

**ONE EAST PALO ALTO  
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE**

**FINAL REPORT: YEAR FOUR IMPLEMENTATION**

**FOR**

**THE WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION**

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**TEAMWORKS  
APRIL 2005**

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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We benefit greatly from the input provided by the key participants in this initiative, including residents, board and staff of One East Palo Alto Central, Hewlett senior staff and its program consultant, Hewlett's program officer for OEPA, and the technical assistance providers. This report covers the year following OEPA's major restructuring. We thank all interviewees, who are working hard to pursue the objectives of neighborhood betterment, and were notably candid and reflective.

We also thank JMPT Consulting, a member of the Teamworks team, for their insight and data tracking the work of OEPA's partners. Finally, we express appreciation to Rachel Lanzerotti Consulting for efforts on behalf of the initiative particularly in regard to OEPA's logic modeling.

We are given extraordinary access to people and to materials, and hope that this report reflects their sincere efforts.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
INTRODUCTION .....	6
KEY FINDINGS .....	8
Section One: Theory of Change.....	8
1.1 Theory of Change .....	8
1.1.1 Theories of Change Getting Stronger .....	8
Section Two: Organizational Capacity.....	14
2.1 Organizational Capacity .....	14
2.1.1 Board Grows its Critical Competencies.....	14
2.2.1 Resource Development Goals Achieved .....	17
2.2.2 OEPA Fund Development Includes Structural Challenges.....	19
2.2.3 Modest Improvements in Resource Development Capacity.....	20
Section Three: Program Outcomes .....	23
3.1 Program Outcomes.....	23
3.1.1 Learn Program Outcomes Exceed Expectations .....	24
3.2.1 Earn Program Falts on Execution.....	29
3.3.1 Safe Program Develops More Consistency .....	33
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	38
APPENDICES.....	42
Appendix A-1: Theory of Change.....	43
Appendix A-2: Learn .....	61
Appendix A-3: Earn.....	72
Appendix A-4: Safe .....	80
Appendix A-5: Evaluation Report Methodology .....	93
Appendix A-6: Strategic Networks Research Instrument .....	94

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The following report assesses OEPA's progress during its fourth year of implementation, calendar year 2004. This marked OEPA's first year of operations after undergoing roughly 18 months of reengineering.<sup>1</sup> The overarching conclusion is that OEPA followed this difficult preceding phase with a highly productive year. This is made even more notable by the fact that at the outset of the year energies were devoted to recruiting a new executive director who started work in late April.

OEPA engages in two types of work to accomplish its outcomes. They are (1) funding a set of partners who provide direct services, and (2) intermediary work is designed to address system-level obstacles (e.g. policy, bureaucratic, capacity and resource impediments) to achieving goals. In essence, one aspect of the work is direct and the other is indirect but supportive. OEPA's stated outcomes are building a strong EPA community-based intermediary, preparing youth for success in school and beyond, increasing the well being of EPA residents by developing their income and assets, and improving neighbor to neighbor relations and increasing safety.

Two of the three program areas, Learn and Earn, have stated performance measures. Learn's has a narrow measure, i.e. literacy in after school programs. Earn's is much broader, economic self-sufficiency, making for a vague yardstick against which to measure progress. A sharper and more relevant set of measures are found in the performance measures negotiated with each partner and tracked by JMPT. Measures were not consistently established for intermediary activities for Learn, Earn, or for Safe (which constitute the bulk of Safe's work).

The evaluation report shows that Learn achieved or exceeded targets, i.e. performance measures agreed to with partners. Earn's performance was more mixed with several partners fulfilling or exceeding agreed upon measures, and others less so. The evaluation introduces a framework to track intermediary activity, which we use retrospectively to array a wide range of system-level outcomes. The report explains that all three program areas produced system outcomes, many notable for having been done in a short period of time. Accordingly, we strongly caution that this report covers one year of program activity, and must account for partners starting their work at different times and when systems for tracking data were being developed. The picture is necessarily incomplete, though promising.

Our baseline for this report is OEPA's proposal for year four, submitted to Hewlett in October 2003. The proposal was assembled by an interim director. Thus, the new director inherited a program already designed and being implemented. The report shows that OEPA has

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<sup>1</sup> In spring/summer 2002, Hewlett required that OEPA restructure to better focus and streamline its program activities, ultimately narrowing from nine areas to the present three (Learn, Earn, and Safe). Also restructured was the relationship with the Peninsula Community Foundation, from managing partner to supporting funder. Hewlett became OEPA's managing partner and continued its role as principal funder.

- ⇒ *made a concerted effort to address residents of its target area*, between January and December 2004 the number of clients (n=997) grew from 37% to 62% of the population being served by OEPA within its footprint. Of the 646 families served by OEPA, 430 are in the footprint, constituting 15.6% of the footprint's total households. In total OEPA served 1,009 people through its partner programs.<sup>2</sup>
- ⇒ *made great strides stabilizing its organizational infrastructure*. OEPA received its 501c3 status (11/03), its grassroots board (80% residents) hired a new executive director, completed personnel policies, established a financial management system, finished extensive annual planning for year 2005, and ran a board-directed resource development campaign raising over \$9000.
- ⇒ *grown its profile and competencies as an intermediary organization*. For example, the county supervisor has asked OEPA to be the convener of the area's first regional task force to address public safety needs, an issue of priority concern to East Palo Alto.
- ⇒ *demonstrated that it can grow and facilitate strategic networks, a key competency of intermediary organizations*. OEPA does not provide direct services, but rather must grow multi-sector networks to meet its program goals. This year it catalyzed, convened, and facilitated in three networks – Gateway, CLASS Collaborative, and Crime Reduction Task Force – bringing together well over 60 public and private sector organizations into partnerships focused on addressing gaps in meeting OEPA's workforce, after-school literacy, and public safety needs.
- ⇒ *shown that strategic networks can achieve such intermediary-level system change goals as policy reform/bureaucratic change, enhancing local capacity, and developing resources*. This past year OEPA (1) attracted \$679,998 dollars to support its efforts; (2) after a year of advocacy work, OEPA reached an agreement with the EPA Police Department for services to block clubs organized by and associated with OEPA (an MOU for quarterly beat officers meeting with residents, at least one 2-hour training session per block club per year provided by the police, and community policing principles will be practiced); (3) played a critical role in a law suit supporting efforts towards a nuisance abatement ordinance designed to drive out tenants who are selling and using drugs; (4) pioneered a program with Stanford University to provide English-language training; (5) created a model, through the Gateway network, to target hard-to-reach-OEPA residents for job training; and (6) strengthened the viability of the CLASS Collaborative, a group of community-based organizations, that are mandated by the state of California and are responsible for providing after-school literacy programs. These efforts build an essential, new kind of infrastructure, i.e. a platform for coordinating and focusing services and attracting resources for OEPA residents.

OEPA is aligning its overall theories of change and their associated strategies with program outcomes and their stated performance measures. For example, Learn has advanced the literacy of parents and children (175 adults completed ESL training, 77% from OEPA

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<sup>2</sup> The footprint includes the northern segment of the Gardens, Kavanaugh, Palo Alto Park, Weeks, and University Village and has a total population of 13,855. There is no target regarding percent of households to be served, but we believe 15.6% to be a robust figure. (The difference between 1009 and 997 is due to people who either did not provide addresses or for whom the addresses were unclear.)

footprint; 153 students enrolled in literacy program, both programs exceed enrollment targets), and shown early gains in literacy (testing of one cohort of 30 measured improvements in 50% of the participants). Earn has placed 61 people in jobs (overall a 57% placement rate which compares favorably to the more generously funded and older San Francisco Private Industry Council placement rates), and there was a \$4.83/hr increase in income (the number is likely to be understated because population includes unemployed people). The one program area where the relationship is less clear is Safe, in part because performance measures were not developed that would directly measure changes in public safety. However, above we have listed a number of accomplishments that are plausible aspects of increasing public safety.

Solid progress was made in developing plausible, and in some cases research-based, theories of change. However, theory remains implicit rather than explicit, strategies are not well integrated and what are called strategies are better understood as projects. At the organizational level, the strategies lack integration. At the program level, Learn was the tightest in design and implementation; Earn was fairly well conceived although too broad and poorly implemented; Safe's design was not well grounded in research yet the execution of its strategies produced an array of noteworthy outcomes.

Finally, we cite as the major concern OEPA's need to raise money. Small but important steps were taken in 2004, but OEPA faces an urgent need to generate resources to ensure its sustainability. Funding entities do not have a good grasp of the role of intermediary organizations, which will make OEPA's task doubly challenging.

Thus we close this summary by saying that OEPA emerged from its restructuring a more focused organization that shows signs of being strategic and is on a path to its stated outcomes.

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## INTRODUCTION

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The following is a report to The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation assessing the progress of the One East Palo Alto Neighborhood Improvement Initiative (OEPA NII) during its fourth year of implementation (2004).

OEPA is a distinctive type of an organization, a community-based intermediary. Hewlett's investment in OEPA follows directly on the theory of change used to guide its Neighborhood Improvement Initiative. Rather than the traditional service-providing nonprofit organization, as an intermediary OEPA is charged with fostering networks to advocate for "systems change" through pursuing policy change/bureaucratic reforms, building local capacity, and generating resources to address priorities that had been previously identified by residents.

OEPA received its 501c3 in November 2003, signaling a major step toward its independence. This culminated a nearly 15 month process of restructuring required by the Hewlett Foundation for OEPA to sharpen its focus and become more strategic. This report examines the first full year of OEPA's work within this new, more streamlined structure. Data for the report was gathered using multiple instruments, including observations, interviews, analysis of tracking data, and document review (see appendices A-5 and A-6 for a detailed explanation of the methodology). The report addresses the following three questions:

1. How strong is the relationship between the OEPA theory of change, its program-level theories of change, and its structure, strategies, and actions?
2. What progress is OEPA making toward building its capacities to serve as an effective intermediary organization?
3. Are OEPA's program level strategies and activities, as they are being implemented by OEPA and its partners, achieving the outcomes they seek?

### Community Context

Over the past decade dramatic demographic changes within East Palo Alto and its regional economy have begun to reshape the city. Once nearly wholly African American, the city is now 59% Latino, 23% African American, 9% Asian Pacific Islander, 6% White, and 3% other. Nearly 44% of its citizens are foreign born, and nearly half of those people entered the United States in the 1990s.<sup>3</sup> The hurdles to advancement are high for OEPA's footprint, where just 39% of the residents report that English is the primary language spoken at home.

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<sup>3</sup> Baseline Data Statistics: The East Palo Alto Footprint, 2002, Justice Matters Institute, October 2003.

OEPA's three priority program areas of education, employment, and public safety were identified by community representatives from East Palo Alto in May, 2002. It is evident in each of the three that the needs are profound.

A few statistics that highlight the conditions in OEPA's footprint are<sup>4</sup>

- In the area of education, for example, just 12% of residents report having a bachelor's degree or above, in contrast to 24.9% for San Mateo County. Forty-one percent of Latinos have an eighth grade education or less.
- Thirty-one percent of residents report that they are unemployed or employed only part-time. Forty-two percent report an annual household income within the range of \$20,000 to \$40,000 a stark contrast to San Mateo County's median household income of \$70,819.
- Within the 2003 community survey found that 40% of respondents feel very unsafe, and 25% feel unsafe in their neighborhoods at night. Drugs and violent crime were identified in the same survey as the #1 and #2 respective top crimes issues facing OEPA residents in the footprint.

There are ample additional statistics of the footprint and more broadly, East Palo Alto that show a community where its residents live in fear, have incomes well below the county, and where low levels of educational attainment and literacy are the norm. The residents of OEPA chose well in identifying their priorities.

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<sup>4</sup> One East Palo Alto Community Survey Report, by Empowerment Research!, Community Development Institute, October 2003 (Draft). This is a report of findings from a random telephone sample of the footprint (381 completed interviews with a  $\pm 5$  percent margin of error). Population of the OEPA footprint is 13,855 and of the city of EPA is 29,450.

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## KEY FINDINGS

### Section One: Theory of Change

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#### 1.1 Theory of Change

*Research question: How strong is the relationship between the OEPA theory of change, its program level theories of change, its structure, strategies, and actions?*

##### 1.1.1 Theories of Change Getting Stronger

**The relationship between the OEPA theory of change, its programs, and ultimately the actions of the organization ranges from very strong to weak. Overall, the trajectory is positive with gains made in linking strategy to action, particularly in the Learn and Safe programs.**

OEPA has fulfilled the requirements to produce organizational and program level theories of change and logic models. OEPA's theories of change range from quite good to weak, with the trajectory indicating that staff, particularly in relation to Learn and Safe, are becoming increasingly strategic.

It is important to note that the term, "theory of change," is relatively new to the nonprofit world and has only recently gained popularity within foundations as a means of requiring that applicants and grantees be clearer and more strategic about the change(s) they are seeking.<sup>5</sup> We will use the term theory of change to describe an overarching set of elements that includes a theory, hypothesis, strategies, and ultimately outcomes. Logic models are the tools that detail the strategies and how they will be implemented to achieve desired outcomes. The formulation of a theory ideally (1) is based on rigorous inquiry, including research; (2) should provide guidance in selecting appropriate strategies and outcomes; and (3) it should be able to withstand testing, i.e. it should endure.<sup>6</sup> The strategies are the element most likely to undergo modification.

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<sup>5</sup>A seminal monograph on theory of change is "Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-Based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiative for Children and Families" by Carol Hirshon Weiss, in New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods, and Practices, James P. Connell, Anne C. Kubisch, Lisbeth B. Shorr, and Carol Weiss (Washington, DC.: Aspen Institute, 1995): pp 65-92. Also see Update on the Hewlett Foundation's Approach to Philanthropy: The Importance of Strategy (Paul Brest, November 2004), [www.hewlett.org](http://www.hewlett.org).

<sup>6</sup> For example, the theoretical framework for capitalism (free markets) was laid out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Adam Smith and endures today.

Considerable progress was made in 2004 formulating the organizational and program level theories of change. We find two areas where further refining would help OEPA both complete this task and give it the guidance that a clear and living theory of change can provide. The two areas are (1) for its organizational level and three program areas, the underlying theories are not explicitly stated, and (2) with the program areas the terms strategy and project are often used synonymously.

For all of OEPA's theories of change, what is presented as theory is actually a set of strategies or projects. A theory is a rationale that explains why something works the way that it does, or in this case, why the desired outcomes will be produced if certain strategies are pursued. For example, OEPA's work is anchored by four strategies (resident engagement and advocacy, leadership development, brokering partnerships, and local capacity building). But, what is the underlying theory that explains why these particular strategies (and not others) will achieve OEPA's goals? Without an overarching theory, the strategies appear disconnected and without criteria for selection.

As noted above, a theory should be based on research and should be able to provide direction in choosing strategies for maximum impact. Experience, i.e. testing, guides whether the strategies selected should continue to be pursued or should be modified to achieve desired outcomes. When strategy is mistaken for theory, there is no overarching rationale to assist in making modifications for greater impact.

This confusion between theory and strategy, and theory being implicit, is not surprising for two reasons. First, theory is the realm of academe, not nonprofits, foundations, or business. The use of the term theory of change is very recent, and the language associated with it is in rapid evolution. This leads to the second point. OEPA's efforts to create theories of change were supported by technical assistance from a range of providers who themselves did not well understand either the concepts or the language of theory of change.

Vocabulary and meanings have not been consistently used, and this has produced a lack of clarity regarding both what is being talked about, and the significance and potential benefits of this work.<sup>7</sup> This also explains the reason the term "strategy" is often incorrectly used to describe projects.<sup>8</sup> Given this situation, the fact that OEPA developed its theories of change as well as it has is all the more remarkable.

Below are our assessments of the organizational and program level theories of change. Details that provide context for understanding OEPA's progress and the basis for these assessments are in appendix A-1.

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<sup>7</sup> See appendix A-1 for a thorough discussion of the history and context in which OEPA developed its theories of change.

<sup>8</sup> For example one of Safe's strategies for 2004 is as follows: "assist residents to form block clubs and neighborhood watch programs." The strategy appears to be raising resident awareness and involvement (because it is assumed to increase public safety), but it is implicit.

## OEPA Organizational Theory of Change

OEPA has made good progress developing an organizational level theory of change and its core strategies are reflected in its programs.

We find that

- the overall theory of change correctly follows on the thinking that formed the basis of Hewlett's Neighborhood Improvement Initiative;
- the theory of change appropriately mirrors OEPA's mission;
- the strategies are consistent with the roles of an intermediary organization;
- the theory that underlies the core strategies is implicit, not explicit;
- there is no conceptualization explaining if or how strategies will be integrated;
- the strategies are well reflected in the plans for each of the program areas in 2004;
- in 2004 the development of the program level theories of change preceded a new formulation of the organizational level theory of change, resulting in the programs appearing to drive the organization, rather than the reverse.

## Background

The baseline for the organizational theory of change is presented in OEPA's proposal to Hewlett for 2004 (submitted October 2003). Four strategies are identified: resident engagement and advocacy, leadership development, brokering partnerships, and local capacity building. No rationale points to a particular research base, or explains why these particular strategies were selected, or if or how they might relate to each other. Nonetheless, the strategies are consistent with the roles of an intermediary, and they provide a plausible framework for action.<sup>9</sup>

The major structural change that occurred in 2004 was OEPA's decision to integrate what was known as the "Spirit" program, i.e. the work focused on resident involvement, into each of the three program areas rather than having it operating as a fourth program. All three programs ultimately wove as well all of the core strategies into their intermediary work, in addition to resident leadership and advocacy. In effect the program areas became the vehicles through which the organization's theory of change would be implemented.

