them taking care of the place.' She goes, 'but that CHA housing across the street, that place is so well kept up and I would take any of *those* tenants any day over any of mine.' And I just love that, you know, she just leveled it and it was great.<sup>71</sup>

By speaking out, this resident in Irving Park made it known that prejudice was not founded and was not going to be accepted in their community. This made it possible for new subsidized housing to be built in the neighborhood, with the support of the neighborhood.

### **Conclusions / Policy Implications**

The scope of my research is inherently once removed from top-down policy measures, as in this paper I analyze and address on-the-ground best practices for community organizations in integrated community areas. However, many of the issues and barriers to social integration that I discuss throughout could be positively affected by further policy intervention. So, although community organizations (and similar local social interventions) are an essential component in achieving and maintaining social integration, government policy measures are conversely important in enforcing the guidelines that allow the right conditions for social integration to take place. From my data, I have compiled implications that could further address the root of the challenges community organizations face and encourage the social integration process. However, I argue that further local research should be done to understand which policy interventions would function best for which communities and at what level they should be implemented.

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<sup>71</sup> GIPNA. (2019, January 25). In person interview.

When discussing racial integration, fear is a common pushback against racial change. However, what exactly are people afraid of? And are their fears founded? Many individuals push back against racial integration because they fear consequences that are associated with minority communities; such as lower housing values, crime, and poor education.<sup>72</sup> Yet, although these characteristics might be present in many minority communities, they are not consequences of race itself, but rather of decades of unfair political and economic systems in the United States. The consequences of racial change have more to do with structural inequality and prejudice than with individuals themselves, and although education programs and community organizations can do things to promote positive interaction, address prejudiced perception, and even remedy the structural effects of racial change, only further policy interventions will be able to fix some of the root problems of inequality in the US. It is not in the scope of my research to determine what these interventions are, but based on my interviews in Beverly and Irving Park, I suggest that one of the most important places for further interventions to take place in is in schools.

If a community achieves racial integration, but the schools in its area don't, the social integration process is challenged, and further inequalities often result from marginalization of those students who have no other choice but to attend the local public school. Segregated schools in an integrated community create an inequality between neighbors, as was seen in certain areas of Irving Park, where "the students (at the high school) are predominantly Hispanic and most of the people volunteering are white."<sup>73</sup> In my data, schools proved such an important platform for social integration, and I suggest that instituting policy interventions to help strengthen public schools (especially ones in integrated and minority neighborhoods) and keep them diverse might

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<sup>72</sup> BAPA. (2019, January 14). Phone interview.

<sup>73</sup> OIPA. (2019, January 9). Phone interview.

help community organizations further use schools as a platform for social integration.

Additionally, making it easier for parents who are either new to the country or unfamiliar with the school lottery process would help build diversity and equality, as “parents who are familiar with system and have the wherewithal to think 10 months out” are the ones who get their kids into the specialized public schools.<sup>74</sup>

Separately, during my research process, residents expressed confusion about my methodology; particularly about why I was studying their community area at-large rather than their smaller neighborhood units, and why I was using broad racial categories as my criteria. I explained to them that the reason I was studying their community area and using racial categorizations was because I was following the demarcation and categorization established by government authorities, and that this is the kind of data widely available to researchers. However, residents tended to have a much more fluid sense of what they considered their ‘community’ to be, and it almost never exactly aligned with boundaries drawn out by the city of Chicago.<sup>75</sup> And in Irving Park, residents expressed to me the importance of understanding the nuances of the ‘Hispanic’ community in the area, because answers to my questions varied widely depending on if we were talking about new immigrants or established members of the community with some Hispanic heritage, both of which would have checked ‘Hispanic’ on the census and have been placed in the same categorization. For example, one of my interviewees informed me that there are important barriers that new immigrants face that other Hispanic people might not, and that in order to further social integration, it is important to understand those barriers.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

<sup>75</sup> This finding is consistent with Robert Sampson’s “neighborhood effect”

<sup>76</sup> TRIP. (2019, February 4). In person interview.

I believe that this criticism of my research methods is important, because it shows an inconsistency in how residents view their community (and the people within it) and the way in which race issues are usually studied. This inconsistency in how we understand race could be fueled by categorizations that are outdated, as one of my interviewees told me:

We keep thinking of race as someone is this, that, or something else. That is not today's America anymore. A large percentage of my children's friends were half this and half that. We are becoming a very mixed race country. So basically, you can't even really say: is this neighborhood becoming more Spanish if the wife is Colombian and the husband is Italian-American. I mean, what are their kids? Or they're half Jamaican and half Irish. You know, who are they? There's that racial ambiguity, and who do they identify as being themselves. So I think at a certain point demographers and sociologists are going to have to decide how they look at that, how they define that, because we all are going to be all mixed up.<sup>77</sup>

Based on these findings, I suggest that it might be helpful to update how we categorize identity in this country, and also how we study race. More nuanced data could help researchers in future endeavors to understand the process of racial integration.

Lastly, I think researchers should generally think more about how we define 'integration' and about what it means to foster a diverse and inclusive community. One of my interviewees defined integration in a way I had never heard before, and it showed me a lot about racial relations in Beverly:

When you finally got to a place where a white, a Caucasian person bought a house from an African American, you know that is like, okay, *so this is stable*. It's back and forth. And we are, um, you know, we're, we're definitely able to coexist.<sup>78</sup>

In the literature about integration, I had only read definitions of racial integration as statistical measures, so when my interviewee told me how she understood stability and integration, it

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<sup>77</sup> OIPA. (2019, January 9). Phone interview.

