

Strengthening Portal Neighborhoods

Commissioned by CEOs for Cities
Written by Paul C. Brophy and Joy L. Borkholder

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Introduction

Cities in the United States are shaped by the immigrants who have historically settled in them. New York City would not be the same without Chinatown, Miami is known for its Cuban flair and Chicago competes with Warsaw for the largest Polish population in the world (Polish News, 2006). Immigration continues to be a defining force for the United States, demographically, socially and economically.

The 1990s saw immigration rates second only to those at the turn of the 20th Century. The foreign-born population grew 57 percent in the 1990s (Singer, 2004), and by 2005, 12 percent of the U.S. population was foreign-born. The Population Resource Center estimates that between 2000 and 2050 the U.S. will add 130 million people, of whom 90 percent will be racial and ethnic minorities, largely fueled by immigration, and many cities across the country rely on immigration for their net population growth. Immigrants have a positive impact on the economy. Not only do they have significant purchasing power, they outpace the native-born population in entrepreneurial activity (Fairlie, 2006).

In cities and suburbs, ethnic neighborhoods continue to emerge and thrive. Many of these neighborhoods are the first place of arrival for immigrants, or are "portal neighborhoods." They play an important role in the social and economic integration of immigrants. A thriving portal neighborhood is one that provides opportunities for economic and geographic mobility -- the support necessary for an immigrant to become an active and productive participant in the social, economic and civic life of the U.S.

Portal neighborhoods are places for cities to encourage new talent and entrepreneurs, create distinctiveness and cultivate connections to the world. As immigration continues to be an important issue in American life and politics, urban leaders and policy makers should not overlook the unique function and value of portal neighborhoods while making city and community planning decisions, and need to focus on strengthening these neighborhoods as assets to their cities.

Immigration and Portal Neighborhoods

A look at U.S. immigration history reveals that many immigrants from the same country or similar cultures tend to cluster together geographically in “ethnic enclaves” in central cities, often residing closer to other immigrant groups than to the native-born population. Portal neighborhoods are those enclaves that continue to host new immigrants.

Establishing a precise definition of a portal neighborhood is still a work in progress. For example, Taylor and Puente (2004) use a measure of more than 10,000 immigrants per square mile to identify 7 Chicago communities as “established ports of entry” and identify 6 “emerging ports of entry” where the immigrant population increased by more than 25 percent of the total tract population from 1990 to 2000. One drawback to this definition is that it does not factor in whether these are new immigrants and whether these neighborhoods are places of primary settlement.¹ A working definition of a portal neighborhood is a place that has a critical mass of recently arrived foreign-born residents. They are the initial points of entry for new immigrants, the base from which they establish themselves in this country. These enclaves serve immigrants by offering a culturally familiar environment where their native-language is spoken, links to ethnic employment niches and job networks, access to public or shared transportation and other services. Generally, they share common characteristics:

- Relatively low per capita incomes and/or a high degree of income diversity;
- A low rate of home-ownership compared to their metropolitan area;
- High rate of residential mobility;
- High limited English proficiency (LEP) rates;
- Presence of formal and informal services;
- Presence of commerce tailored for the immigrant population and culture of origin.

Portal neighborhoods are usually densely populated, which allows newcomers to blend into the community and provides more opportunities to learn from peers (Capraro, 2006). Examples of portal neighborhoods include Little Village in Chicago, Frogtown in the Twin Cities, and Little Haiti in Miami. (A partial list of portal neighborhoods in the U.S can be found in the Appendix of the second paper.)

Immigrant adults, regardless of their legal status, participate in the workforce at high rates with lower unemployment than the native-born

population (Passel, 2006). Remarkably, immigrants have substantial buying power. A recent study in the Chicago metro region found that unauthorized immigrants alone spend \$2.9 billion annually from their earnings (Mehta et al., 2002). In the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, foreign-born households had a total income of \$29.5 billion (1999 to 2000 data) and they paid \$9.8 billion in taxes: \$7 billion in federal income, Social Security and Medicare taxes; \$1.6 billion in state income, sales, auto, cigarette and alcohol taxes; and \$1.1 billion in local property, income, sales, auto, telephone and utility taxes (Capps, Passel & Fix, 2006).