This initial theory of change was prepared by one of OEPA's program directors who was then acting as interim director. The roots of the work on the organizational level theory of change can be traced as far back as the July 2002 evaluation training, when OEPA was in the midst of re-engineering itself. In 2002 Hewlett required OEPA to reduce the number of its program areas (from nine in 2002 to three by late 2003). In 2003, OEPA staff directed its energies to logic modeling these programs. One result of this was that the programs' theoretical development was given priority, rather than a conceptualization of the organization as a whole. This is understandable given the absence during much of

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<sup>9</sup> See appendix A-1 for details on the NII Leadership Institute on the "intermediary organization" and the strategic planning process in 2003 that informed the development of the organizational theory of change presented in October 2003.

this time of a strong executive director. However, it did create a silo effect in which the programs were conceived of separately, rather than as integrated parts of a whole.

Upon being hired in April 2004, the new executive director was tasked with implementing the year four plans rather than having the opportunity to establish her own direction. For example, she inherited projects such as block clubs and community benefits agreements, rather than being able shape the overarching strategy of resident engagement. More than six months after the baseline organizational level theory of change was developed, the new executive director, working on a planning team with the Hewlett project manager, the Earn program director, and NCDI, expanded upon the narrative that explains the organization’s overarching strategies, and drafted the first organizational level logic model.

By early 2005 we see evidence of steps being taken by the executive director to brand how the organization’s core strategies will evolve. For example, this topic was given priority at the board’s February 2005 retreat. Small but suggestive changes in the wording of the strategies in the proposal for 2005 (organizational capacity building, resident engagement, advocacy for system change, broker resources and services) suggest shifts, but unfortunately these are not elaborated upon.

OEPA Theory of Change: Alignment with 2004 Actions

Our primary task here is tracing the relationship between theory, strategies, and actions. Again, theory is implicit. The table below illustrates the high alignment between the organization’s overarching strategies and program actions.

**Table 1-1  
Organization Theory of Change: Alignment with 2004 Actions**

<b>Organization Strategy</b>	<b>Sample Program and Partner Activities</b>
Resident Engagement and Advocacy	Parent Leadership Institute Spanish Language Police Academy Block Clubs
Brokering Partnerships	Gateway Project Crime Reduction Task Force CLASS Collaborative
Local/Organizational Capacity	Nuestra Casa Gateway Project CLASS Collaborative
Leadership Development	Parent Leadership Institute Block Clubs

We have previously explained that the organization’s strategies were embedded in each of the program areas, the outcomes of which are detailed in section three of this report. Although integration of strategies is not discussed in OEPA’s theory of change, we nevertheless find some integration beginning to occur. This is most evident in the connections made between the growing of Nuestra Casa, EPA’s first Latino community-based organization, and in the growing of parent advocates, and in the potential contributions of the block clubs to the goals of the Crime Prevention Task Force. (Details

that form the basis for these judgments regarding the status of activities and the extent to which they progressed or not are in section three of this report and appendix A-4.)

Lastly, all of OEPA's work is ultimately dedicated to improving the lives of its residents. JMPT's data shows the OEPA has made a concerted effort to address residents of its target area, where between January and December 2004 the number of participants in partner programs (n=997) grew from 37% to 62%.<sup>10</sup> In total OEPA served 1,009 people (an estimated 646 families, 430 of which reside in the footprint) in its partner programs.<sup>11</sup> We also note that OEPA is led by a board that is 80% residents.

### Program Level Theories of Change

Learn demonstrates the strongest relationship between program theory, albeit implicit, and strategies, and actions. Safe shows a strong relationship between strategies and actions, despite it not having a well formulated theory. Earn had a strong research base to guide its thinking and a comprehensive set of strategies, but its execution was flawed ultimately leaving its strategies and underlying theory untested (refer to Table 1-2).

For each of the program areas we asked if theory was articulated and upon what it was based, if it provided a thorough and well reasoned set of strategies in relation to the issue to be addressed, what actions occurred (and if they did not why and what adaptations were made), and ultimately the relationship between what was stated and what was done. Over the course of the year what was called theory of change (1) did not specify the theory, (2) occasionally muddled the distinction between a strategy and a project, and (3) was largely guided by what was described in the proposal for 2004 and less so by program level logic models that evolved over several months while strategies were already being implemented.

In addition we again note that the program level theories of change frequently use the word strategy to describe a planned project. Earn's articulation of its approach most closely approximated statements of strategy, with Learn's a mix, and Safe's largely a list of projects. Our work thus included having to surface what was implicit, i.e. identify strategy through analyzing the choices of the projects. We have chosen for simplicity to use the word strategy to encompass both what was stated and what was implicit. The need to distinguish between strategy and project and to be explicit is addressed in the recommendations.

Given these conditions, we considered the strength of the conceptual framework, using the factors of whether (1) the work was guided by credible research or plausible rationale, (2) if the strategies are connected to the research and as a whole provide a complete picture of how a need is addressed, (3) if the strategies together are broad or narrow, and (4) whether the actions are consistent with the strategies, or the adaptations are consistent with the theory. Secondly we considered the relationship between what happened and the conceptual framework.

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<sup>10</sup> See appendix A-6 for a description of JMPT's data gathering technology.

<sup>11</sup> Data is from JMPT March 2004 report to the Hewlett Foundation. There were 12 people who either did not report an address or the address was unclear.

We find that

- theory is implicit in each of the programs;
- strategies are drawn from either credible research or have a plausible rationale;
- Learn’s strategies are credible, comprehensive, narrow, well-integrated, and well-executed;
- Earn’s strategies are credible, comprehensive, very broad, not well integrated, and poorly executed;
- Safe’s strategies are plausible, not fully formed into a model, modestly integrated, and well executed.

**Table 1-2  
Program Theories of Change: Relationship to 2004 Actions**

<b>Signature Program</b>	<b>Conceptual Framework: Strategies</b>	<b>Practice: Actions Align with Strategies</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Learn	Strong	Strong	Strategies mirror guidance from ASR. Execution shows good progress producing specified outcomes. Additional (unspecified) outcome is building a Latino leadership base.
Earn	Strong	Minimal	Strategies mirror guidance from CJTC; Gateway well executed, OEPA played facilitating and advisory role, Hewlett was a catalyst. OICW progress is good, other projects received minimal attention.
Safe	Weak	Moderate	Proposed projects were implemented, with appropriate adjustments made to take advantage of important emerging partnerships, e.g. CRTF.

Additional data supporting these determinations is in section three, the analysis of program outcomes, and in appendix A-1.

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## KEY FINDINGS

### Section Two: Organizational Capacity

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#### 2.1 Organizational Capacity

*Research question: What progress is OEPA making toward building its capacity to serve as an effective intermediary organization (sub-sections: board capacity, resource development)?*

##### 2.1.1 Board Grows its Critical Competencies

OEPA Community-Wide Outcome: Build a strong East Palo Alto community-based intermediary. <sup>12</sup>
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**The board of directors makes dramatic improvements in its critical competencies and organizational infrastructure during 2004. The board's leadership brings new stability to the organization.**

Over the course of 2004, OEPA's board of directors successfully led the organization to new levels of stability and accountability. During this time period, the board (1) hired and developed a well functioning relationship with a new executive director; (2) developed internal policies needed for the organization's infrastructure and financial independence; (3) participated in and approved program planning that culminated in the annual plan for 2005; (4) familiarized themselves with the language of results-based accountability, and the ways in which this model now informs the organization's framework for action; and (5) created a resource development committee and mounted its first fund-raising effort. The board accomplished this while shepherding the organization through eight months without an executive director (Aug 2003-April 2004), and incorporating six new board members, including a new chair and vice chair, as of January 2004. These accomplishments are used as the basis for assessments presented in Table 2-1.

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<sup>12</sup> The OEPA proposal to Hewlett for 2004 includes the following goal for OEPA (board and administration): "to develop a strong community-based organization that can develop resident leaders, broker resources and services, build the capacity of individuals and organizations, and advocate for change." The OEPA interim and final reports for 2004 shorten this to the outcome statement included above.

**Table 2-1  
OEPA Board Progress**

<b>Key Board Competencies</b>	<b>Evaluation of OEPA Board Progress<sup>13</sup></b>
Mission Clarity/Theory of Change	Significant
Organizational Oversight/Planning	Significant
Fiscal Responsibility	Significant
Personnel Policy	Significant
Resource Development	Modest <sup>14</sup>

Work of this magnitude from a grassroots board is particularly remarkable given that expectations were not explicitly stated. Both the annual plan for 2004, and the proposal to Hewlett for 2004, do not include specific goals for the board, there was no work plan for the board, and Hewlett’s grant letter for this period is not explicit in its requirements for the work of the board.<sup>15</sup> Assessments of progress are more difficult to make without the benefit of a baseline and clear expectations.

Building Organizational Infrastructure

During 2004 the board focused on building the internal infrastructure of the organization that is the critical foundation for OEPA to be stable and move into the future. The board had been involved in work of this nature during the 18 months of funding year three, but was hampered by the lack of strong executive director to provide clear direction and structure.

OEPA was granted status as a 501c3 nonprofit organization in November 2003. The board was at that time involved in a search for a new executive director, who did not take office until late April 2004. In the remainder of 2004, the board of directors, with the guiding partnership of the executive director, developed the policies required for the organization to become financially independent and fiscally responsible. These include the following:

- Personnel handbook
- Insurance policies for the organization (renters’, liability)
- Health insurance policy for employees
- Revised fiscal policy
- Oversight of transition from external fiscal sponsorship to financial independence.

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<sup>13</sup>The competencies are drawn from literature on the key characteristics of strong boards (www.boardsource.org). Evaluator ratings for the variable of progress (no, minimal, modest, significant) are based on observations, document review, and interviews. We also drew upon ER! CDI’s assessment of OEPA’s board and staff, completed in October 2004, a follow up of earlier work carried out for the National Community Development Institute. The data indicates dramatic improvement in several areas, most notably organizational planning, and systems and infrastructure, which is congruent with our analysis.

<sup>14</sup> Please see the following section of the report for a detailed discussion of resource development.

<sup>15</sup> The stated outcome is for OEPA Central as a whole. The proposal to Hewlett for 2004 remarks upon the need to revise board elections practices, and to be more strategic in selecting board members on the basis of skill sets rather than diversity alone.

### Role of 2004 Annual Planning

The board undertook its most sustained involvement with the program areas to date during its annual planning process. Board members, the leadership of which and one third of whom were new, report significant increases in their understanding of the

specific work being done in the program area that they studied during the planning process. Because of how the planning was structured, board members focused on the program area that interested them the most. As a result they were exposed deeply to one program area while hearing presentations of the other two areas. Thus the board may not have been able to develop as comprehensive an understanding of the organization based on the programs as would have been desirable. We observed, however, a high level of mission clarity among the board at the organizational level. Notably OEPA's annual plan for 2005, which grew out of this planning process, is far more substantial and developed than the annual plan for 2004.<sup>16</sup>

Interviewees noted that the planning process created a stronger foundation from which to make more strategic policy decisions. This was particularly the case as well because of the active participation of the new executive director, who played an important role in helping the board to further its understanding of the organization's work even as she was increasing her own knowledge of it.

We have observed board members increasingly integrating the use of the organization's mission statement and theory of change to guide decision-making. During 2004 the board focused on infrastructure building, including building the staff's and its own capacities as already noted. Most significant going forward is the board deepening its understanding of and agreement on the organization's work, what the organization specifically aims to accomplish, and whether or not its current strategies are those best suited to achieve its stated outcomes.

### 2.2.1 Resource Development Goals Achieved

**Resource development commitments exceed goals for 2004 by almost \$100,000. Commitments are higher than for FY3, as OEPA increasingly defines its signature program areas. OEPA has not yet significantly diversified its revenue sources beyond its two major funders.**

Table 2-2 shows that total commitments moderately exceed the goal laid out in OEPA's most recent resource development plan (October 2003).

**Table 2-2  
Fundraising Goals and Actuals for 2004**

Resource Development.	Goals	Commitments	Difference
OEPA operations	\$664,589	\$669,108	\$4,519
Learn Program	\$223,000	\$409,168	\$186,168
Earn Program	\$930,000	\$883,000	(\$47,000)
Safe Program	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,000
Spirit Program	\$154,866	\$94,750	(\$60,116)
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$1,972,455</b>	<b>\$2,071,026</b>	<b>\$98,571</b>

<sup>16</sup> The annual plan for 2004 was not completed. It contains many places in which performance measures, for example, were never entered. The annual plan for 2005 is a complete, well structured document, in which all program areas and OEPA Central receive full consideration in terms of outcome, rationale, theory of change, target population, call to action, problem statement, best practices, core strategies, partner organizations and evaluation indicators.

In three out of four areas, amounts raised exceeded targets, with the fourth falling just short. The biggest unanticipated gain comes in the Learn program area, in which new funds were leveraged for Nuestra Casa through the state-funded CBET program (\$104,140).

Our last report covering OEPA's 18 month period of reorganization (evaluation year three) showed that fundraising dropped precipitously. Funding levels have climbed again as OEPA has increasingly defined its signature program areas, and the organization has become more adept in its role as an intermediary organization. Yet as noted in Table 2-3, the lion's share of funds (73.5%) raised for programs comes from the Hewlett Foundation and the Peninsula Community Foundation (PCF), OEPA's former managing partner. Notably, the Hewlett Foundation increased its total cash commitment to OEPA and its partner agencies by 52%, from \$915,000 in 2003 to \$1,391,028 in 2004. OEPA is yet to make significant headway in diversifying its revenue sources beyond its two major funders.

**Table 2-3  
January-December 2004 Cash Commitments to  
OEPA Operations & Affiliated Programs<sup>17</sup>**

<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Programs</b>	<b>2004 Totals</b>
Hewlett Foundation	\$588,000	\$803,028	\$1,391,028
Peninsula Community Foundation	\$34,500	\$219,750	\$254,250*
Center for Venture Philanthropy	\$9,519	\$0	\$9,519
Fiscal sponsorship of CI!	\$15,076	\$0	\$15,076
Families in Motion	\$9,100	\$0	\$9,100 <sup>18</sup>
Emergency Services convening	\$12,493	\$0	\$12,493
Membership dues	\$420	\$0	\$420
Ravenswood City School District	\$0	\$104,140	\$104,140
Gateway funding <sup>19</sup>	\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000
Anonymous	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$669,108</b>	<b>\$1,401,918</b>	<b>\$2,071,026</b>

\*This includes the total amount of PCF grant for 11/2004 -11/ 2005.

<sup>17</sup> This information has been pieced together by TEAMWORKS from a variety of documents, including the OEPA final report for 2004, several PCF documents, Families in Motion Budget to Actual, NII Total Funds for 2004. TEAMWORKS was not provided with a comprehensive template of OEPA's funds. The financial picture may therefore be incomplete.

<sup>18</sup> Commitments came from Hewlett Foundation (\$3000), Applied Materials (\$2500), Palo Alto Weekly Holiday Fund (\$1500), eBay Foundation (\$1000), and various others (\$1100 total).

<sup>19</sup> This is the amount of funds estimated to go to residents of the OEPA footprint. The total estimated amount includes an additional \$110,000 grant to the San Mateo Workforce Investment Board (WIB) from the Hewlett Foundation (which is included in this table in the Hewlett sum) for a total of \$360,000. The \$250,000 is drawn from commitments to Gateway Project by the Walter S. Johnson Foundation (\$225,000), U.S. Department of Labor (\$200,000), and the Bay Area Funders' Workforce Collaborative (\$425,000). The Collaborative's amount probably includes \$125,000 of matched funds from the WIB, but this was not specified in the NII Total Funds document.

## 2.2.2 OEPA Fund Development Includes Structural Challenges

**As a community-based intermediary, OEPA is beginning to be recognized as creating new value as a convener, broker, and strategist. OEPA faces uncharted terrain as it seeks to effectively describe and demonstrate its role and value to partners and funders. Funding prospects depend upon OEPA demonstrating its value-added in terms of function combined with issue area.**

With the creation of OEPA Hewlett made an investment, as would a venture capitalist, in a new type of organization, a community-based intermediary. The decision to create this type of instrument for neighborhood advancement was made because Hewlett identified an important gap. Other organizations, ones that focus on providing specific and narrow sets of services, are not positioned to address the larger set of policy reforms seen as necessary for creating systems change. A community-based intermediary knits together diverse agencies and individuals to address structural gaps, specifically to bring and/or better organize how resources may address the needs of a lower income population. Such an intermediary has an indirect, rather than a direct, relationship to services provided.

This organizational definition focuses more on function than on issue area. This new function is both what is most needed and also what is most difficult to define and understand. OEPA, during its 18 months of re-engineering, and its first year of implementation (2004) in its new form, has been developing its identity as an intermediary with as great an emphasis on its function (as a convener, broker, and advocate) as on its specific issue areas (education, economic development, and safety). We report extensively in section three and its associated appendices on OEPA's efforts, for example, to foster three strategic networks, a critical competency of an intermediary organization. Our findings are that OEPA in the last year alone has made solid progress modeling the role of an intermediary.

OEPA faces new terrain in demonstrating to partners and funders of its value-added as an intermediary with an indirect relationship to services that focuses on three issue areas. The nonprofit and philanthropic worlds are most familiar with organizations that provide direct services, and that define themselves by the issue that they address, such as education or health. Funding streams are primarily organized by issue area, rather than by function, although the assumption is that the function is to provide direct services.