<sup>78</sup> St.Barnabas 'You are my Neighbor'. (2019, March 9). Phone interview.

surprised me. I think that further localized research could help researchers better understand what integration means and what aspects of it we should strive for.

## Appendix A

### Consent Form

#### UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

**Study Title:** BA Thesis for the Public Policy Department

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Charles Broughton

**Student Researcher:** Nicole Somerstein

**IRB Study Number:** 18-1655

I am a student at the University of Chicago, in the Department of Public Policy. I am planning to conduct a research study, which I invite you to take part in. This form has important information about the reason for doing this study, what I will ask you to do if you decide to be in this study, and the way I would like to use information about you if you choose to be in the study.

#### **Why is this study being conducted?**

You are being asked to participate in a qualitative research study about two recently racially integrated neighborhoods in Chicago and the role that community organizations have in forming and maintaining community. This means that you are either: an adult resident of the neighborhood, or a leader a community organization.

The purpose of the study is twofold; I aim to reveal the nuances in community building at the neighborhood level for populations that are racially diverse, and I also hope to understand the characteristics and actions of effective neighborhood organizations in times of racial transition.

#### **What will I be asked to do if you choose to be in this study?**

You will be asked to participate in a single 15-30 minute interview, involving a series of questions about either:

- a. Your experience as a resident in your neighborhood and your interaction with community organizations
- b. Your organization's actions over the years that have helped build community in your neighborhood

**Study time:** Study participation will take approximately between 20-30 minutes total. Each interview will take 15-25 minutes, and participants will not be interviewed more than once.

**Study location:** Participants will be asked to participate in a confidential one-on-one interview with me, the primary contact of the study, in a public location of their choice.

I would like to audio-record interviews to make sure that I remember accurately all the information you provide. I will store these tapes on my UChicago Box account and secure them using two factor authorization. Only I will have access to the tapes. If you prefer not to be audio-recorded, please let me know, and I will take notes instead.

I may quote your remarks in presentations or articles resulting from this work. A pseudonym will be used to protect your identity, unless you specifically request that you be identified by your true name.

**What are the possible risks or discomforts?**

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life. However, you may feel uncomfortable with some of the questions and topics we will ask about. If you are uncomfortable, you are free to not answer or to skip to the next question.

As with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality of the information we collect from you could be breached – we will take steps to minimize this risk, as discussed in more detail below in this form.

**What are the possible benefits for me or others?**

You are not likely to have any direct benefit from being in this research study. The study is designed to understand the ways in which residents of integrated neighborhoods experience community, as well as the role that community organizations play in forming and maintaining community. The study results may be used to help other neighborhood residents/organizations in the future.

**How will you protect the information you collect about me, and how will that information be shared?**

Results of this study may be used in publications and presentations. Your study data will be handled as confidentially as possible. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used, unless you specifically request that you be identified by your true name.

To minimize the risks to confidentiality, we will store all data with encryption on UChicago Box (a secure server) and access the data via password-protected computers. The crosswalk between the generic identification numbers that the participant will be assigned and their real name and contact information will be stored in a password protected, encrypted electronic file on the student researcher's password-protected computer. This crosswalk will be permanently destroyed no later than September 1, 2019. De-identified transcripts of interviews will be kept indefinitely.

We may share the data we collect from you for use in future research studies or with other researchers – if we share the data that we collect about you, we will remove any information that could identify you before we share it.

If we think that you intend to harm yourself or others, we will notify the appropriate people with this information.

### **Financial Information**

Participation in this study will involve no cost to you. You will not be paid for participating in this study.

### **What are my rights as a research participant?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer. If at any time or for any reason, you would prefer not to participate in this study, please feel free not to. If at any time you would like to stop participating, please tell me. We can take a break, stop and continue at a later date, or stop altogether. You may withdraw from this study at any time, and you will not be penalized in any way for deciding to stop participation. If you decide to withdraw from this study, the researchers will ask you if the information already collected from you can be used.

### **Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns about this research study?**

If you have questions, you are free to ask them now. If you have questions later, you may contact the researchers at nsomerstein@uchicago.edu or Nicole's cell (312)-543-6418.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you may contact the following office at the University of Chicago:

Social & Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board  
University of Chicago  
1155 E. 60th Street, Room 418  
Chicago, IL 60637  
Phone: (773) 834-7835  
Email: sbs-irb@uchicago.edu

### **Consent**

“I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have additional



questions, I have been told whom to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form.”

If you agree to participate, please say so. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

## **Interview Questions**

After acquiring verbal consent, I asked the following questions:

1. Could you name and briefly describe your organization, as well as your occupation within it?
2. Could you please tell me, in your own words, what role your organization plays in your community area?
3. What are the goals of your organization?
4. How long has your organization been active in this community area?
5. How does membership work?
6. Why did you decide to get involved yourself?
7. What programs/events does your organization hold currently?
8. What is the usual turnout for these events?
9. How are people recruited for your programs? / How is outreach done?
10. Do the people who attend your events/programs attend regularly?
11. Would you say that the population at your events accurately reflects the racial composition of your neighborhood? If not, why do you think that is?
12. Could you speak to the integration process over the past 30 years? How has your organization adjusted, if at all? What changes have you seen?
13. Have you experienced any challenges in that adjustment?
14. If you could give a piece of advice to another community organization facing racial integration, what would it be?

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