Immigrants are also entrepreneurial. Overall, they have higher rates of entrepreneurship than do native-born people--0.46 percent versus 0.35 percent, respectively (Fairlie, 2006). While considerable variation exists among national groups, for nearly as long as there are records, any given foreign-born ethno-racial group in the U.S. has 10 to 20 percent higher self-employment rates than their native-born counterparts (Light, 2001). The positive net effect of self-employment on earnings holds for immigrants, even after factoring in various levels of human capital (Portes & Zhou, 1999). Researchers and policy experts cite the correlation of high-immigrant cities and economic growth, especially in the inner city (Moore, 1998). Immigrants identify business opportunities in inner cities, capitalize upon them and in the process "provide a much-needed shot of economic vibrancy to distressed neighborhoods" (Michael Porter, quoted in Iwata, 2005). In the Twin Cities, immigrants took the risk in impoverished areas, where there were no Latino-owned businesses in 1994, but by 2006, there were over 300 (Leon, 2006).

The Westlake neighborhood in Los Angeles, a portal neighborhood for Central Americans and Mexicans, has small business loan rates (loans per square mile) that are 10 times the rates for Los Angeles County (Federal Financial Institutions Examination Counsel). The 26th Street corridor in Little Village in Chicago, a portal neighborhood for Mexicans, has a level of retail activity second only to the city's famous Magnificent Mile on Michigan Avenue, and the neighborhood's retail spending per acre was more than double that of wealthy suburban Kenilworth, despite an average household income less than one-third of Kenilworth (HUD, 1999).

This entrepreneurial activity in urban centers help foster trade districts, as seen on Canal Street in NYC, the "Asia Trade District" on Dallas' Harry Hines Boulevard, and along the Harwin Corridor in Houston (Kotkin, 2000). This enterprise takes various forms, from people involved in the transfer of goods and remittances, to those who import daily newspapers from the country of origin, the latest music and entertainment, clothing and food, and finally those returnees to the country of origin who rely on networks in the U.S. to provide them with goods and information and to stay connected (Landoldt et al., 1999, Portes et al., 2002).

Informal economic activity is often key in immigrant neighborhoods, consisting of cash services from auto repair to beauty salons. It is estimated that 38 percent of households in Little Village participate in informal economic activity (Light, 2001). Social Compact has estimated that in 100 urban neighborhoods in Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, Jacksonville, New York City, Oakland, Santa Ana and Washington, D.C., the total informal economic activity exceeded \$4.4 billion. The Economic Roundtable claims that the informal economy has been responsible for economic growth in Los Angeles County, with fully 304,000 informal workers in the city of Los Angeles (Alderslade et al., 2006). Given what is known about immigrant participation in informal economic activity, and the concentration of immigrants in many of the cities cited above, these neighborhoods have considerable unmeasured and untapped economic assets.

More easily recognized is the cultural diversity that portal neighborhoods often provide a city. Ethnic restaurants, stores and cultural events draw people from near and far, including established immigrants and first generation Americans that buy wares from their families' country of origin, other native-born residents that seek cultural diversity and tourists wanting to experience the essence of that city and the American dream.

Elements of Integration

Integration is “a dynamic, two-way process in which newcomers and the receiving society work together to build secure, vibrant and cohesive communities.”² The integration process allows immigrants to gain the skills necessary to tap into opportunity for social and economic mobility, and provides a city the opportunity to develop a uniquely skilled, multi-cultural and multi-lingual workforce. In addition, strengthening the function of portal neighborhoods provides urban leaders an opportunity to revitalize areas and create a more vibrant, attractive city.

Integration approaches and needs vary by the socioeconomic status of immigrants and the culture of the immigrant groups in the portal neighborhoods. In some cities comparable numbers of multiple national groups live (Minneapolis-St. Paul and San Francisco), while in other cities, one national group is half or more of the foreign-born (Chicago and Miami). As immigration patterns change and countries of origin change and grow, approaches to integration must also change to meet a new environment.