At this point, OEPA has had success in attracting funds for services to benefit its footprint's residents, but not for support for its own activities. Table 2-3 above shows that, for example, over \$100,000 in CBET funding went to Nuestra Casa from the Ravenswood City School District and \$250,000 went to the Gateway Project, yet OEPA received no funding for either, despite providing essential intermediary services. Recently OEPA was asked to convene the Crime Reduction Task Force (CRTF), a task force originally carried out by a county supervisor, and is expected to run a series of meetings, handle communications, and otherwise provide the infrastructure to sustain this promising collaboration of organizations concerned about public safety. In addition,

OEPA is tasked with convening a community planning process to fulfill the recommendations of the task force. OEPA prepared a draft budget of \$40,000, but it has not yet successfully negotiated the funding environment in such a way that it has accessed funds for such an intermediary activity.

On the one hand, it is not the goal of OEPA's intermediary function to bring direct service funds into the organization. It is appropriate that OEPA assist in brokering resources to its partners in the networks who will actually deliver services. On the other hand, OEPA at this point is almost entirely dependent upon its two major funders, the Hewlett Foundation and PCF, to support the knitting that we described is central to its function. Table 2-3 shows also that OEPA has generated some funds as an intermediary, through its convening for Emergency Services meeting, and through its own fundraising. But these numbers are very small compared to what is required to keep this organization going.

OEPA is a small, community-based, intermediary organization just having finished its first full year implementing the three re-engineered program areas. Outcomes from its partners and from functions such as its strategic networking are just now being made visible, e.g. through longitudinal tracking data and the analysis presented in this evaluation report. OEPA's challenge is both (1) to track effectively the work of its partners in order to show the degree to which their projects are able to create change according to specific performance goals, and (2) to show the ways in which its work furthers these projects, and are linked to fulfilling OEPA's overarching outcomes. In this way OEPA may build understanding of the value it brings as an intermediary organization to the issue areas of education, economic development, and safety. This in turn may provide it with access to funding streams organized by these issue areas.

### **2.2.3 Modest Improvements in Resource Development Capacity**

**OEPA makes modest improvements in its resource development capacity. Resource development committee is created, and new executive director is hired. Resource development activity for sustainability is behind schedule.**

The most recent resource development plan was written by the Hewlett managing partner, in the absence of an executive director at OEPA, in October 2003.<sup>20</sup> This plan revises an earlier plan from April 2003. It outlines activities for developing OEPA's resource development capacity, including the creation of a resource development committee, funding goals for 2004, and acknowledges that the plan will need to be revised again in 2004 after the new executive director is hired and funding priorities are established. Below, we highlight the work of the resource development committee and the executive director.

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<sup>20</sup> It is not clear the degree to which this plan was ever truly used as a framework for action. It was written by Hewlett's project manager, and reportedly it was not fully or easily adopted by OEPA staff.

### Resource Development Committee

A core component of the strategy for developing OEPA capacity, according to the resource development plan, is the creation of a resource development committee. The plan outlines the committee as including representatives from OEPA's board of directors and Hewlett's advisory committee for OEPA, a resource development consultant that Hewlett had earlier hired, and members of OEPA staff.

OEPA's board approved the creation of a resource development committee as one of its own committees in November 2003. The resource development committee operated in fact throughout 2004 as a committee of the board, rather than as the more heterogeneous, advisory body laid out in the resource development plan. The more ambitious vision was probably not realistic, given the nature of Hewlett's advisory committee. The committee was led by a resource development consultant hired by Hewlett, and met monthly or more often from January-November 2004.

The resource development committee was hampered by technical assistance that was not well suited to the tasks that emerged and what needed to be done. The resource development consultant, hired initially to identify foundation leads and write proposals, for example became tasked with board resource development trainings, which were not helpful to the board. In addition, the consultant was drawn into hands-on event planning, which included facilitating the resource development committee to mount this project, none of which was in her area of expertise. One result was a lack of agreement about appropriate roles regarding the event for the board, consultant and staff. Board members on the committee did not take on the leadership of the committee, although several committed significant time and energy to the enterprise. The executive director was just getting her grounding, with her attention focused on other organizational issues.

Despite these issues, the resource development committee did mount OEPA's first fundraising event, which raised \$9,100.<sup>21</sup> Although seemingly small, we caution that measuring dollars alone does not provide a good picture of board progress. OEPA is a very small, new grassroots organization. Board members of such organizations are rarely in the position of having the capacity/contacts to do substantial fundraising. Their role in this task is typically symbolic, important to raising awareness, commitment, and engendering a fundraising culture. Members' participation in the committee and more broadly in the signature event, Families in Motion, were steps toward these ends. In fact, while the Families in Motion event was designed to be the focal board-driven resource development event for 2004, rather than dollars its accomplishments would be more aptly assessed in its providing favorable publicity for OEPA, giving the board members a platform to practice showcasing their work, and attracting the attention of a wide swath

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<sup>21</sup> Several years older than OEPA, its sister initiative, the Mayfair Improvement Initiative (MII) just completed its first board-driven fund campaign and raised \$23,000 (the goal was \$30,000). Prior to this campaign, MII had innumerable board training programs, significant assistance from the Community Foundation Silicon Valley brokering high level contacts, and the benefit of a Hewlett staff person spending up to eight hours a week (often on site) assisting with resource development. Thus, OEPA's achievement with a less experienced board, more modest agency track record, and less direct technical assistance from its primary funders (e.g. Hewlett and PCF) stands up well in comparison.

of EPA. The event drew upwards of 200 attendees, 100% attendance of board and staff, and nearly 20 local agencies were there to provide information about their services.

### Executive Director

A key criterion for the hiring of OEPA's current executive director was her fundraising competencies.<sup>22</sup> The executive director work plan for the first year (April 2004-March 2005) includes four specific tasks in this area, primary among them (1) developing a diversified plan for 2004/2005 with specific six, twelve, and 18-month goals, and (2) developing a post-Hewlett strategy to sustain the signature projects of OEPA.

According to OEPA's final report to Hewlett for 2004, the intensity of infrastructure development prevented the executive director from addressing tasks in resource development other than meeting the requirements for the grants from Hewlett and PCF. For example, a new resource development plan has not been generated. It should be noted, however, that the executive director led a restructuring of the PCF grant that created greater alignment of funded activities and signature programs, expanded implementing partnerships, and increased funds allocated to OEPA for managing grant activities. This effort was done strategically to strengthen the relationship of OEPA to PCF with the intention of cultivating PCF as a future funding partner.

Certainly demands have been heavy on the new director during these first eight months, and as noted above, dramatic improvements have been made in the organization's infrastructure. However, postponing developing a plan for 2004/2005 goals until March 2005 precludes most significant movement in that direction. Resource development efforts for the last two years of Hewlett funding, and for post-Hewlett sustainability, are now behind schedule.

It is not surprising that resource development efforts may not have unfolded according to plan. The executive director has been learning the organization and its role as a community-based, intermediary, and developing her vision of where she wants to take the organization based on its mission statement. And the executive director did bring a fiscal sponsorship into OEPA from her past connections, and successfully mounted the Emergency Services convening for which OEPA was paid. In addition, the search for a new resource development consultant by OEPA is underway at the time of this report's writing. In any event, 2005 is a critical year for plans to gel, and action to be taken. The horizon for funding proposals is often over a year, and OEPA is now well into its second to last year of guaranteed funding.

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<sup>22</sup> Information based upon review of recruiting materials and TEAMWORKS observations of three of the search committee's meetings.

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## KEY FINDINGS

### Section Three: Program Outcomes

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#### 3.1 Program Outcomes

*Research question: Are OEPA's program level strategies and activities, as they are being implemented by OEPA and its partners, achieving the outcomes they seek?*

The following section details the outcomes of OEPA's intermediary work and summarizes the work of its partners. Research leading to Hewlett's NII showed that resources intended to address the needs of lower income communities typically were channeled through silos and often did not reach the intended populations. Hewlett's implementation called for creating a community-based intermediary organization that would seek to make systems more responsive to residents.

Such changes in systems are well understood to take a long time, much longer than the year examined in this report. Here we begin the process of documenting system changes, using indicators central to the functioning of an intermediary:

- *Policy change/bureaucratic reform*, including the signing of memoranda of understanding, regulatory reform, and the development/adoption of programs;
- *Local capacity*, encompassing the formation or facilitation of strategic networks, creation or strengthening of local organizations, and actions carried out to build resident capacities;
- *Resource development*, including net new dollars, better channeling of dollars, and also the engagement of expertise on behalf of OEPA.

Our scope called for identifying two to three strategic networks and similarly two to three "priority" projects for deep, case study analysis that would be assessed, in part based on these indicators. The concept of analyzing strategic networks was introduced midway through 2004, and followed by the development of a research instrument for which the first test was its use in this report (see appendix A-5 for a copy of the instrument).<sup>23</sup> The strategic networks and priority projects were selected by the Hewlett Foundation managing partner and the executive director of OEPA based upon criteria generated by Teamworks. The strategic networks are Gateway, the CLASS Collaborative, and the Crime Reduction Task Force. The priority projects are Nuestra Casa and Block Clubs.

The following section is organized by program, has the highlights of each case study and integrates the findings with JMPT's data on partner outcomes to provide a comprehensive picture of the program area. The case studies are in appendices A-2-4, and constitute an essential part of the story and data summarized in the next section.

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<sup>23</sup> For an analysis of *social* networks and their role in the corporate setting, see "A Practical Guide to Social Networks" by Rob Cross, Jeanne Liedtka, and Leigh Weiss (Harvard Business Review, March 2005), pp124-132.  
Teamworks: OEPA Evaluation Year Four Implementation April 2005

### 3.1.1 Learn Program Outcomes Exceed Expectations

Learn 2004 Community-Wide Outcome:  
Youth prepared for success in school and beyond.

#### Main Strategies<sup>24</sup>

- Support development of ESL and parent leadership training classes to empower Latino parents to participate more fully in their children's education and become better advocates on their behalf. Nuestra Casa is the main vehicle for this strategy.
- Advocate for improved community-based English tutoring (CBET) curriculum that will increase the general level of English knowledge in EPA.
- Support development and delivery of literacy based after-school tutoring programs, along with professional development training for associated program staff and volunteer tutors. Project sited at Quest.
- Streamline the Ravenswood After School Programs Collaborative (CLASS) through improved curriculum, professional staff development, and communications systems linking teachers and parents.

**Learn skillfully deploys cohesive strategies that leverage efforts across projects to achieve significant systems change outcomes. Improvements in children's literacy levels are suggestive; community impacts await additional evaluation.**

In 2004, Learn implemented a two part strategy to produce systems change in education for the EPA community. One part focused on improving the quality and delivery of individual program materials, along with improving the skills of the professionals who deliver them. The other part helped build the capacity of stakeholders to engage more effectively, and improved the coordination and integration among them, their programs, and related decision-makers. This work was undertaken with an agreed upon understanding of the educational process and its associated outcomes as a combination of family, school, and after-school experiences.

Learn applied this two part strategy to two areas of concern: (1) the capacity of EPA families to support their children's educational experiences and to advocate on their behalf with local authorities and service providers; and (2) the capacity of after-school programs to support and enrich children's educational experiences, and to tailor and coordinate services to fit the needs of individual students. Both program areas focused especially on the heightened needs of non-English speaking parents and students, a group recently grown to become the majority of EPA households with school age children.

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<sup>24</sup> The outcome and strategies for this and the subsequent sections on Earn and Safe are drawn from OEPA's proposal to Hewlett for 2004. Strategies listed here for Learn are condensed versions of lengthier narratives in the proposal.

By December 2004, these efforts had produced outcomes in all three areas of systems change: policy change/bureaucratic reform, local capacity, and resources. The most significant among these are:

- major innovations in the content of community-based, adult ESL training, and the school district's selection of the OEPA-sponsored organization (Nuestra Casa) that piloted these changes to deliver the full program;
- developing infrastructure to support communications and coordination between school teachers and after school services, and among after-school services providers, to better meet the needs of students;
- Nuestra Casa succeeded in attracting significant resources to the community, primarily in the form of funding for its CBET training program. These funds have supported the strengthening of the organization's capacity to empower the Latino immigrant community to advocate on its own behalf for policy changes in the educational system and beyond;
- other important resources leveraged came in the form of expertise from the Stanford University School of Education, and University of California at Santa Cruz's New Teacher Center, among others.

#### Policy change/bureaucratic reform

Policy change and bureaucratic reforms refer to innovations in the ways bureaucracies operate and policies are shaped, including who participates in shaping them, the background assumptions upon which policies are based, and the allocation of funds for their implementation. Learn has succeeded to varying degrees in impacting each of these areas, through innovations in the design and delivery of services, structures for system integration, and creating new vehicles for stakeholder involvement in policy reform.

- Nuestra Casa and Stanford's School of Education combined forces to develop and pilot an improved English-as-a-second-language curriculum (ESL), with the ultimate goal of replacing the current form of community-based ESL (CBET) programs offered by the local school district. The pilot was a success and Nuestra Casa was ultimately awarded the contract for delivery of all Ravenswood City School District CBET training. Collaborations between small, local, community-based organizations and major research institutions are rare, and seldom part of the process for the design or delivery of public services.
- Nuestra Casa worked closely with Cañada College to ensure coordination of the content and schedules of its ESL classes with Cañada's courses. This will allow Nuestra Casa graduates with sufficient English to transition into Cañada's college level courses in English and other subjects.
- CLASS collaborative sponsored the design of a template for a coordination system to enable regular exchange between school teachers and after-school programs, sectors otherwise isolated from one other. A pilot implementation is currently underway at Quest.
- Learn's active participation in the newly formed After-School Advisory Council creates a vehicle for greater representation of community voices in developing educational policy in the district, particularly as it pertains to after-school programs. Learn's relationships with the council and the school board were instrumental in CBET funds being awarded to Nuestra Casa.

## Local Capacity

Learn was strategic in its efforts to build local capacity in both organizations and the individual residents they serve, with the ultimate goal of increasing literacy. At the organizational level, Learn targeted three entities: Nuestra Casa, Quest, and the CLASS collaborative (the latter being a network of organizations). At the individual level, outcomes can be observed for parents, students, and teachers.

- Learn strengthened Nuestra Casa in its capacity to serve EPA's new Latino immigrant population, an increasingly large and hugely underserved segment of the community. Supported by CBET and other funds raised, the organization added 2 new FTEs to its staff, recruited five new board members, and developed its Parent Leadership Training program, in addition to increasing the number of ESL classes offered.
- Learn supported Quest to develop improved literacy-based curriculum for its after school programs, and Quest staff and volunteers benefited from professional development skills training by the New Teacher Center. Quest's collaboration with Nuestra Casa for parent leadership training has led to cross-referrals and tighter integration between programs.
- With Learn-arranged support, the CLASS collaborative articulated its vision and mission and agreed on shared goals, culminating in an action plan for their achievement, and more efficient operations overall. Development of the communications and referral system is in its early stages.
- Among adults, EPA residents enhanced their capacity to advocate effectively for improvements on behalf of their children. Nuestra Casa enrolled 197 adults in ESL training, of which 144 completed the program, a figure exceeding expectations by over 75%. Sixty adults participated in Nuestra Casa's Parent Leadership training, a figure below targeted outcomes, which were projected at 90. Less may mean more focus given that 16% of the participants moved on to leadership roles, e.g. becoming members of Nuestra Casa's community board, becoming promotores, and volunteering for another EPA organization. Advocacy skills are evident among participants in Nuestra Casa's Parent Leadership Institute who expressed, in a public meeting of the RCSD school board, their concern about the poor quality of food served in the district's schools, backed up by the results of a survey they developed and administered.
- Among school children, 190 have participated in Quest after-school programs in 2004. Though measurement of improvement has not yet been administered to all participants, Quest internal assessments of 30 students showed 50% of the cohort experiencing demonstrable performance improvements in literacy-based subjects.

## Resources

Resources attracted to the community take the form of both dollars and expertise. Learn has been instrumental in adding to EPA's share of both. Especially impressive is Learn's success in bringing to bear high level expertise, for example, from Stanford University's School of Education, University of California at Santa Cruz's New Teacher Center, and local research firms like ASR, to support development of the capacities and services needed to bring about improvements in education. Such expertise is normally

beyond the means of small community based organizations, and lends enormous credibility to their programs and funding proposals.

- In dollar terms, Nuestra Casa's success in winning funding from the school district to deliver its CBET program has meant an infusion of \$104,140/year for three years, with \$89,000 of the yearly total going to Nuestra Casa, and the balance to Cañada College.
- Learn brokered the services of the Stanford University School of Education (SUSE) for the design for Nuestra Casa's ESL curriculum. A rigorous, literacy-based after school curriculum for Quest was made possible with expertise from ASR and the University of California at Santa Cruz's New Teacher Center (NTC). ASR also helped CLASS to develop its vision, mission, and goals, and the NTC has stepped in with design support for the collaborative's new communication and referral system.