Support required by immigrants and their families to achieve in education and employment fall into two categories: short-term resettlement assistance and long-term support. Resettlement services include public or private legal services, assistance in meeting food, clothing and shelter needs, registering children for school and assistance with navigating their new community. In portal neighborhoods, the first immigrants attract, create and use a broad range of services and public goods that assist in their long-term integration process. These include mutual assistance associations, religious institutions, ethnic-based social service providers, traditional community organizing groups that have responded to the new immigrants, immigrant rights organizations, and crossover organizations that adapt from nonimmigrant communities to the unique situation of immigrant groups. Some support services are filled by family or community members, creating in part the informal social and economic networks that are found in portal neighborhoods. Services include language acquisition, housing, health, transportation, job training and other efforts aimed at economic integration, education and youth programming, and providing a safe environment. Immigrant families are younger than native-born families (Passel, 2005) – and households headed by non-citizens are significantly more likely than native households to contain children (Fix et al., 2001).

Local governments, nonprofits, foundations and increasingly the private sector have an important role in the organization of space and daily activities related to immigrant integration, especially in the absence of

federal integration policy. The Building the New American Community project and others have shown the benefits of collaborative efforts among the non-profit, public and private sectors, and also technical assistance and capacity building of existing infrastructure (Applied Research Center, 2002, Farris, 2005, Ray, 2004).

In the Westlake neighborhood of Los Angeles, Bank of America embarked on the five-year “America Block-by-Block Initiative” in 2001 to better serve and tap into this portal neighborhood of primarily Central American immigrants. Its collaboration with city government, community organizations and individual leaders resulted in significant growth in deposits, loans and other financial transactions; literacy and computer classes for 1,500 residents, some of them finding jobs at Bank of America; financial literacy classes delivered in elementary, middle and high schools, reaching around 2,000 students; \$70 million in business loans and credit lines, and the training of informal sector entrepreneurs; and the construction of over 500 affordable homes. For example, Bank of America worked directly with the L.A. Metro Skills Center to send referred graduates of other skills programs to a class that would prepare adults specifically for semi-skilled jobs at Bank of America. This long-term comprehensive approach was made possible by extensive on-the-ground qualitative and quantitative research, and partnerships with and funding to community organizations like Los Angeles Neighborhood Housing Services, the Central American Resource Center, Centro Latino de Educación Popular, the Salvadoran American Legal and Education Fund, the Los Angeles Unified School District and others.

- From internal Bank of America report: “America Block-by-Block Initiative, Westlake: Year Five Summative Report.”

Portal neighborhoods tend to have similar types of services, which can be used as a basis for developing strategies to strengthen them around the integration process.

Education, English, Employment and Entrepreneurship. The clustering of immigrants in portal neighborhoods means that services such as English for Language Learners (ELL), special education programs, employment training and entrepreneurship assistance are all able to be concentrated in one area. ELL services are proving to be most successful when integrated in job and skill training programs, offered through the public and private sectors. As cited above, immigrant-owned businesses generate significant sales and tax revenues, and they offer options to newly arrived co-ethnics and to immigrants otherwise disadvantaged in the mainstream labor

market (Portes et al., 2002).

Children & Youth Programs. The U.S.- and foreign-born children of adult immigrants also benefit from ELL, tutoring and other supportive services. Bilingual, ELL-trained teachers and culturally sensitive school services are especially important and needed to aid immigrant integration (Hood, 2003 and Kindler, 2002).

Financial Services. Access to banking and financial services is key for an immigrant's integration into the mainstream economy. Immigrants tend to be unbanked, or in other words, they do not hold transaction accounts at a bank. This makes it difficult for them to participate in mainstream financial activities, such as establishing credit, starting a business and homeownership.³ The barriers to immigrants' use of mainstream financial institutions include language and cultural obstacles, lack of knowledge of how U.S. banks function, distrust of formal institutions stemming from their home country experiences, lack of official identification and the absence of these financial institutions in their neighborhoods (Newberger, Paulson & Chiu, 2004). Many immigrants, especially the newest ones, are also financially supporting family members in their countries of origin, so money-wiring services are in demand (Agunias, 2006).

Basic strategies tested by banks include collaboration with community-based organizations, checking and savings accounts with low minimum balances, savings accounts with monthly deposit incentives, free overdraft protection, financial education, no limit on teller transactions, the ability to write checks in their native language and obtain cheap money orders, special remittance services and the availability of multilingual bank staff (Baddour & Lightsey, 2004).

Housing. Rental housing is predominant in portal neighborhoods, since for most residents, it is a place of transition. Immigrants are much more likely to live in over-crowded housing (Lipman, 2003). It is not uncommon that rooms are used on a shift basis, accommodating work schedules and a demand for low cost living space. Sharing facilities between families and individuals, such as kitchens and bathrooms, is also common (Hacobian, 2006, and Valenzuela, 2006).

Health. New immigrants lack access to basic healthcare and health insurance. Children of immigrants have higher rates of "fair to poor health" (as reported by parents), are less likely to have a regular source of medical care, and low-income children of immigrants have lower insurance rates than native-born counterparts (Capps, Fix, Ost, et al., 2005). Children of immigrants are less likely than their native counterparts to access public services for which they qualify; one likely cause of this is mixed-status families, where one parent is unauthorized. Mental health

care can also benefit immigrants who survived traumatic events, as well as those coping with stressful individual and family adjustments to a new society. Linguistic accessibility and cultural sensitivity of health services is important, especially for emergency room personnel and 911 operators (Atiles & Bohon, 2002, Murdaugh, et al., 2004).

Civic Integration and Citizenship. Civic integration can start before U.S. citizenship is achieved. New immigrants are often actively engaged in their communities, for example by participating in school and church activities. Immigrant organizations teach ELL and U.S. civics to immigrants, organize naturalization campaigns, and manage voter registration and outreach campaigns (Morse & Orgocka, 2004). Portal neighborhoods are often underrepresented by elected officials, since a high percentage of residents are non-voters. But this does not mean political interest is low. Although many immigrants cannot vote during elections, they often have financial means of expressing their political views (Yoo, 2006). Some immigrants are reluctant to participate too actively, however, in fear of drawing attention to their own or others' legal status.

Safety. Crime, gangs and juvenile delinquency affect those new immigrants living primarily in poor urban areas, from being easy targets for theft to youth gangs. There are significant barriers in building cooperation and trust between police departments and immigrant communities, including: fear that police contact will lead to deportation (of themselves or their friends/family); distrust of police and judicial systems in native countries; language and communication barriers; and cultural misunderstandings (Atiles & Bohon, 2002, Khashu et al., 2005). Building and sustaining trust, communication and cooperation between police and the community is key in successful policing and safety programs (Khashu et al., 2005).

Neighborhood Development Framework

Developing strategies to strengthen portal neighborhoods requires an understanding of both the immigrant integration process and neighborhood dynamics. Over the past 20 years, considerable progress has been made in understanding neighborhood development. Policies and programs are now categorized into interventions for neighborhoods that are “weak markets” and those that are “strong markets.”⁴

Weak market neighborhoods are characterized by a loss of population and flat or declining property values. Development strategies reposition these areas so that they can be more competitive for investment, via improved housing, infrastructure and improved business districts, lower crime and other efforts that aim at stimulating investment. Increasing homeownership in these kinds of areas is typically seen as a way to build more stakeholders in the neighborhood.

Strong market neighborhoods are those that are seeing market forces lead to increased investment. The results are sometimes at the expense of low-income residents who might be forced out by rising rents and property taxes. In these neighborhoods, strategies focus on housing, property tax relief and other devices that can protect the interests of low-income residents while encouraging development.