**Table 3-1: Overview of Learn Program Structure and 2004 Outcomes**

Strategy	Gap addressed	Goals	OEPA roles	Outcomes
<b>Intermediary activity</b> Nuestra Casa	Lack of local quality programs and delivery of services in EPA to build capacity of new Latino immigrant families to support and advocate for their children’s educational needs.	Build local capacity to create and deliver quality programs designed to empower new Latino immigrant parents to support and advocate for their children’s educational needs.	Develop strategic direction; broker relationships with school board, community college, and research providers; attract resources; recruit new leadership; support hiring process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Change: (1) successful collaboration between local CBO and major research institution to design and pilot new program for public services; (2) continuum of training across skill levels and institutions.</li> <li>• Local Capacity: (1) strengthened organization serving Latino immigrant population; (2) more parents of EPA school age children improve English language skills, advocacy skills, and knowledge of school system.</li> <li>• Resources: (1) CBET funding of \$89,000/yr for 3 years; SUSE expertise.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Network</b> CLASS Collaborative	EPA after-school program offerings of uneven quality; disconnected from each other and other parts of education system; uninformed by individual student needs.	Improve overall program quality; Align collaborative around shared goals; Build system for cross sector communication.	Broker support services and technical assistance for improved organizational process; design and implement communications system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Change: (1) enhanced communication between in-school and after-school services, teachers; (2) strengthened community voice in shaping school district policy; (3) quality literacy-based after-school curriculum developed.</li> <li>• Local Capacity: (1) teachers and tutors supported with training and mentoring; (2) collaborative operations improved with articulation of clear goals and action plans.</li> <li>• Resources: ASR, NTC lend expert support to designing systems and improving operations.</li> </ul>
<b>Partner Projects</b>  Nuestra Casa  Quest  Ravenswood	Nuestra Casa: see above  Quest: literacy based after-school programs for English learners and others  Ravenswood: see CLASS Collab above	Increase parents involvement in children’s education; Increase participant levels of English proficiency increase children’s literacy skills improve services and infrastructure to promote academic achievement increase resident capacity for advocacy.	Support expert TA for development of Nuestra Casa ESL; support TA and operations at Quest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 175 adults complete Nuestra Casa ESL training; up to 77% from target footprint; exceed enrollment goals by 50% to 100%.</li> <li>• Nuestra Casa: 60 adults enroll in PLI.</li> <li>• 20 Nuestra Casa participants take parent leadership classes at Quest.</li> <li>• Quest enrolls 153 students in its after-school literacy based programs, with steady increases in numbers over time, and surpassing enrollment targets.</li> <li>• Quest reports increase in number of students getting positive feedback on homework, and is beginning to demonstrate impact on literacy in OEPA service area.</li> <li>• Ravenswood (CLASS) Collaborative has grown to include 27 local agencies.</li> </ul>

### 3.2.1 Earn Program Falters on Execution

Earn 2004 Community-Wide Outcome:  
Increase the well being of EPA residents by  
developing their income and assets.

#### Main Strategies

- Increase employment of neighborhood residents through job training and placement (OICW).
- Increase longevity of employee placement through employer-based retention and career advancement programs (Springboard Forward).
- Extend existing and planned career pathways in biotechnology and allied health careers for EPA residents (Gateway network).
- Support and train EPA residents to start and grow their own businesses (Start-Up).
- Increase the savings and assets of low income families (IDA project).
- Invest in new policy development to institutionalize career advancement opportunities for EPA and similar communities (Career Ladders).
- Advocate for stronger and better monitored Community Benefits Agreement (Earn program staff).
- Exploratory research for increasing incomes and economic well-being (Earn program staff).

**Key Earn partner, OICW, exceeds outcome targets. Gateway network pilot moves into implementation with great promise for systems change. Limited staff capacity, unclear focus, and poor cross-project integration make for minimal or no progress on other Earn strategies.**

In OEPA's 2004 proposal, EARN proposed the eight strategies listed above as the focus of its work for the year. Although this collection of strategies smartly reflects the multiple sources of economic well-being, there were few synergies and overlaps in the various activities entailed in their execution. This weakness in cross-project integration, combined with a severely understaffed program, made it highly unlikely that Earn would meet all of its targets.<sup>25</sup>

By the end of 2004, four of Earn's eight strategies showed evidence of progress towards outcomes. Three of the four are in the category of "partner projects." Of these three, OICW exceeded its projected targets for building individual capacity in the form of job training and placement. Start Up has exceeded its targets and Springboard Forward has submitted a report documenting six months of its work that shows it is more than half way

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<sup>25</sup> The Earn program director served as the interim executive director for eight months (Sept 2003-April 2004), and also acted as OEPA's finance director until November 2004. His time for attending to this sizable and ambitious program was therefore severely curtailed.

to its target.<sup>26</sup> The fourth program, Gateway, is a strategic network in which OEPA/Earn is one of many participants. Gateway has exceeded expectations in some areas, and fallen short in others. Please see a detailed case study of the Gateway strategic network in appendix A-3.

Taken together, reportable outcomes for the year are small when compared with overall targets. Cast in terms of systems change, a few items rise to the surface, mostly in the area of local capacity.

#### Policy change/bureaucratic reform

Gateway is an innovative, integrated network-based model for workforce development with low-skilled youth and adults, and workers with limited English proficiency – a segment which thus far has been difficult to reach, and difficult to qualify for existing workforce programs. The Gateway network is unique for bringing together cross-sector organizations to address the common characteristics of these populations that prevent their participation in workforce development training. These characteristics range from a lack of basic language, reading and math skills to that of social and financial supports while in training. The policy change in this case is the Gateway model itself, which is notable for including public sector agencies, community-based organizations, and educational institutions, along with a case management system to coordinate and tailor services to the unique requirements of each participant. This kind of heterogeneous network is very unusual, and the network has navigated exceptionally well the radically different cultures of the partners involved.

#### Local Capacity

- Earn's partner, OICW produced particularly robust outcomes, exceeding targets for building individual capacity: 107 clients were served, 96 earning training certificates, with 61 job placements (57% placement). This stacks up well against the mature and well funded San Francisco Private Industry Council's 20 year placement rate of 72%. Of job placements, 82% remained employed after 6 months.
- The Gateway network, in addition to representing a change in the policy arena, has also created an organizational capacity for coordination and collaboration across entities with vastly different organizational cultures, and added to organizational skill in performing successful outreach with low income populations disconnected from usual information sources.

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<sup>26</sup> Alumni follow up surveys show that 10 people report higher business revenues and 7 state that take home income is greater than last year. Given uncontrollable variables targets are not set for impacts on business revenues or income gains (in addition self-reported data of this type is notoriously unreliable). Just 2 of the 7 participants in Springboard's program are from the footprint (the others are from EPA). Springboard reports that the primary employer for the program has had difficulty identifying eligible participants from the footprint which may threaten its viability.

## Resources

- In a relatively short period of time, Gateway attracted widespread interest and an impressive level of funding from multiple sources of \$360,000 directed toward residents of OEPA's footprint.<sup>27</sup>
- Along with Hewlett, Earn was part of early conversations to develop and design the Gateway project, and was instrumental in engaging the expertise of Skyline College and OICW (an existing program partner, and one of the few areas of synergy between Earn projects) to the network. OEPA also brought in as advice early research findings on area workforce trends from the University of Santa Cruz's CJTC.

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<sup>27</sup> Overall Gateway has attracted more funding than this. We include here the amount designated to benefit residents of OEPA's footprint. Please see footnote to Table 2-3 in section 2.2.1 above for more details on Gateway funding.

**Table 3-2: Overview of Earn Program Structure and 2004 Outcomes**

Strategy	Gap addressed	Goals	OEPA roles	Outcomes
<b>Strategic Network</b>  Gateway	Low-skilled youth and workers with limited English proficiency poorly served by existing workforce development programs.	Create coordinated system of context-based services, including bridge training and ancillary supports, to address unique needs of targeted population and build system of career pathways.	Broker partners and services; provide technical assistance with outreach strategies; shape funding proposals; convene and facilitate meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Change: new organizational model offers means to provide workforce development to heretofore unreachable population.</li> <li>• Local Capacity: improved organizational know-how for cross-sector collaboration and outreach methods.</li> <li>• Resources: (1) \$360,000 raised from funders, including Hewlett contribution; (2) CJTC research findings; expertise from Skyline College and OICW.</li> </ul>
<b>Partner Projects</b>				
OICW	Training and job placement in stable, career jobs.	Increase number of residents working in career-oriented jobs.	Project sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 61/107 clients or 57% placement.</li> <li>• 96/107 clients or 90% certified.</li> <li>• +\$4.83/hr increase in income (many clients are unemployed, so number may be skewed).</li> <li>• 31 out of 38 (82%) were in the same job or a new one after 6 months.</li> </ul>
Springboard Forward	Job retention and advancement for retail employees.	Reduction in job turnover; advancement to higher paying jobs.	Project sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 clients/4 planning to return to school/3 seeking promotions at Home Depot. Two from footprint.</li> </ul>
Start Up	Training and support for small businesses and entrepreneurs.	Increase new business starts and improved revenues in existing businesses.	Project sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 alumni reported higher business revenues over previous yr.</li> <li>• 18 existing businesses reported obtaining licenses and documentation.</li> <li>• 14 people enrolled in advanced training</li> <li>• 19 new entrepreneurs graduated</li> </ul>
Lenders for Community Development	Vehicle for raising assets via matched savings accounts.	Increase number of EPA residents enrolled in and saving through program.	Project sponsor	No outcomes to report
Community Benefits Agreements	Promote first source hiring policy in EPA businesses.	Increase number of local jobs going to EPA residents.	Program advocate	Established coalition. Plans for grocery changed. Alternative strategy to monitor city's First Source hiring does not have outcomes to report.
Career Ladders	Research on career ladders in California.	Policy level participation in developing career ladders in California.	Researcher, advocate	Attended meetings. No outcomes to report.
Worker Center	Investigate day laborer and undocumented business segments.	Explore improvements in serving undocumented workers.	Researcher, advocate	Research tasks, excluding worker survey, completed.

### 3.3.1 Safe Program Develops More Consistency

Safe 2004 Community-Wide Outcome:  
To improve neighbor to neighbor relations and increase public safety.

#### Main strategies

- Assist residents to form block clubs and neighborhood watch programs.<sup>28</sup>
- Coordinate support from block clubs to increase accountability from the EPA police department and establish a community-based coalition to help combat drug-related crime in the community.
- Create a citizen's academy in Spanish that will give Spanish-speaking residents greater knowledge of police procedures, their rights and the law.

**Safe program accomplishes policy changes at the municipal level, and builds numerous sites of local capacity. Safe consistently pursues its primary strategies, achieving most stated goals.**

The Safe program produced outcomes in 2004 in two primary areas of systems change: policy change and local capacity. The most significant among these are (1) advocacy efforts leading to policy changes at the EPA police department, and (2) OEPA being selected by the county supervisor to take over as convener of the Crime Reduction Task Force. Organizing and support of block clubs has created a number of local capacity outcomes, including evidence of resident leadership. Increase in local capacity among residents laid the groundwork for outcomes in policy change.

#### Local Capacity: Block Clubs

Assisting with organizing and supporting block clubs is a primary strategy of the Safe program. The total number of block clubs that has been organized by OEPA in cooperation with Palo Alto Park Neighborhood Association (PAPNA) increased from eight to 12 during 2004.<sup>29</sup> Although the number of block clubs with consistent membership reportedly dropped (9 to 5) in the second half of 2004, it is not clear what this means in terms of the continuation of the 12 block clubs. Neighborhood groups are notorious for shifting membership and periods of inactivity, which may or not be indications of dissolution.

Safe aimed to increase the capacity of block club members through a variety of training opportunities. The most sustained of these was the 11-week Spanish-language police academy (SLPA), which was offered by the EPA police department in Sept.-Dec. 2004, and which graduated 21 residents. Safe also contracted the National Community

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<sup>28</sup>For simplicity, we use the term block clubs in this report to refer to all neighborhood groups, including as well neighborhood associations and neighborhood watch.

<sup>29</sup> PAPNA has been a primary partner of OEPA Safe in organizing block clubs. Leaders in PAPNA also sit on the OEPA board of directors.

Development Institute (NCDI) and Peninsula Interfaith Action (PIA) to deliver trainings to block club members. Trainings included facilitation, recruiting, organizing and advocacy, and there is evidence of resident leadership emerging in actions initiated by block club leaders, although a causal link cannot be drawn. Delivery on the contracts with NCDI and PIA was not complete.<sup>30</sup> Local capacity development was therefore not as robust as was planned.

2004 local capacity outcomes for block clubs include organizing and participation rates, leadership development, and developments in knowledge.

- In terms of participation and organizing, six new block clubs were formed, and 64 active residents regularly participated in block club meetings. This is a significant increase in the total number of block clubs from 6 to 12. Data reported indicates that the number of block clubs with consistent membership decreased from 9 to 5, although as noted above it is difficult to determine the relative significance of this.
- Neighbor to neighbor relations apparently increased as evidenced by over 300 residents participating in events sponsored by block clubs<sup>31</sup>, with 11 actions taken this year;
- Knowledge was developed among (1) 21 graduates of the SLPA in their increased understanding of US law and judicial system; (2) the EPA Police Department (EPAPD) regarding the concerns of EPA's Spanish-speaking residents through the SLPA; and (3) 20 residents who attended two block club leadership summits in September and October, and received training on facilitating meetings, community organizing, and recruiting cross-culturally;
- Evidence of resident leadership emerged among those block club captains, reportedly three, who have initiated significant actions on their own<sup>32</sup>;
- One of Safe's goals has been to increase accountability of the police department to residents, and the program commissioned a survey of block club participants in fall 2004 asking about this. According to this survey, 44 of 73 block club respondents report a high degree of public officials' awareness and responsiveness to community concerns.

### Policy Change: Block clubs

OEPA and its associated block clubs helped create three policy level changes in 2004. The first two of these outcomes grew out of increased capacity of residents, at least in part, through their association with OEPA. The third suggests an increase in capacity

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<sup>30</sup> Coaching for block club members, monthly follow-up meetings with block clubs, and best practices research on block clubs was not completed by NCDI. In December 2004, a new MOU was drawn up between OEPA and PIA, with most of PIA's commitments still outstanding.

<sup>31</sup> Data in the JMPT system suggests numbers higher than this, but this number was selected as a conservative estimate of the number of participants in these events based on inconsistent entries into the JMPT system. It is possible, given the inconsistencies, that the actual number is almost twice this much.

<sup>32</sup> These include the captain of Illinois Street block club who organized the Mother's Against Violence march in July 2004, and leaders in PAPNA, also members of the OEPA board of directors, who played a key role in nuisance abatement ordinance (see section following on policy change).

within the police department in regard to both its relationship with and accountability to residents.

- The EPA police department for the first time offered one of its citizens' academies for Spanish speaking residents after five months of focused advocacy by OEPA, PAPNA, and block club leaders. Awareness of the need for such an academy grew out of (1) Safe's program director putting together Census 2000 statistics indicating a new Latino majority in EPA with results from CDI's community survey showing a very low level of civic participation among Latinos, and (2) increased organizing of block clubs that included mono-lingual Spanish speakers. OEPA worked with residents and the EPAPD to create an appropriate curriculum. According to OEPA's final report for 2004, the police department has now agreed to hold at least one of its academies in Spanish each year, and understands the need for more bilingual police officers.
- At least one "drug house" has been closed as a result of efforts at the city level to create a nuisance abatement ordinance. Leaders in PAPNA, also members of OEPA's board of directors, initiated and have been particularly active in this effort. The Safe program has provided requested support in obtaining affidavits from Spanish-speaking residents.
- A memorandum of understanding has been drafted between OEPA and the EPAPD that requires the department to develop its strategies in community policing, particularly regarding support of block clubs. OEPA has been advocating for such an MOU since 2003, and was able to draft one with the interim chief of police. Evidence of increased police attention already exists in a significant increase in the number of block club meetings attended by beat police officers (2 to 5) in the second half of 2004.

#### Local Capacity: Crime Reduction Task Force

OEPA acted strategically in folding its intentions to convene an anti-drug coalition based in EPA into the regional Crime Reduction Task Force (CRTF) convened by county supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson. (Appendix A-4 includes a complete case study on the CRTF as a strategic network.) OEPA participated in the task force as a partner during 2004, and was selected by the county supervisor to act as convener as the task force enters its next phase in 2005. OEPA was selected in part because of the growing visibility of block clubs associated with it, and the recognition among stakeholders at the county and municipal levels that OEPA is the one organization in EPA capable of convening a broad constituency of the community.

The work of the CRTF as of December 2004 produced a number of outcomes in local capacity, listed below. Most significant among these for OEPA was the opportunity for the Safe program director, and to a lesser extent OEPA's executive director, to develop his capacity to play a key role in this strategic network on a regional level (the executive director already has such capacity). The input of OEPA as whole (program director, executive director and chair of the board of directors) reportedly made a major contribution to the community orientation of the task force's report. This orientation importantly shifts accountability for a safe community from law enforcement alone (a

more typical view) to a broader set of stakeholders responsible for helping to create a healthy, functioning community, including city departments, schools, and community-based organizations.

2004 local capacity outcomes of the CRTF were the following:

- new cooperation and coordination among regional law enforcement agencies;
- a substantial and concise report published with series of recommendations;
- new collaboration among heterogeneous regional entities, including the county supervisor's office, county probation department, sheriff's department, community-based organizations, and, to some extent, local school districts;
- an increase of juvenile probation officers to seven or eight, up from four, dedicated to East Palo Alto/East Menlo Park;
- increased attention by the county probation department to the 25-50 most violent offenders located in East Palo Alto/East Menlo Park;
- OEPA learning to be a key player in regional crime reduction effort.