Development approaches in both weak and strong neighborhoods assume that there are relatively stable rates of movement in and out of the area. In weak market neighborhoods, the goal is typically to improve the neighborhood’s desirability so that current residents will stay and more will be attracted to the neighborhood, increasing homeownership rates and stabilizing or increasing property values. Strategies aimed at strong market neighborhoods tend to focus on growth management and efforts to provide affordable housing. In both instances, improvement efforts include elements such as crime reduction, improvement to schools and education systems, adequate recreation space and programs, and business development.⁵

The unique characteristics of portal neighborhoods add an entirely new dimension to neighborhood development. For example, portal neighborhoods handle a continuous flow of people, thus they may show little or no changes in poverty rates or levels of homeownership over time, a typical indicator of success in neighborhood development. This is not because people have not prospered but precisely because some have prospered and no longer choose to live in their neighborhood of arrival.

They move to other neighborhoods, being replaced by more new immigrants in transition.

The function of these neighborhoods is to integrate immigrants, and progress in these neighborhoods should be measured by how well they succeed in their function. The challenge lies in articulating principles, policies and programs especially for portal neighborhoods.

Strengthening Portal Neighborhoods

In the midst of the hotly debated legalities of immigration, focusing on a place-based strategy around immigration - strengthening portal neighborhoods - allows city leaders to address the effects of immigration, regardless of the contentious and unresolved federal debate. Portal neighborhoods allow urban leaders look at the issue of immigration more constructively as a nation - as something good for people, places and local economies (Boyle, 2006). The first steps to strengthening portal neighborhoods is for urban leaders to recognize the value of integrating, supporting and retaining immigrants in their cities, the unique characteristics of portal neighborhoods and their role in integrating immigrants socially and economically in American society.

The next steps are to develop strategies that strengthen portal neighborhoods for what they are - places to integrate immigrants.

Communicate the Positive. While money often talks, collecting and distributing data on the positive economic impact of immigration is not necessarily enough to counter negative media and political debate around immigration (Morse, 2006). There is a need to harness the energy immigrants bring into this country and release it as story of vibrancy and success. Positive media can help garner public backing for local policies that strengthen immigrant integration and portal neighborhoods (Capraro, 2006).

Highlight Immigrant Leadership. As the population in cities has shifted to a majority African American, Latino, Asian and multi-racial population (Puentes, 2006), our leadership should reflect that demographic. Professional and trade organizations, such as CEOs for Cities, need to reach out to immigrant leaders. Politicians should recognize the immigrant voice that is lost at the ballot box, especially since they are potentially future voters. Businesses are finding a growing consumer base in immigrants, and products and marketing should reflect that demand. Municipalities can spotlight international influences on American culture through city festivals or exhibitions.

Collaborate for Success. Strengthening portal neighborhoods does not mean competing for already strapped funding or channeling more funding into existing programs. It means finding new ways for service providers to collaborate and developing new partnerships between private and public

sectors (Fernandez, 2006). Foundations, such as the Chicago Community Trust and the Knight Foundation, have launched immigration initiatives in their funding programs. Corporations are finding success in outreach to immigrant neighborhoods. For example, Bank of America partnered with numerous organizations to launch a program in Westlake, Los Angeles, to increase financial literacy amongst immigrants and train them for jobs with the Bank (Argüello, 2006). Academic institutions can provide needed research and facilitate outreach programs (Bailey, 2006). Other potential collaborators include: elected officials, chambers of commerce, the African American community, developers, hospitals and clinics, cultural and religious institutions and intermediary community organizations (e.g. Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Enterprise Community Partners).

Adapt Neighborhood Development Approaches. Adapting traditional neighborhood development and urban planning strategies to the unique nature of portal neighborhoods will enhance their function to speed immigrant integration.

Housing. Appropriate housing policy in portal neighborhoods runs counter to policies appropriate for most weak market neighborhoods. Housing policies for portal neighborhoods will vary by place, but may have the following characteristics in common:

- An approach to code enforcement that protects safety but may be more lenient regarding definitions of overcrowding than elsewhere;
- Considerable attention to protecting the long-term affordability in these places;
- Consumer protection for renters;
- Homeownership counseling, so that new immigrants can get prepared for homeownership when they are financially ready, even though their first home is likely to be somewhere other than the portal neighborhood.

Community-based affordable housing developers can ameliorate the challenges immigrants face in finding safe, adequate housing. A fuller housing agenda might include developing innovative housing design types that match immigrant cultures, and suits extended families as well as single-room occupants. Many of these housing needs can be met via adaptations of the existing housing stock. But, what would housing specifically designed for these populations look like? Engaging local design and/or architecture schools could stimulate creative and viable housing solutions.