**Table 3-3: Overview of Safe Program Structure and 2004 Outcomes**

Strategy	Gap addressed	Goals	OEPA roles	Outcomes
<b>Intermediary activity</b> Block Clubs	Residents empowered to make positive change, police accountability to resident concerns.	Resident leadership development; increase resident perceptions of safety.	Organizer, convener, trainer, facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Reform: (1) Spanish Language Police Academy (SLPA) graduates first class of 21; (2) MOU with EPA police department completed and near signing; (3) OEPA contributes to work toward nuisance abatement ordinance.</li> <li>• Local Capacity: (1) 6 new block clubs formed in 2004, some with increasing organizational capacity; (2) EPAPD more than doubles participation in neighborhood group meetings (2 to 5) in second half of 2004; (3) increased capacity of graduates of SLPA re: local law and police department re: concerns of Spanish-speaking residents; (4) increased capacity among 3 block captains who have received training evident in at least two new actions initiated by them.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Network</b> Crime Reduction Task Force	Lack of coordination of services and shortage of resources for crime prevention.	ST: Produce CRTF report with recommendations; LT: Reduce crime stats in EPA; increase feeling of safety of EPA residents.	(1) Subcmnts: I. Safe prog. director is co-chair of Community Values; II. OEPA exec. director is member of prevention; (2) OEPA becomes convener in 2005.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local capacity: (1) New cooperation and coordination among regional law enforcement agencies; (2) report published with series of recommendations; (3) new collaboration among heterogeneous regional orgs, agencies and govt. departments; (4) 3-4 additional juvenile probation officers dedicated to East Palo Alto/East Menlo Park; (5) OEPA learning to be a key player in regional crime reduction effort.</li> </ul>
<b>Partner Outcomes</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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This evaluation report for OEPA's fourth year of implementation describes an organization that after a period of reengineering is much more focused than it had been previously. The evidence shows that the plans outlined in the proposal for 2004, with the exception of several aspects of Earn, were well implemented. We conclude that OEPA is being strategic about its work, made noteworthy progress during the year cultivating an essential intermediary competency of strategic networking, and made great strides forward building key aspects of the organization's infrastructure. It is testament to the hard work of its grassroots board and staff.

The year ahead, however, will bring new challenges. The most critical of which is resource development. Our first recommendation therefore addresses this point.

<b>Organization Level</b>
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1. **Urgent attention must be given to resource development.** OEPA knows that it faces a challenge demonstrating to funders of the net value of the work of a community-based intermediary. OEPA should consider using Learn's work to highlight how an intermediary operates and what it can accomplish, including showing how the effort to increase literacy has also been building local capacity, attracting resources and influencing policy/bureaucratic changes (extensive documentation is provided in the body of this report and in appendix A-3 as well). OEPA's fundraising strategy needs to show how its intermediary role brings new value to familiar issue areas, such as education, that are not accomplished by organized focused on providing direct services. Funders are accustomed to making grants in the categories of issue areas, and OEPA needs to negotiate this environment by demonstrating its leadership role in knitting together heterogeneous agencies and opportunities to bring resources to its inadequately served community. OEPA's strategy should be broad based and pursue the development of an individual donor base, private foundations, and government. We underscore the urgency of OEPA generating funds, given the length of time it takes to cultivate sources and little time left before Hewlett's support will sunset.
2. **Use strategic planning to clarify strategies.** Year 2005 marks an opportunity for the OEPA level theory of change and its strategies to establish how they will drive the organization's programs. The strategic planning opportunity presents an ideal time for OEPA to refine the meaning and focus of its strategies (e.g. resident

engagement, local capacity). For example, local capacity building could focus on creating or strengthening strategic networks, and/or incubating essential community-based groups (e.g. Nuestra Casa). It could also include incubating programs (e.g. block clubs) with the idea of spinning them off for another organization to manage. We think OEPA should be very cautious about pursuing ambitious ideas of building the capacity of EPA's community based organizations until it builds its own. We believe that such fresh thinking is needed for OEPA's four principal strategies. Completing this set of tasks will place the organization's vision in the position of driving the programs.

3. **Within strategy of advocating for change, include an applied research component.** Intermediary organizations often use research to both inform their own programs and inform the broader community as well. Such research can be a catalyst for advocacy efforts and ultimately for policy change. OEPA should consider how it can continue to commission critical studies. For example, its sister initiative in San Jose recently released a detailed worker survey that was well covered in the San Jose Mercury News. The survey findings are being used to develop the curriculum for a new adult learning center and to implement a regional employment strategy.
4. **Finalize theories of change.** Theories of change make transparent, for an organization and its community of interested parties the logic of what it wants to do, why, and how it proposes to accomplish its goals. They are foundation for developing a shared vision and serve as a compass for refining strategy. OEPA has completed much of this work, but modest fine tuning remains. Complete and date final versions of the OEPA organizational level theory of change, program level theories of change (additional recommendations are noted below), and their associated logic models. Include description of research that was used, the theory/assumptions that underpin the work, the specific strategies chosen, and logic models. Note that underlying theory does not change, strategies are tested and refined, and logic models will understandably be modified on an annual basis. Make clear intentions regarding the integration of strategies within and across programs. Be sure to make clear the difference between strategy and projects. Because language has been such a source of confusion, we encourage that OEPA consider having a glossary and footnoting sources for its work.

<b>For Programs</b>
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5. **Pursue more synergies within and across program areas.** This would help to leverage efforts of program directors and intensify impacts on families and individuals. Examples of cross-program connections are:
  - Learn's Parent Leadership Institute (Nuestra Casa), with Safe's CRTF, would provide Latino residents with an avenue to address their concerns about safety, having received training on advocacy through the PLI. Latino

residents are currently among the most active residents in block clubs, and it may be that others as well would welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with the larger community toward issues of safety and creating a revitalized community as envisioned by the CRTF report. The goals of the CRTF would also be well served by the participation of Latino residents.

- Nuestra Casa's CBET program, with the Gateway project, would sensitize Gateway programs to the needs of non-native English speakers, provide CBET graduates with a pathway to job training, and build bridges between Cañada College's different collaborations with OEPA programs.
6. **Refining is needed to finalize program level theories of change.** Learn needs to briefly spell out the underlying assumptions (i.e. the theory) of its work, and articulate its overarching strategies – components that are now implicit. Safe needs the benefit of sound research to support and guide its work. It needs a set of well integrated strategies rather than the bundle of disparate projects that have defined its work and scattered the energies of the program director. .
  7. **Give strong consideration to developing a cross-program focus on youth.** We encourage OEPA to look at youth as a potential focal point across the program areas that may provide ready means for integration. A focus on youth first emerged within Safe's research during the annual planning process in 2004, and then was picked up in OEPA's proposal to PCF for 2004/2005 with a cross-program emphasis. Through its PCF grant, OEPA is now fostering a collaborative of agencies serving youth in EPA. The CRTF also raised youth as a major focus of its recommendations, Learn's focus on youth is in after-school programming and through parent education, and Gateway seeks to assist young people with multiple barriers to gain access to higher education and higher wage employment. All of these foci aim to assist what is well known to be population in great need in EPA. At this point these efforts are disparate rather than integrated, but synergies could be developed that may provide more strategic focus, creating greater impact with less effort.
  8. **Earn is an essential part of a community development strategy.** The Earn program deserves reexamination. No comprehensive community development initiative can maintain its credibility in the absence of efforts directed to improving economic wellbeing. Whether or not Earn is reinstated as a separate program, OEPA must continue to place income and asset development on its priority list of concerns. This could mean integrating Earn's outcomes into OEPA's remaining program areas, for example by connecting their participants to job training, placement, or savings programs.
  9. **Identify a partner to sustain the block clubs.** We have already stated that OEPA yet needs to further clarify its role in regard to resident engagement. Block clubs have been a core component of the strategy and OEPA should decide next steps regarding this effort. Incubating a project to fill a gap is a vital role of an intermediary, but direct organizing is highly labor intensive and not a particularly

effective use of limited staff time. We encourage the OEPA move rapidly to identify a partner who can sustain the block club work.

### **Data Management**

10. **Learn should strengthen tracking of students.** In order for Learn to fully demonstrate and articulate its real impact on literacy, as well the true benefits of its family-focused strategy, it will need to strengthen the tracking system. For example, Quest has had demonstrable impacts on literacy levels in OEPA’s target population, albeit with data collection on a small portion of its clients thus far. Strengthening data quality and increasing data coverage, and tracing the relationship of Quest outcomes to the larger context of the CLASS collaborative, would make a stronger case, to funders and the community, for both Quest and CLASS as well. This kind of tracking—across agencies as well as robust within one agency—is the type of information OEPA needs to be able to demonstrate its value added as an intermediary organization, what it brings to the table that is different and important.
  
11. **Safe data management should not be done by the OEPA program area director.** This has a major impact on the undercounting and inconsistencies of OEPA data. It also does not adequately reflect the strength of the resident engagement work. We recommend there is data collection and input support provided for the OEPA Safe program area director.

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## **APPENDICES**

- A-1 Theory of Change**
- A-2 Learn**
- A-3 Earn**
- A-4 Safe**
- A-5 Evaluation Report Methodology**
- A-6 Strategic Network Instrument**

**APPENDIX A-1**

**Theory of Change**

## APPENDIX 1: THEORIES OF CHANGE ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROGRAM LEVEL

### Background

To better appreciate how to measure OEPA's progress in regard to its theories of change, it is important to provide both a historical perspective for OEPA itself, and a broader context for formulating theories of change more generally. OEPA has had to adopt a new lexicon (e.g., logic models, causal models, outputs, outcomes), the meanings for which were used and explained differently by different parties, and for which there is not yet a standard set of meanings in the field. It also had to cope with technical assistance that was itself uncertain about this new language, occasionally flawed, and sometimes delayed to the point of undermining OEPA's progress. Yet OEPA staff persisted, at times doing their own research to gain clarity, and ultimately made solid progress.

The following background in which OEPA's theories of change were developed provides (1) the steps taken by Hewlett and technical assistance providers to support OEPA's effort to generate theories of change to frame its work, and (2) the conditions that affected OEPA's capacities to take advantage of this approach. It is followed by detailed analysis of the organizational and program level theories of change that form the basis for the assessment provided in the main body of the report.

### Steps to Adapt Theories of Change

The term, theory of change, is relatively new to the nonprofit world and has only recently gained popularity within foundations as a means of requiring that applicants and grantees be clearer and more strategic about the change(s) they are seeking.<sup>33</sup> Hewlett's Neighborhood Improvement Initiative (NII), is one of the foundation world's earliest programs to explicitly use the language of "theory of change." Ahead of its time, the NII had a theory, a set of strategies, and broad outcomes. Looking back to its formulation a decade ago, it was impressively grounded in research and it well articulated its strategies for the planning stage of the initiative. The strategy for implementation was very broadly outlined and ultimately largely informed by the sites themselves through experience. Hewlett's logic model for the overall initiative was first presented in 2002, roughly seven years after launching the first site.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> A seminal monograph on this subject is "Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-Based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiative for Children and Families" by Carol Hirshon Weiss, in New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods, and Practices, James P. Connell, Anne C. Kubisch, Lisbeth B. Shorr, and Carol Weiss (Washington, D.C.: Aspen Institute, 1995), pp 65-92. Teamworks evaluation reports dating back to 2001 had recommended that OEPA develop a theory of change to guide its work.

<sup>34</sup> At the core of the NII theory is the thesis that extremely low-income communities are disadvantaged because of a lack of understanding about how to access power brokers that can make resources available (William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987). Developing bridges to government, in particular, is seen as central to gaining the power to foster policy change. The strategies for the NII were detailed for the planning period but not for implementation. The lack of clarity regarding implementation strategies contributed to conflicting expectations between Hewlett and its other two sites (Mayfair and West Oakland). Conflicting expectations between Hewlett and OEPA resulted in Hewlett requiring its reengineering in 2003.

In the nonprofit world, the practice of planning is routine (e.g., strategic planning), but the development of theories of change and the notion of having a sound theoretical basis for the selection of strategies are unfamiliar. Hewlett recognized it was entering new territory and was proactive in providing support for both the development of theory and for logic modeling. The initial emphasis was on logic modeling followed by the research to support theory formulation and strategy development. This was an unfortunate sequence, as the formulation of theory should have preceded the logic models. Below we briefly describe what occurred, focusing on the factors that influenced OEPA's progress.

We find that the work of OEPA is best appreciated by understanding (1) the confusion due to the evolving nature of the language associated with theories of change, (2) the sequence in which theory development occurred, (3) the mixed quality of the technical assistance provided to OEPA and its impact on the three program areas, (4) the pressures on OEPA through its reengineering during which it lacked an executive director for roughly eight months, and (5) the differing competencies among the staff.

#### Logic Modeling Terminology

When Hewlett established a requirement for OEPA in 2003 to submit logic models, the foundation provided support for training in logic modeling (then referred to as "results based accountability") and for technical assistance as well. In essence, this belies an assumption, proved correct, that neither the experience nor the skills to produce such models existed within OEPA or its partner agencies. Unfortunately, the various advisors' use of the language associated with logic models and theories of change sowed considerable confusion due to inconsistencies in their definitions of fundamental terms. Such inconsistencies are common when a concept is rapidly disseminated and popularized. In an effort to address this muddle, the president of the Hewlett Foundation wrote a monograph that included a set of working definitions.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless differing uses of terms persist.

#### Sequence of Theory Development

Hewlett supported OEPA in developing its understanding of its role as an intermediary, and developing its new mission and vision, through the spring and summer of 2003 (See p.43 for comprehensive timeline of theory of change development.). CJTC and NCDI in May 2003 organized a leadership training institute, for both NII sites, focused on "the intermediary organization," with speakers from across the country. Hewlett also supported a strategic planning process at OEPA July-September 2003 during which the organization's mission was rewritten to align with its role as a community-based intermediary. The mission proved to be a key building block for formulating the organizational level theory of change, which first appeared in OEPA's proposal to Hewlett for 2004, written in October 2003. This proposal has been used throughout this report as the baseline for evaluation.

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<sup>35</sup> Update on the Hewlett Foundation's Approach to Philanthropy: The Importance of Strategy (Paul Brest, November 2004).

The logic modeling that was done in 2003 largely focused on the grantee partners and less on the intermediary aspects of the organization's work, or how to weave the two into a whole. The requirement to develop "intermediary program logic models" was new in 2004 as was the requirement to develop an organizational level intermediary logic model. The process to create intermediary logic models happened backwards: the logic models generally drew upon strategies or activities that staff proposed and often were already engaged in, not upon overarching, articulated theories. A preferred approach would have been for the programs to generate their theories of change, then to create logic models—essentially action plans—from the theories. Conceivably this was because the models were explicitly required by Hewlett, and because the modeling was largely driven by Hewlett's requirements of partners.

In addition, the core strategies of the organization outlined in the mission statement, and which under-gird the organizational level theory of change (October 2003), were integrated into the programs during 2003. The programs thus became the vehicle through which the role of the organization was conceived and implemented. As noted in the body of the report, this led to program silos, rather than programs conceptualized as parts of an integrated whole. Also the logic modeling and generating of theories of change happened at the program level first, before the organizational level, and in this sense the programs have been driving the conceptualization of the organization.

In the first part of 2004, Hewlett required that program level logic models be done that integrated each program's intermediary's work with that of its partners. Though never fully completed, this work was ultimately helpful in formulating the approach to developing the 2005 logic models, the most recent version.

#### Technical Assistance and Theory/Strategy Formulation

Hewlett recognized that the theories needed to be grounded in research and provided OEPA with support to retain expert research assistance for each program area. Learn worked with Applied Survey Research (ASR), Earn with the Center for Justice Tolerance and Community (CJTC), and Safe with both Empowerment Research! Community Development Institute (CDI) and the National Community Development Institute (NCDI). During 2003 and 2004, under the supervision of Hewlett, contracts were issued for each of these organizations. The quality of their work varied greatly, and significantly affected the progress of the respective program areas. Both Learn and Earn were able to draw strategies almost verbatim from the research provided to them by their research partners. Safe never had the benefit of such clear articulations from its expert assistance.

The work with Learn was the most narrowly focused, on after-school literacy programs in three schools, and was completed in September 2003. The research for Earn was mostly informed by CJTC, but also drew upon CDI's work. CJTC's work was high quality, exhaustive and included multiple studies, several of which were identified or modified as work evolved, and resulted in revisions to their scope. They directly informed Earn's strategies. The work for Safe was incomplete, narrowly focused on crime statistics, perceptions of crime, and on block clubs. Safe's research partners did not identify

prevailing theories of how to foster greater security or outline strategies beyond block clubs.

The research agreements varied in the extent to which they made clear that the researchers would provide advice beyond the production of a set of report recommendations. Earn's expert, CJTC, structured ongoing consultation in their agreement and was the most active in this regard. Learn's program director sought out additional assistance to learn how the school system was structured and its points of leverage, information that proved invaluable and enabled jumpstarting this program. Finally, for Safe little guidance was given to the program in regard to how to interpret data,<sup>36</sup> or in how to use overarching theories to inform strategies for action. Given this new and often changing terrain, and occasional poor alignment between expertise and needs, the fact that OEPA had fits and starts is not unexpected, nor is the fact that its products are uneven.

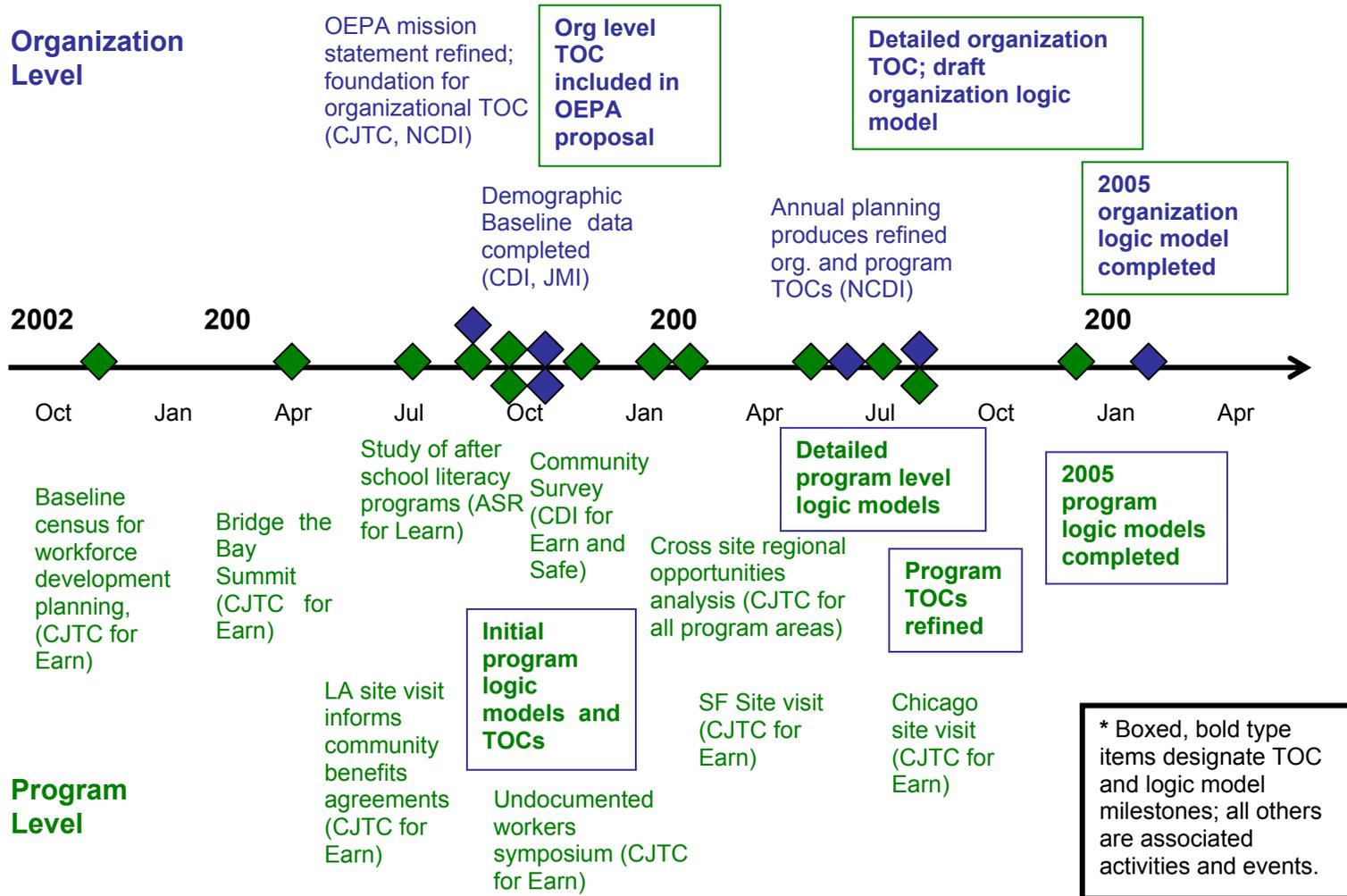
#### Organizational Conditions Affecting OEPA's Adaptation of Theories of Change

In 2003 OEPA was emerging from a traumatic period in which it fulfilled Hewlett's requirements that it shed programs and terminate or otherwise alter numerous relationships, e.g. with grantees and the Peninsula Community Foundation (PCF), its former managing partner. Within the organization morale was low, and outside the organization complaints were made about its retreat (and also Hewlett's) from resident involvement. In late spring of 2003 OEPA hired its first staff person with competencies in research and a background studying community initiatives. Except for the then director (who left in summer 2003), other staff had previously been hired for their backgrounds in community organizing. In late April 2004, OEPA hired a new director who brings an extensive research background along with a deep history of community work. Thus, the requirements to develop theories of change/logic models was superimposed upon an organization surfacing from turmoil and whose staff and board were largely unprepared and inexperienced in the skills needed to address the demands they were about to face.

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<sup>36</sup> Safe is the only one of the three program areas where the staff member is directly responsible for the collection and input of data. Safe staff and JMPT have identified problems with both underreporting and the quality of the data (see section three and appendix A-4 of this report). The Safe staff person has been doing the data management but neither has a background nor has had training to build needed competencies in data management and analysis.

**Figure A1-1:  
Development Timeline: Organizational and  
Program Level Theories of Change, Logic Models, and Associated Activities**



## **OEPA Organization Theory and Strategies**

### **Organization Theory (Annual Plan to Hewlett for 2005, approved August 2004)**

Developing and engaging resident leaders will produce a critical mass of local residents who understand community problems, play a significant role in bringing about community change, and speak with one strong voice to shape policy decisions that determine the quality of life in the community.

By brokering resources and services in the areas of education, employment, and public safety, organizational partnerships will be formed that give residents access to culturally and linguistically appropriate opportunities to improve the quality of their lives; service providers will collaborate more effectively through strong networks to achieve greater impact on critical social problems; and more resources will be invested in the community and leveraged as a result of new public and private partnerships.

Building the organizational capacity of community-based service providers and neighborhood groups will significantly improve their ability to plan and implement effective programs, stabilize their administrative and fiscal systems, and secure resources to sustain their operations.

In advocating for systemic change, residents will identify priority issues and develop strategies for changing institutional policy, improving institutional services and increasing institutional accountability [to the community].

By developing and engaging residents, brokering resources and services, building organizational capacity and advocating for systemic change, residents will be educated, organized and empowered to be change agents; programs and services in the areas of education, employment and public safety will be accessible, effective, and culturally relevant; community organizations will be stable and operate efficiently; and institutions will be responsive and accountable to the community. These changes, in turn, will result in a community where children are educated to succeed, families are economically self-sufficient, neighborhoods are safe, and residents are empowered to organize and advocate effectively for social change.

### **OEPA Theory of Change and Strategies**

Both OEPA's organizational theory of change, and its associated strategies, align well with Hewlett's Neighborhood Improvement Initiative theory of change. Hewlett's model draws, in part, on a theory that low-income neighborhoods are cut off from resources and relationships with powerful stakeholders at the governmental level. The strategies that emerge from this premise are that to rise out of poverty, lower-income neighborhoods must: (1) build bridges to access resource providers, (2) have satisfactorily strong organizational infrastructure to deliver services, and (3) involve residents in meaningful

decision-making about the locality. Places with these ingredients, even untapped, would, in this theory, be more likely to successfully revitalize over time.

With the selection of EPA, Hewlett chose a site that poses great challenges.<sup>37</sup> Though there are some bright spots in the area’s economics, overall its city government remains poorly resourced. In the recent past the city relied on support from area foundations to staff city agencies such as redevelopment. Community-based organizations have long been cash starved and known to be lacking in capacity. And, dramatic changes in EPA’s demographics have raised tensions among residents, affecting their abilities to work collaboratively. These factors do not fundamentally alter the theory of change, i.e. for transformation to occur resources must be accessed and agencies need to have capacity, but they underscore the fact that there are high hurdles to overcome.

**Table A1-2  
OEPA Organization Level Strategies**

<b>Proposal for 2004</b>	<b>Proposal for 2005</b>
<i>Focus: Program</i> -Resident Engagement and Advocacy -Leadership Development -Brokering Partnerships and Local Capacity Building	<i>Focus: Program</i> -Organizational capacity building -Resident engagement -Advocacy for system change -Broker resources and services
<i>Focus: Internal Capacity</i> <sup>38</sup> -Hire and train appropriate staff to lead a community based intermediary organization. -Diversify funding streams. -Continue to build the capacity of board to manage the organization. -Improve outreach and communications -Strengthen programs and promote synergies	<i>Focus: Internal Capacity</i> No strategies listed.

**Execution of Strategies**

Our analysis indicates that there are many more cases of the strategies being well executed within the programs than poorly or not executed. As referenced in the report, in 2004 the core strategies of the organization were imbedded in the conceptualization of each of the program areas. Each program area had at least one if not more of the strategies incorporated into its programming. We also find, though integration of these strategies is not specified as a goal, connections are emerging within and across programs. Below are some of the examples that we use for the documentation that supports the conclusions presented in the report.

<sup>37</sup> EPA was the last site to be selected by Hewlett, with the intent of learning from the other two sites.

<sup>38</sup> We reported extensively in Section 2 of this report on the impressive progress made by OEPA in building its organizational infrastructure.

- Resident engagement was particularly well integrated into Learn's support of Nuestra Casa, which has become an incubator for parent leadership. Safe's work to organize block clubs is an example of direct organizing being done by OEPA to fill a gap. Earn's intent to promote resident involvement through its community benefits agreement initiative was essentially never fully tested because the quality of the organizing being done by the partner agencies was reportedly weak and because the incentive for the project (a planned grocery store) was put on hold.
- Brokering partnerships found traction with the emergence of OEPA's first substantial networks, which are highlighted in case studies in this report. These partnerships share intellectual resources, show potential for growing political clout, and occasionally for attracting funds. For example, (1) Gateway is a partnership of public and private sector representatives where OEPA's role has helped direct new monies to the footprint for employment development; and (2) Learn succeeded in accessing ESL/CBET monies.
- Local capacity building is highlighted (1) in the building of these networks, ones that do not necessarily become independent formal organizations but are intended to fill a critical gap, (2) incubating organizations such as Nuestra Casa, and (3) modeling the creation of block clubs. We underscore that this concept of local capacity building is distinctly different from the traditional notion of providing technical assistance (e.g. for board development, financial management) to EPA's nonprofit organizations. While the latter is a worthy notion, it is extremely labor intensive and doubly challenging while OEPA itself is growing its own capacities.
- Advocacy took a number of forms, for example, (1) in the creation of the first Spanish Language Police Academy, and to the writing of a memorandum of understanding with the EPA Police Department regarding the police department's commitments to community policing; (2) in participants in Nuestra Casa's Parent Leadership Institute expressing, in a public meeting of the RCSD school board, their concern about the poor quality of food served in the district's schools, backed up by the results of a survey they developed and administered.

## **Learn Theory and Strategies**

### **Learn Theory (Annual Plan for 2005, approved August 2004)**

Parents of Cesar Chavez and Green Oaks elementary students who participate in ESL classes and leadership training, will improve communication with teachers, form advocacy groups to promote school reform, have greater impact on their child(ren)'s education.

By providing professional development training for after-school staff, implementing a student case management system, developing a uniform curriculum, and sharing student after-school achievement information, there will be more educational supports to address students' needs, be better tutor/teacher relationships to enhance students' academic success, and more effective programs to increase literacy.

As a result, parents will serve as resources for students and schools, after-school programs will be enhanced, students will be better supported, and OEPA Learn will partner more closely with schools, all of which, in turn, will lead to school reforms that result in improved student test scores and in children succeeding in school and beyond.

#### **Learn Theory**

Learn benefited early in its theory formulation from a study conducted by Applied Survey Research that examined the quality of after-school programming in three Ravenswood schools. ASR's study was narrowly focused, done by a credible organization, required just a few months to complete and produced recommendations that could translate easily into actionable strategies. The ASR study was completed in September 2003 and forms the backbone of Learn's work.

From the research developed an unstated hypothesis that essentially says systems change that will lead to better outcomes for children (specifically their literacy levels) will occur if (1) parents learn English, learn how to help their children with homework and reading, and how to advocate for their children, e.g. for school reform (2) teachers receive better information about the children and their needs, (3) volunteers who provide after-school services are better prepared, and (4) the community-based organizations involved in service delivery improve the quality and fit of their services. As with the other two program areas, theory is more implicit than explicit, but the importance of these factors in performance improvement is undeniable.

**Learn Strategies<sup>39</sup>**

Learn’s strategies mirror the key elements of the theory. There is a narrow set of well targeted strategies that are pulled almost directly from the research. The strategies do not necessarily require integration, but they allow for this to occur. Components address parents, teachers, volunteers, and community based organizations (see Table A1-3).

**Table A1-3  
Learn Strategies**

<b>Proposal to HF for 2004<sup>40</sup> October 2003</b>	<b>Annual Plan for 2005 August 2004</b>	<b>Logic Models for 2005 December 2004</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Support development of ESL and parent leadership training classes to empower Latino parents to participate more fully in their children’s education and become better advocates on their behalf. Nuestra Casa is the main vehicle for this strategy.</li> <li>-Advocate for improved community based English tutoring (CBET) curriculum that will increase the general level of English knowledge in EPA.</li> <li>-Support development and delivery of literacy based after-school tutoring programs, along with professional development training for associated program staff and volunteer tutors. Project sited at Quest.</li> <li>-Streamline and increase accountability of the Ravenswood After School Programs Collaborative (CLASS) through improved curriculum, professional staff development, and communications systems to link teachers and parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Implement an ESL curriculum focusing on increasing parental involvement in their children’s education, school improvement, and better communication with teachers and school administration at the target schools.</li> <li>-Implement the parent leadership development program to empower families and community members to organize parent leadership groups, advocate for positive changes in the school district and support teachers and after-school personnel.</li> <li>-Provide professional development trainings targeting after-school personnel from the school district, LEARN staff and OEPA Learn program partners.</li> <li>-Implement a youth information and case management system to coordinate referrals between the school and after-school programs.</li> <li>-Develop and agree on a uniform after-school curriculum for the school district and after-school programs which serve the target schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Promote a more collaborative student progress evaluation process involving after-school program(s), parents, and the Ravenswood School District</li> <li>-Support parent involvement in school programs</li> <li>-Improve after-school professional development and staff retention</li> </ul>

Learn’s actions are consistent with the strategies. We note that the Learn director retained expert assistance, roughly during the period that ASR was doing its work, to increase understanding of how school systems are structured, identify decision-makers,

<sup>39</sup> The program director’s summary for the evaluation produced in January 2005 states that only one activity, the Ravenswood City School District Community Based English Tutoring, was approved in the final version of its 2004 intermediary logic model, suggesting that the incubation of Nuestra Casa, the tracking system, the survey for CLASS, and the work of the Quest Learning Center were all extra. This does not square with the logic model that was in the proposal for 2004, or what appears in the intermediary logic model for 2004.

<sup>40</sup> Strategies listed here for Learn are condensed versions of lengthier narratives in the proposal.

and learn how to foster change. This effort was self-initiated and provided essential preparation for implementing the strategies.

- Learn's work has been notably strategic in facilitating the creation and building the capacity of Nuestra Casa.
- Learn is strategically integrating its strategies. Learn's director convened an after-school advisory council, which brings together school principals to discuss program improvements. The council is an overarching body that would be looking at the work of Nuestra Casa, Quest, and the CLASS collaborative referral system, services for parents/CBET, kids, teachers, and service providers.
- Though not stated as an explicit goal, through its work with Nuestra Casa, a cadre of Latino leaders is being incubated. Involvement in school reform has long been a natural point of entry for future leaders. (We note that Nuestra Casa would be a likely partner for Earn programs, but do not have evidence whether this connection has or has not been made.)
- A few projects have not proceeded on the desired timeline, and also some projects were proposed about which we do not have sufficient documentation to explain what transpired, e.g., Room to Read. Quest was not able to develop the curriculum for the teachers because the staff person responsible for formulating it left her job and no one at the firm was prepared to continue the work. Details of Learn's accomplishments are provided in section three and appendix A-2 of this report.

**Earn Theory and Strategies**  
**Earn Theory**  
**(Annual Plan for 2005, approved August 2004)**

Residents of East Palo Alto can earn higher incomes and develop assets in two ways: self-development and policy change. With respect to self-development, they can enroll in education and training programs (basic education, job skills training, business/micro enterprise training), receive assistance in expanding their social networks (making use of existing jobs and coaching), and participate in specialized savings programs (Individual Development Accounts). OEPA Earn Program helps EPA residents do this primarily through its partners.

With regard to policy change, EPA residents can also earn higher incomes and develop assets when they have greater access to employment and business opportunities and are supported by pro-worker policies and better targeted programs. OEPA Earn Program helps bring this about through research, planning and advocacy that will lift and enforce standards and generate greater community benefits from local development.

Providing education and skills training, expanding social networks and implementing asset development programs, will enable residents to qualify for jobs, upgrade their employment status, increase their incomes and develop savings accounts. By targeting growth, lifting and enforcing standards, and expanding community benefit agreements, more and better job and business opportunities will be created for residents. EPA residents with better jobs, higher incomes, and a greater number of improved opportunities will be able to meet their basic needs and, in turn, move towards greater economic self-sufficiency and a better quality of life.

**Earn's Theory**

Earn's conceptualization of its theory of change benefited from a comprehensive research program and a peer learning approach to deepen board and staff understanding of workforce needs and strategies. The entire effort was coupled with access to expertise. For the most part, Earn's research partner was CJTC. Earn also commissioned CDI to carry out several narrowly defined tasks including a set of focus groups and a survey to inform its strategy for reaching undocumented residents.<sup>41</sup>

CJTC's baseline study of OEPA's workforce began in the summer and fall 2002, over six months before the arrival of the Earn director. It was commissioned by Hewlett to aid both OEPA and the other NII sites in their explorations of how to link local economies with the region. Using data just released from the year 2000 census, CJTC detailed the demographic shift from what was once a majority African-American population to Latino, the generational shift to a younger population in EPA, and the vast gap between the readiness of EPA's workforce and the jobs that a ladder to the future. This work was

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<sup>41</sup> As we noted earlier, OEPA was very thinly staffed. The survey was not completed, in part, because the Earn's director chose to give priority to administrative demands on his time, leaving this project undone.  
Appendices: OEPA Evaluation Year Four Implementation  
Teamworks: April 2005

by CJTC along with its other ongoing labor force studies to directly inform the formulation of the strategies that became the backbone of Earn's work. They are (1) target growth, (2) improve education and training, (3) expand networks, (4) accumulate wealth, and (5) enforce standards. Earn did not attempt to target any one population in particular. In fact, as data arose, e.g. regarding the scale of undocumented workers, effort was made to determine how the program could better address their needs.<sup>42</sup>

Elements implicit in this model are that self sufficiency would be achieved by offering opportunities for self-improvement through education and training, providing bridges to job opportunities, and pursuing policy reform/bureaucratic change

### **Earn's Strategies**

Earn's strategies are credible, e.g. well informed by research, comprehensive, but were not well integrated and were poorly executed. Taken as a whole, they have, with integration, the promise of the sum being larger than the individual parts. Much of Earn's model however was untested because major components were not fully executed. (See Table A1-4 on the following page for depiction of Earn's strategies.)