Police-Community Relations. Strong police-community relationships are needed, through community meetings, volunteer “cultural brokers” (community residents who are multilingual and can navigate between cultures), and by promoting cross-cultural training for front-line officers

and 911 call operators. Police training programs can target immigrants, who hold language and cultural skills needed to work more effectively in immigrant communities. Many cities, such as Saint Paul, have passed city ordinances that state that city officers are not to inquire about citizenship status of any individual, unless required by law. These types of ordinances ensure that residents can report crimes or suspected crimes without the fear that they will be questioned about their own legal status.

Economic Development. Portal neighborhoods are very substantial business locations and vibrant places. City and local governments and other entities charged with stimulating economic development need to craft programs that are aimed specifically at stimulating business development in these areas, capitalizing on immigrants' entrepreneurship and cultures, and attracting visitors and their wallets. This can include developing retail opportunities, ethnic centered marketing, cultural product and service niches, tapping into venture fund opportunities for start-ups, and offering bookkeeping and accounting services. Local employees can offer training opportunities, especially for co-ethnics that are still learning English. Larger employees can tap into portal neighborhoods as a source of multi-lingual and -cultural employees that are in high demand, especially at schools and in health care.

Financial Literacy. Newcomers are confronted with a complex financial system in the United States. Therefore, policies and programs that permit them to become financially literate as quickly as possible are essential to their integration. Banks are natural partners in this portal neighborhood function. Business owners would benefit from access to small business loans and would-be immigrant business owners need access to micro-finance sources and knowledge of small-business programs that provide technical assistance and financing. To the extent that financial institutions partner with community-based organizations, accept nontraditional proofs of income and credit risk, and collaborate with employers who offer mortgage and homeownership education on-site, they will be more effective in outreach to immigrants (Schoenholtz & Stanton, 2001). Furthermore, locating banking branches in portal neighborhoods not only provides access to a growing market, but also provides an anchor for neighborhood stability.

Adult Education. Local organizations such as neighborhood associations, community schools, faith-based institutions and worker centers are well suited to deliver adult education and training programs for immigrants. Since a buffer of familiarity exists in portal neighborhoods, there is a higher risk that newcomers will not quickly learn English, a crucial step in the integration process. Therefore, special attention should be placed on language learning. Local workforce development boards are natural partners in this planning and implementation process. While a diversity of learning opportunities is important, funds are in short order, so

communities should focus on models that are most effective and promote collaboration instead of competition among the various players in portal neighborhoods. For example, vocational ELL is a logical way to make funding more effective.

Employer-Employee Relations. Employers play an important role in the integration process. They are a source of learning the ropes, and provide income. An awareness of fair labor practices needs to be raised, and labor protection laws need to be enforced with particular attention in portal neighborhoods and local ethnic employment niches, so that vulnerable immigrant workers are not exploited. Staff at day labor worker centers, including organizers who visit informal hiring sites, can be valuable sources of information to policy makers.

Public Education. Public education in portal neighborhoods is particularly challenging, due to language, cultural and mobility constraints. Schools in many portal neighborhoods struggle to score well in the context of “No Child Left Behind” rules. School systems—and those regulating them—need to be attentive to the special conditions in portal neighborhood schools and score performance on criteria that are aimed at integrating students into American society—particularly the development of the language skills needed. What would a curriculum look like that is aimed at integration of young immigrants as its special function? Progress measurement needs particular attention here: schools that constantly receive 1.5 or second generation LEP children may need to be measured differently than those teaching students who have language skills and other pre-school preparation, often absent in portal neighborhoods. A multi-lingual classroom can also be an asset for all students, as skill in multiple languages becomes more important in the workforce. Universities with a teaching department might find success in recruiting students and adults (as in the Grow Your Own program) in portal or immigrant neighborhoods.⁶

Health Access. Public and private hospitals serving portal neighborhoods need multilingual employees and/or interpreters. Similar efforts should also be made for domestic violence shelters and mental health care clinics. There is opportunity for creativity here, such as the use of mobile clinics with medical students to offer free specialized check-ups and preventive care after local religious services. Health care training programs and community colleges could make strong efforts to recruit and train immigrants who are already multi-lingual and -cultural.