- Earn moves from a list of seven strategies in October 2003, to six strategies that mirror CJTC's advice (community benefits is a means of lifting or enforcing standards). By December 2004 the list is narrowed to four strategies that have enough breadth to encompass the two that were in the annual plan but are not explicitly included, i.e. targeting growth and expanding social networks.
- Earn's overall strategy is very broad, i.e. it covers the entire footprint and is focused on the underemployed, unemployed, entrepreneur, potential entrepreneur, and attempts to reach undocumented residents also.
- There appears to have been no effort to leverage, coordinate, or otherwise integrate the strategies and projects that were supported.
- There was little attention given to agreements that were not performing to determine why and make adjustments, e.g. the CDI study, the work of Peninsula Interfaith Action and Youth United for Community Action toward organizing for community benefit agreements.

### **Complicating Factors**

The Earn director also took on the role of finance director after being hired in spring 2003. In addition, he became the interim director for OEPA in September 2003, a role that continued until late April 2004. This left minimal time for implementing the plan that had been outlined for 2004. When the executive director was hired, Earn's director continued to have responsibility for financial management. Technically the allocation of the hours varied from 60/40 to 50/50 administration to program responsibility. Regardless of the particular percentages, there was insufficient time to focus on all of the projects that had been proposed.

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<sup>42</sup> Also, in summer 2004 Hewlett staff worked with OEPA's new director to prepare a proposal to the Irvine Foundation to add a youth component to Gateway, which did not receive funding.

- While time was at a premium for managing the Earn program, adjustments, such as setting priorities, were never made. As a result, the fundamental theory and its strategies have not truly benefited from testing.
- Between January and May 2004, while Earn’s director was the interim director for OEPA, the Hewlett managing partner played the lead role for OEPA in the formation of the Gateway Network. With the hiring of the new executive director, the responsibility was transferred to OEPA, and the new executive director played a leadership role in Gateway from June throughout 2004 (see the case study of Gateway in appendix A-3).

**Table A1-4  
Earn Strategies**

<b>Proposal to HF for 2004 October 2003</b>	<b>Annual Plan for 2005 August 2004</b>	<b>Logic Model for 2005 December 2004</b>
-Increase employment of neighborhoods residents through job retention and career advancement -Increase longevity of employee placement through employer-based retention and career advancement programs -Extend existing and planned career pathways in biotechnology and allied health career for East Palo Alto residents -Support and train East Palo [Alto] residents to start and grow their own businesses -Increase the savings and assets of low income families -Invest in new policy development to institutionalize career advancement opportunities for EPA and similar communities -Advocate for stronger and better monitored Community Benefits Agreement -Exploratory research for increasing incomes and economic well-being.	-Targeting growth -Providing and improving education and skills training -Expanding social networks -Accumulating wealth -Lifting and enforcing wage standards -Expanding community benefits from development	-Target job and business opportunities for EPA res. -Provide educational and skill training and employee development and career advancement programs -Provide and improve asset development and small business micro-enterprise programs -Lift and enforce local standards and policies

### **Suspending the Earn Program**

The Earn program was suspended in February 2005. Hewlett had expressed concerns regarding Earn’s lack of a sharp focus and its uneven progress. Earn’s program director in February 2005, and an opportunity was provided for OEPA to reassess its direction which is underway. Hewlett has funded a half-time position for 2005, with the idea that once a plan is complete a person would start in August.

## Safe Theory and Strategies

### Safe Theory (Annual Plan for 2005, approved August 2004)

Organizing residents will increase their awareness of how to make the police more responsive and accountable, empower them to outreach to their neighbors, and mobilize them to eradicate neighborhood problems of crime and blight. Partnering with youth organizations will result in increased resiliency-based programming that builds on youth strengths and enhances their potential to succeed. Engaging institutions to work with resident leaders and community organizations will bring additional resources to address crime and safety problems in the OEPA service area.

By organizing residents, partnering with youth organizations, and engaging institutions, there will be more resident engagement, more police accountability, reduced crime and increased resources for community safety which, in turn, will lead to residents feeling safer and being connected to resources that will enable them to maintain a safe environment.

#### Safe's Theory

Safe's theory of change has at its core residents—raising their awareness and involvement. This is one essential piece in a theory for how to foster greater community security, particularly in changing norms.

The need to address public security is well documented for EPA. Unfortunately Safe has not benefited from over-arching theoretical research to guide its development. The Safe director's document file includes a set of self-initiated efforts to obtain research studies. However, the whole is not cogently put together. This is not surprising given the program director's lack of a research background, and external or internal supervision.<sup>43</sup>

Unlike with Learn and especially Earn, Safe was provided with technical assistance providers, CDI and NCDI, that were not good matches to provide the kind of research that would ground the Safe program in an overarching theory, and also they were not charged with doing so. The scopes of work of both organizations are quite limited in relation to kind of research and advice needed to guide Safe's direction. CDI's research focuses primarily on surveys of OEPA footprint residents, census statistics, and a scan of service providers for youth in EPA. Findings from CDI's telephone survey regarding resident priorities and perceptions about block clubs are promising if used correctly.

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<sup>43</sup> Studies cited by Safe's program director as the basis for this area's strategies include: CDI Best Practices Research from 2003 Block Leader Summit, National Council on Crime and Delinquency, An Assessment of Disproportionate Minority Confinement in San Mateo County: Final Report (Prepared for The San Mateo Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission, December 29, 2003); NCDI Block Leader Summit 2004 report; East Bay Corridor Partnership for Crime Prevention case study; Empowerment Research! PowerPoint Presentation, OEPA Strategic Planning, May 1, 2004.

Apparently Safe did not know how to properly analyze or utilize the data and did not receive coaching to do so. We have previously pointed out in earlier reports that the data has been misinterpreted. NCDI generated a draft report on best practices research on block clubs, but it was never completed. NCDI did provide coaching to the Safe program director, but it was not designed to assist with developing a sound research base for the program as a whole.

**Table A1-5  
Safe Strategies**

<b>Proposal to HF for 2004 October 2003</b>	<b>Annual Plan for 2005 August 2004</b>	<b>Logic Model for 2005 December 2004</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Assist residents to form block clubs and neighborhood watch programs.</li> <li>-Coordinate support from block clubs to increase accountability from the EPA Police Department and establish a community-based coalition to help combat drug-related crime in the community.</li> <li>-Create a Citizen’s Academy in Spanish that will give Spanish speaking resident greater knowledge of police procedures, their rights and the law.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Engage neighbors to form block clubs, and neighborhood watch associations that work with local law enforcement and community based organizations.</li> <li>-Forming strategic organizational partnerships, to better coordinate and increase resources to impact crime reduction in EPA.</li> <li>-Supporting youth programs that offer alternatives for positive living to keep youth and young adults off drugs and away from crime.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Resident focused advocacy and leadership training</li> <li>-Crime reduction and violence prevention-based strategic organizing</li> <li>-Asset based programs focused on youth at risk</li> </ul>

**Safe’s Strategies**

Safe’s strategies are plausible, not fully formed into a model, modestly integrated, and well executed. The execution of Safe’s strategies for 2004 was consistent with what had been proposed.

- Safe’s strategies move from being quite specific (better described as projects) to more closely approximating strategies. Block clubs move from a narrow set of actions into the broader category of resident focused advocacy; the anti-drug concept morphs into strategic partnerships and then into the Crime Reduction Task Force; a new focus on youth emerges for 2005.
- Safe’s strategies *individually* have plausibility, i.e. each is based on reasonable hunches about how to promote greater public safety. Why these particular strategies, however, and not others, and how they might be integrated for greater impact, is unclear.
- Safe’s work in 2004 was set of projects which were completed and yield a range of outcomes detailed in this report. Safe’s fundamental weakness of a lack of theory and cohesive integration of strategies continues to manifest itself in the Annual Plan for 2005 and the associated logic model. Again block clubs play a central role, but are better conceived as a project than as a strategy.<sup>44</sup> In the

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<sup>44</sup> Block clubs have been difficult to categorize, occasionally being considered a partner-type activity and at other times an intermediary activity. Efforts have been underway to find an organization or group with Appendices: OEPA Evaluation Year Four Implementation Teamworks: April 2005 59

- annual plan there are two new strategies that are carried over to the logic models for 2005, but the lack of an overarching theory and the structure of them suggest that the question of how they might be linked has not been strategically addressed.
- The Rachel Lanzerotti Consulting (e-mail to Teamworks and Hewlett: February 23, 2005) analysis of the narrative description of Safe's planned work presented in the 2005 proposal and its 2005 logic model, highlights some of Safe's pattern of adding, altering, or otherwise engaging in ongoing modifications of strategy. For example, the narrative includes a Youth Success Center which is not in the logic model (and had been advised by Rachel Lanzerotti Consulting earlier to delete it because it was insufficiently detailed and too ambitious for a one year time frame). The narrative also adds outcomes that might fit within the logic model, but the connections are not made. We note this as it is representative of what might be considered a pattern within the Safe area of adding components midstream that puts the program at risk of not being focused, and not following through.
  - The Crime Reduction Task Force fits squarely with OEPA's networking function and has great promise for 2005, given proper guidance for the Safe staff's needs. Details of the activities and outcomes are provided in Section three of the report and in appendix A-4.

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which to partner, having the partner do the community organizing, and Safe the more networking types of activities. See appendix A-4 for more details.

## **APPENDIX A-2**

### **Learn**

#### **Priority Project: Nuestra Casa**

#### **Strategic Network Case Study: CLASS Collaborative**

## **Learn Priority Project:**

### **Nuestra Casa**

**Skillfully executed Learn intermediary strategies grow Nuestra Casa into an effective hub for the design and delivery of innovative educational programs serving EPA's new Latino immigrant families.**

#### **Background**

EPA has experienced dramatic demographic shifts in the last decade, from a city with an African American majority to one in which new Latino immigrants, mostly young and with school age children, have become the largest segment. Much of this new population is undocumented and has limited command of English. The local supply of quality services to meet their needs has lagged far behind the demand. Children of monolingual, new immigrant families in EPA have the lowest academic performance scores of any ethnic group, and their parents lack the language skills and systems knowledge to advocate on their behalf with the school board and other key local authorities.

Nuestra Casa (NC) is the focal point of a number of Learn intermediary activities designed to address these gaps in services, skills, and knowledge. The core premise behind the development of Nuestra Casa is the well known relationship between parent involvement and children's educational performance. Because families lacking basic language skills face a formidable barrier in navigating any local service system, and because adult ESL programs available to the EPA community were generally acknowledged to be of poor quality, improving the effectiveness of these services logically became Nuestra Casa's initial focus. Since then, in keeping with its family centered approach to improving educational outcomes for children, the organization has added parent leadership classes focusing on advocacy skills and knowledge of local institutions and systems of services including education and beyond.

#### **Implementation**

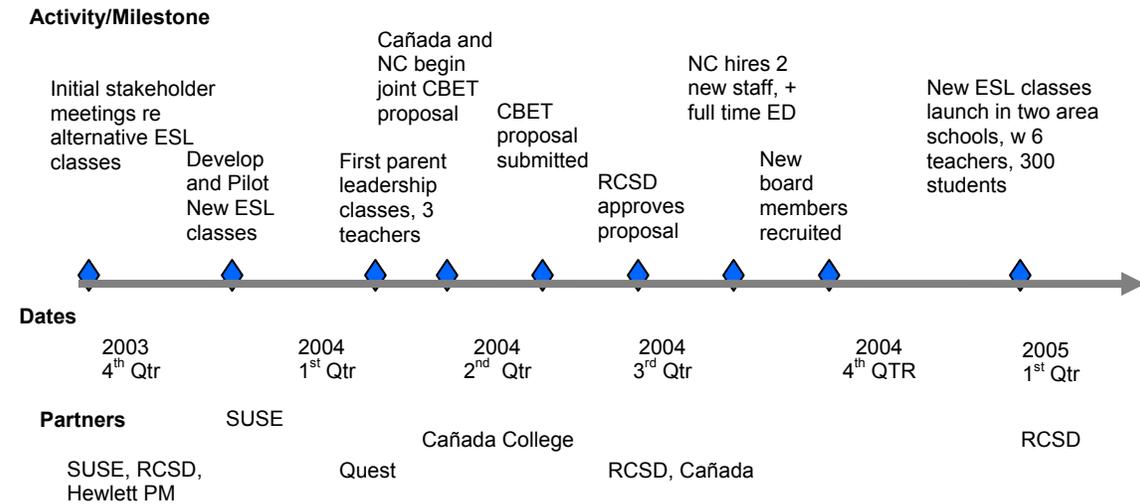
OEPA's Learn program has supported the incubation of Nuestra Casa from its beginnings in 2003 as a pilot language training program staffed by one part-time coordinator, to its current status as a recognized community organization offering a range of classes and services in support of learning for new immigrant families. In doing so, OEPA has played -- and honed -- a number of roles characteristic of an effective intermediary. Early in the project, the Learn program director successfully leveraged his relationships with the Ravenswood City school district and education experts at Stanford University to develop and pilot an alternative approach to existing community based ESL training (CBET). The new approach was grounded in credible research, developed by Stanford experts in second language education, and delivered by highly skilled ESL instructors pursuing advanced degrees at Stanford and San Francisco State universities. It promised

better outcomes in acquisition of English language skills, while also teaching participants about the workings of the U.S. public education system.

Early in 2004, Cañada College approached Nuestra Casa to propose the joint development of a proposal for CBET funding from the RCSD. The Learn program director had invited RCSD board members to Nuestra Casa to observe the pilot ESL classes, and continued to broker relationships between the school district, Cañada College and Nuestra Casa following submission of the proposal. The RCSD approved the grant to Nuestra Casa in June 2004.

The infusion of CBET funding, plus an additional grant from PCF, provided Nuestra Casa with a solid base on which to build the organization. In September, Nuestra Casa hired its first full time staff: the Executive director went from part time to full time, and two new FTEs were filled, for a parent leadership coordinator and an ESL program coordinator. In addition to supporting Nuestra Casa with the hiring process, the Learn program director helped to recruit five new board members to steer the organization into its next phase of development towards gaining 501c3 status.

**Figure A2-1**  
**Nuestra Casa Timeline: Implementation Milestones**



**2004 Outcomes**

OEPA more than succeeded in meeting its stated 2004 outcomes for Nuestra Casa in terms of funding, program development, and organizational capacity building, with considerable implications for systems change.

## Systems Change

### *Policy change/bureaucratic reform*

- A different approach to design and delivery of public services. Nuestra Casa's ESL classes are the fruit of collaboration between world class university researchers, public sector dollars, and a small, community-based organization to design, test, and deliver innovative, quality services customized to meet the specific needs of a local population. This is radically different from the usual relationships among these types of entities, and makes possible a product that is at once solidly research based, locally informed, and carefully delivered. It is the opposite of the one size fits all approach found in many public sector programs.
- Integration of services across organizations: Nuestra Casa coordinates its courses and its constituency with other local organizations. So far, this has taken the form of: (1) shared classes and mutual referrals with Quest, for parent leadership training and after-school programs for children of Nuestra Casa families; (2) synchronization of courses with the local community college, for referrals to college level courses and advanced ESL training.
- Tying children's educational outcomes to parental capacity for support and involvement. The above mentioned collaboration with Quest, in which parent leadership classes and literacy based after-school programs for children are both offered at the library, embodies this approach. Traditional educational support programs for children rarely integrate a parent education or involvement component.

### *Local Capacity*

- The development of Nuestra Casa itself, from an entity with a single pilot class and a part time director, into an organization with 3 full time staff, and solid board, serving over 200 community members each term with ESL and parent leadership trainings, and the first EPA organization dedicated to serving the city's new immigrant Latino community.
- The skills developed in Nuestra Casa's constituents, to understand the system and their rights within it, and to advocate successfully on behalf of their children. For example, Parent Leadership Institute course participants developed and administered a survey regarding the quality of food in RCSD schools, and presented the results to school board members as part of their case for demanding change.
- OEPA has also been instrumental in recruiting 5 new board members for Nuestra Casa. Two are graduates of the summer leadership program and 3 are bilingual professionals, with the skills and experience to support the organization through the process of soliciting 501c3 status.

### *Resources*

- The CBET grant jointly won by Nuestra Casa and Cañada College has injected almost \$104,140 into the community, each year for the next three years, primarily for delivery of adult ESL courses. As mentioned above, these funds support three FTEs at Nuestra Casa, and have leveraged additional support for Nuestra Casa's parent leadership development trainings. PCF funds cover part of the costs of a parent leadership coordinator.

## Case Study: Learn Strategic Network

### CLASS Collaborative

**Learn program plays catalyst role in transforming existing collaborative of EPA after-school service providers into strategic platform for improving the quality of individual after-school programs, integrating them more closely with the larger educational experience, and tailoring offerings to individual student needs.**

#### Background

The potential of quality after-school programs to improve educational performance is well recognized by academic researchers and school teachers alike. Their value is all the greater in chronically underperforming school districts like RCSD. Over 20 organizations, in addition to the district itself, offer after-school programs of one kind or another to students in RCSD schools. From its 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fund, the California Department of Education has made funding available to local school districts to help support such programs. In turn, fund recipients are required to participate in a district administered collaborative that meets monthly to discuss issues of common concern. This was the initial basis for the RCSD CLASS Collaborative, which had been in existence for several years before OEPA's involvement began.