Youth Programs. One of the biggest challenges in portal neighborhoods is steering young people into productive and safe activities. These efforts might include vocational and college preparation, mentoring programs, sports, arts and more. Local park districts, schools, public libraries, foundations and non-profits can collaborate to offer the most relevant and

appropriate programs, and local business might offer mentoring and internship programs.

Civic Engagement. Civic engagement can greatly enhance the integration process, providing opportunities to hone language skills and access free or low-cost services.⁷ Language barriers, unfamiliarity with the channels of engagement that exist, and sometimes just a lack of time and resources can be barriers to civic engagement for many immigrants. Actively engaging parents of immigrant students in school activities and including immigrant leadership on school boards has the potential to ameliorate challenges associated with multicultural classrooms. Business and cultural associations can benefit from the inclusion of the immigrant perspective. Raising awareness of political issues in portal neighborhoods is important, since many newcomers are on the pathway to becoming citizens and will be expressing their views at the polls. Cities are also encouraged to provide services and events with multilingual materials to engage new immigrants in activities outside of portal neighborhoods as well.

Just as the nature of immigration has changed over the decades, so will approaches to immigrant integration. As cities continue to rely on immigration to fuel economic development and population growth, urban leaders are advised to focus on strengthening portal neighborhoods as a strategy to improve the immigrant integration process, and to make their cities more successful.

Background

This paper is the third part in a trilogy of papers from the CEOs for Cities project, *Developing Strategies for U.S. Portal Neighborhoods*. The first part is a briefing paper that acted as a springboard for discussions at the national convening of experts on neighborhood development and immigrant issues in Miami, September 26-27, 2006, co-sponsored by the Bank of America. The briefing paper, which takes an in depth look at immigration patterns and immigration integration programs and the second paper, a summary of the national convening, can be found at www.ceosforcities.org/rethink/research.

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About the Authors

Paul C. Brophy is a principal with Brophy & Reilly, a national community development consulting firm. Joy L. Borkholder is a graduate student at the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration.

About CEOs for Cities

CEOs for Cities is a national network of urban leaders creating next generation cities that excel in the issues that matter most to the success of cities today - talent, connections, distinctiveness and innovation.

Urban leaders in the CEOs for Cities network lead organizations whose success depends, in part, on the success of cities - mayors, university presidents, foundation officials, corporate executives, and heads of economic and civic development organizations.

For more information, go to www.ceosforcities.org, email ceos@ceosforcities.org or call 312.553.4630.

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Endnotes

¹ See Metro Chicago Information Center www.mctic.org for community-level data and maps.

² Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR), 2006

³ Unbanked usually means persons without transaction accounts at traditional financial institutions. Estimates from the 1999 U.S. Census Survey of Income and Program Participation find that while less than 20 percent of the U.S.-born are unbanked, more than 50 percent of Mexican-born and about 40 percent of other Latin American-born are unbanked, Asian-born are similar to native-born, and “born elsewhere” (excludes Europe) are almost 30 percent unbanked (Newberger, Rhine & Chiu, 2004). According to the 2001 Federal Reserve Survey of Consumer Finances, five percent of non-Hispanic whites are unbanked (Samuels, 2005).

⁴ See Fox & Treuhaft, 2005, and Brophy & Burnett, 2003.

⁵ For an excellent set of examples of this non-physical planning, see the Quality of Life Plans developed in Chicago via the Local Initiatives Support Corporation’s New Communities Programs, especially the Woodlawn plan at <http://www.newcommunities.org/>

⁶ The program recruits adults already active in their own low-income communities to be fully-trained and certified to teach. For more information see the Illinois program site: <http://www.growyourownteachers.org>

⁷ See Carnegie Corporation (2003), and GCIR (2006) report, pages 189-203 for an overview of some promising approaches to civic participation.