In this nascent period, the collaborative took the form of an informal networking group of after-school service providers, convened by the RCSD after-school programs coordinator. Members partnered to seek individual grants, but these grants were not necessarily related, nor did the group have any shared projects or goals. Communications and coordination between collaborative members and RCSD day school teachers and programs were minimal. By all accounts, the quality of these programs and their fit with individual student needs was highly uneven. Taken as a whole, the menu of local offerings contained many gaps and redundancies.

OEPA Learn has had a longstanding interest in after-school programs as a tool for improving literacy, as initially reflected in its 2003 commissioning of an ASR study to examine the quality and potential of such programs in EPA. Informed by these findings, the OEPA Learn director and the Hewlett project manager engaged the CLASS collaborative coordinator and the leadership of several local after-school service providers in a series of conversations about critical issues and areas of focus for improvement. The consensus pointed to communication and referral -- between day school teachers and after-school program providers, and among after-school services themselves -- as a critical area requiring attention.

OEPA saw the collaborative as a potentially powerful platform from which to address these issues. In this instance, OEPA did not so much create as inhabit an existing network. Cognizant of the collaborative's operational shortcomings, OEPA's Learn program director once again called upon ASR for technical assistance, this time to survey

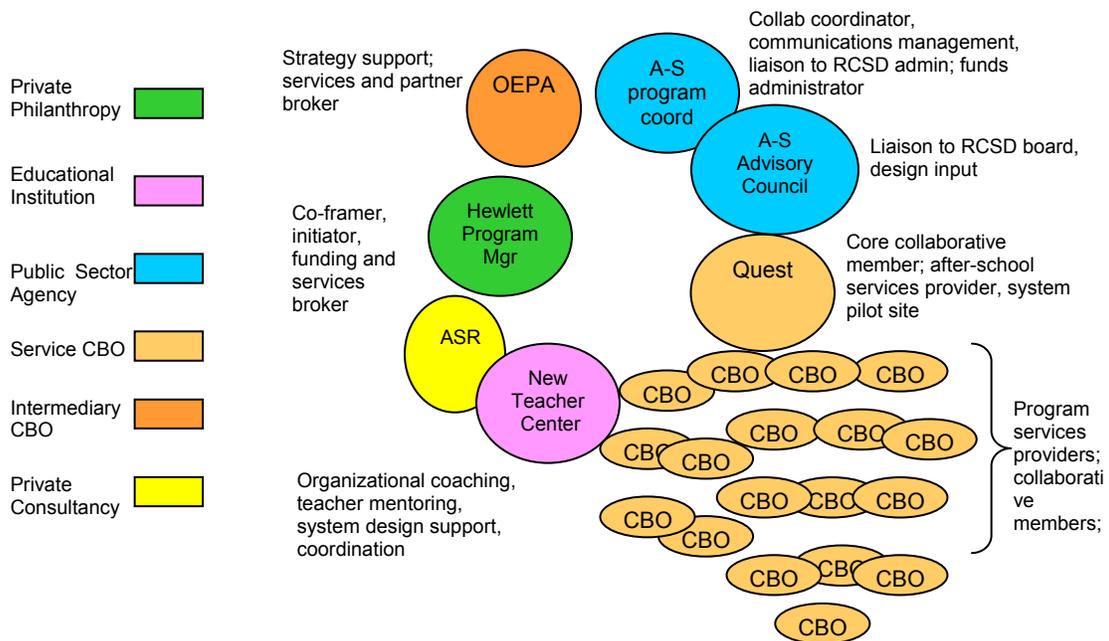
CLASS members as a first step towards creating a clear vision and shared goals for the group. The survey was complete by mid 2004. The outcome was vision and mission statements emphasizing communication and partnership between parents, agencies and providers as a key means to enhancing children’s lives and skills.

The development of a tracking and referral system was a natural and obvious outgrowth of this vision. To design and implement the system, the Learn program director recommended the New Teacher Center, an organization already funded by OEPA and Hewlett to provide technical assistance with after-school curriculum, teacher development, and case management to Quest, another Learn program partner and core collaborative member. Additional help with forms and database design aspects of the referral system was supported by Hewlett through its funding of Public Allies, which provided staff support for the project.

In the fall, with a new RCSD after-school programs coordinator on board, a completed mission statement, and shared goals, meetings of the collaborative became more tightly organized around action planning to move its projects forward.

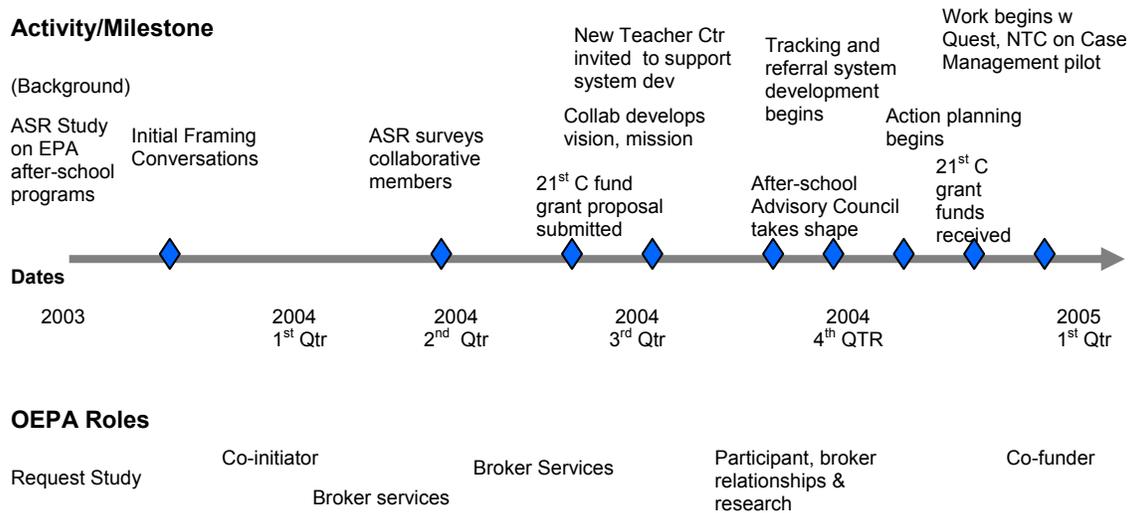
Development of the CLASS collaborative has provided Learn with an additional avenue for access to RCSD leadership, an item most clearly embodied in the formation of the After-school Advisory Council, a less formal group in which OEPA has been invited to participate, made up of the principals of all three RCSD schools along with the district’s after-school program coordinator. The council communicates with and advises the RCSD board.

**Figure A2-2**  
**CLASS Collaborative**  
**Members, Sectors, Roles**



**Figure A2-3**

**CLASS Collaborative Implementation: Key Activities, Milestones, and OEPA roles**



**2004 Outcomes**

With CLASS, Learn has brought to a pre-existing body the vision, focus, and power to broker relationships between school board, school district staff, expert technical assistance providers, and after-school programs. The result is an integrated group of community members, public agencies and private service providers partnering toward a shared outcome – improving the educational opportunities and skills of EPA’s children. In other words, Learn has succeeded in getting a disparate set of actors to adopt its vision as their own, built its capacity for effective action, and leveraged it all into a powerful strategic network with the power to bring about systems change.

The outcomes of concern in this section have to do with the collaborative’s success in actually bringing about systems change, and the degree to which the CLASS collaborative network is aligned with and reinforces other parts of the OEPA Learn program.

Systems Change

As defined here, systems change means changes in policy, local capacity, and resources attracted to the community. Considered in these terms, the CLASS collaborative has made remarkable contributions in the area of policy and local capacity. Its record on attracting resources to the community has been more modest, and hampered by budget cuts and uncertainties in educational funding at the state and district levels.

*Policy Change/Bureaucratic Reform*

The CLASS collaborative’s newly focused vision and the projects inspired by it represent a potential sea change in the practices of school district bureaucracies, their interactions

with community organizations, and their understanding of their place in the total educational experience.

- Integration of services and critical constituencies: through its tracking and referral system, the CLASS collaborative is building an infrastructure to support its vision for the integration of services, service providers, and critical constituencies across the entire spectrum of educational experiences, and their capacity for responsiveness to individual student needs. Especially significant in this regard is the longstanding divide between day school and after-school programs. Already completed are an action plan, referral forms, and initial design work for the referral and communications system.
- Removing obstacles to access: through the creation of an After-School Advisory Council, the CLASS collaborative is overcoming longstanding barriers to direct information sharing and communication between community members and service providers, and high level school district officials and policy makers.

### *Local Capacity*

- Assessment, referral, and case management capacity: local organizations and individual educators receive support with skill building in student assessment, case management, and use of a referral system. Examples include:
  - A case management pilot underway at Quest, with 12 participants
  - New Teacher Center mentoring of RCSD teachers in student assessment and referral skills, with additional outcome of improved teacher retention
- Network management and participation: coaching and support to RCSD After-School Services coordinator for skill development in meeting facilitation, action planning, and communications and decision-making in a network environment. Initially delivered by ASR, responsibility later shifted to the New Teacher Center.

### *Resources*

- In 2004, the CLASS collaborative applied for and won grant support from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fund administered by the California State Dept of Education, for a 5-year grant to the RCSD. The district's actual redistribution of these funds to other collaborative members has deviated significantly from the allocations stated in the proposal, cutting funds to many member organizations by over 50% and increasing its own share commensurately, with negative impacts on collaborative member morale. RCSD budget cuts are one factor in the shifting allocations.

### Relationship to program area

At the core of LEARN's theory of change is the assumption that whole-family, whole-service approaches are essential to achieving positive outcomes in children's educational performance. The focus of Learn's resources has been on: (1) building bridges to partnerships and communications (including the capacity for communication) between and among different levels of service providers and different constituencies; and (2) supporting improvements in the quality of services and their responsiveness to the real needs of target populations. The work of the CLASS collaborative addresses both these areas, and is highly congruent with service (albeit indirectly in this case) to Learn's target population: EPA youth and their parents.

- Participation in CLASS has strengthened Learn’s existing platform for access to high level decision makers, and enhanced its visibility and influence with various key players in EPA’s educational system, particularly with the school district board and administration.
- Ironically, Learn’s leadership role in CLASS is not evident to many active members of the collaborative, according to interviewees. This relative invisibility inhibits OEPA’s ability to demonstrate the significance of its role as an intermediary in knitting together these heterogeneous organizations and fostering their collaboration.
- There are many points of positive overlap and synergy between programs, technical assistance experts, or allies serving both the CLASS collaborative and OEPA or Hewlett as implementing partners, grantees, or allies in other program areas. Quest, the New Teacher Center, and the RCSD board are three examples of such entities.

## **Implementation**

### Robustness

From the standpoint of network robustness, CLASS gets a mixed score. Earlier in the year, the network enjoyed high levels of participation from a small core group of members who contributed significant time and skill to supporting the former RCSD coordinator with proposal development and other tasks. Several core members have become disaffected since then, partly as a result of fund allocations that deviated significantly from expectations.

After much sustained work, network goals have been clarified and are widely shared, and an effective communications system has been devised for network activities. Though decisions are made, capacity for truly participatory decision making remains weak. Nevertheless, the group now has real shared projects to work on, and has gained skill in action planning to move these forward. As conveyed earlier, OEPA Learn’s role in shaping and building the network has been highly significant, but largely invisible to network members. These assessments are summarized further in Table A2-4 on the following page.

**Table A2-4: Robustness<sup>45</sup>  
Learn: CLASS Collaborative**

<b>Robustness Factor</b>	<b>Rating (scale 0-3)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Participation	<b>2</b> Most network members participate; some significant members missing	Growing interest and clarity, combined with selective disaffection. A larger number of total participants than before, with a smaller core group.
Goals	<b>3</b> Network has translated shared goals into plan of action.	Goals clarified and action plan completed, following thorough surveying and input from collaborative members.
Activities	<b>2</b> A calendar of regular activities established and agreed upon.	Regular meetings are well organized, but do not reflect collaboration; participation is more pro forma than active. Real work of the group takes place elsewhere.
Structure	<b>1</b> Decision making roles and rules established but ineffectual	Major changes in roles and rules have alienated previous core members.
Communications	<b>3</b> Consistently regular and timely communications	Great improvement in format, timeliness of formal communications.
Projects/outputs	<b>1</b> Projects underway, awaiting outputs	Tracking system, resource and referral system in early stages of development. Resources in place for moving forward
Logic	<b>1</b> Activities follow mostly logical progression	Visible activities flow logically, but weak coordination and trust among network leadership opens potential for negative redundancies and mixed messages.

Environment

CLASS unfolds in a challenging environment. The RCSD has a highly negative history of corruption, mismanagement, and poor academic performance. The district is poorly funded, badly equipped, and under close scrutiny and pressure for improvement. High levels of teacher frustration and inadequate support lead to poor teacher retention, making the RCSD a training ground for new, inexperienced teachers. The newly hired superintendent is reported to have poor collaboration skills. On top of all the difficulties specific to this district, RCSD faces the additional pressures of impending cuts at the federal and state levels, to public education budgets everywhere. (See ratings for environment in Table A2-5 on the next page.)

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<sup>45</sup> Ratings for robustness and environment (following page, table A2-5), were made by Teamworks based on the strategic network instrument (see appendix A-6).  
 Appendices: OEPA Evaluation Year Four Implementation  
 Teamworks: April 2005

**Table A2-5: Environment  
Learn: CLASS Collaborative**

<b>Environmental Factor</b>	<b>Rating (scale 0-3)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Historic Load	<b>0,1</b> Corrupt, ineffective in institutions	As with all education related efforts in EPA, CLASS labors under the weight of a troubled school district with a negative track record.
Local Influentials	<b>2</b> Open, accountable	Friendly school board officials and principals are determined to make a change, turn district around. New school superintendent has questionable collaboration skills, interest in CLASS concerns.
Available \$\$ Resources	<b>1</b> Minimal or blocked access to funds	Continued federal and state level funding, up to now the mainstay of support for CLASS activities, is uncertain at best. 21 <sup>st</sup> C fund is limited. Control of CLASS \$\$ by acutely under-funded school district diminishes distribution to CBOs.
Community Support	<b>2</b> Growing support	Parents and teachers highly supportive. Others unknown.
Knowledge base	<b>3</b> Developed, freely accessible research findings	Good relationships with Stanford University School of Education, UC Santa Cruz provide high credibility and open access to rich body of knowledge.

## **APPENDIX A-3**

### **Earn**

#### **Strategic Network Case Study: Gateway**

## Case Study: Earn Strategic Network

### Gateway

**Gateway network initiates workforce development pre-training program. Early difficulties largely overcome, as first pre-training class is readied for launch in March 2005. Outcomes delayed.**

#### **Background**

Gateway is a training program designed to address persistent insufficiencies in the capacity of current workforce development training to adequately serve low-skilled youth, and workers with limited English proficiency. The outreach channels, skills requirements, and support services of existing workforce training are mismatched with the realities in communities like EPA, where the norm includes low levels of literacy, lack of information about opportunities, and multiple economic and social obstacles to engaging in training.

Gateway aims to address this gap in the system through a coordinated set of services that take account of these realities. At Gateway's core is a 14-week "bridge" training program designed to give students the skills they need to enter community college programs or qualify for regular job training courses. Around the edges of the training, and integral to its success, are outreach, recruitment and enrollment services to bring the target population into the program, plus social support services to help with everything from transportation to financial aid, part-time jobs, and childcare, to support students staying in and completing the program.

#### History

Several streams of work and knowledge converged to create Gateway. In 2003, CJTC shared with OEPA the findings of its regional economic research, which identified biotech and allied health as industry sectors experiencing high growth and offering high wages and stable career opportunities to workers with the right job skills. At around the same time, the Hewlett program manager convened a number of experts and local organizations concerned with local workforce development for a set of initially informal conversations on emerging opportunities in this area.

The first proposals to fund the Gateway pilot program were submitted to Hewlett, Irvine, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Walter S. Johnson foundations in early 2004. The San Mateo County Worker Investment Board (WIB) also solicited public support from the California Employment Development Department (EDD) and the San Mateo County Health Services Agency (HSA). It would be almost six months before the first funds were received, during which time the network went into a near dormant state, with little or no formal activities of record.

Following receipt of funding, in June 2004, network activities picked up again. The partners began to meet regularly and took several steps in the planning and execution of

outreach. Outreach was fully underway by November. However, by the end of 2004, the program had not yet succeeded in enrolling a sufficient number of qualified students to make an initial class feasible. This had been turned around by February 2005, when 20 students were enrolled, and the first class was scheduled to launch in March.

#### Key players/OEPA role

Because Gateway's design calls for a combination of services and skills that exceeds the capacity of any one organization to deliver, the program necessarily requires the involvement of a number of different entities. The capacity to integrate and coordinate these many and varied players and parts is therefore vital. It is just such a contribution that intermediary organizations like OEPA are, ideally, capable of making.

OEPA's role and degree of involvement have varied since the program's inception. Earn's program director participated in the initial framing conversations convened by the Hewlett program manager. Other participants at that point were the chair of Hewlett's advisory committee for OEPA, the WIB, the consulting firm of Gruber & Pereira, experts in job training programs for youth, and a representative from the EDD. As the consensus centered on creating appropriate training programs for youth in transition, OEPA invited participation from organizations from the education and social services sectors, and local community based organizations with which it was already partnering, notably Skyline College and OICW.

The Earn program director then became involved in the development of a first set of proposals to fund the emerging partnership. OEPA's initial projected outcomes for Gateway in 2004 were to enroll 40 EPA residents in pre-training programs by the end of the year. Several delays in the receipt of Gateway funding and in OEPA's hiring of its permanent executive director, delayed involvement from OEPA to the middle of summer, 2004.

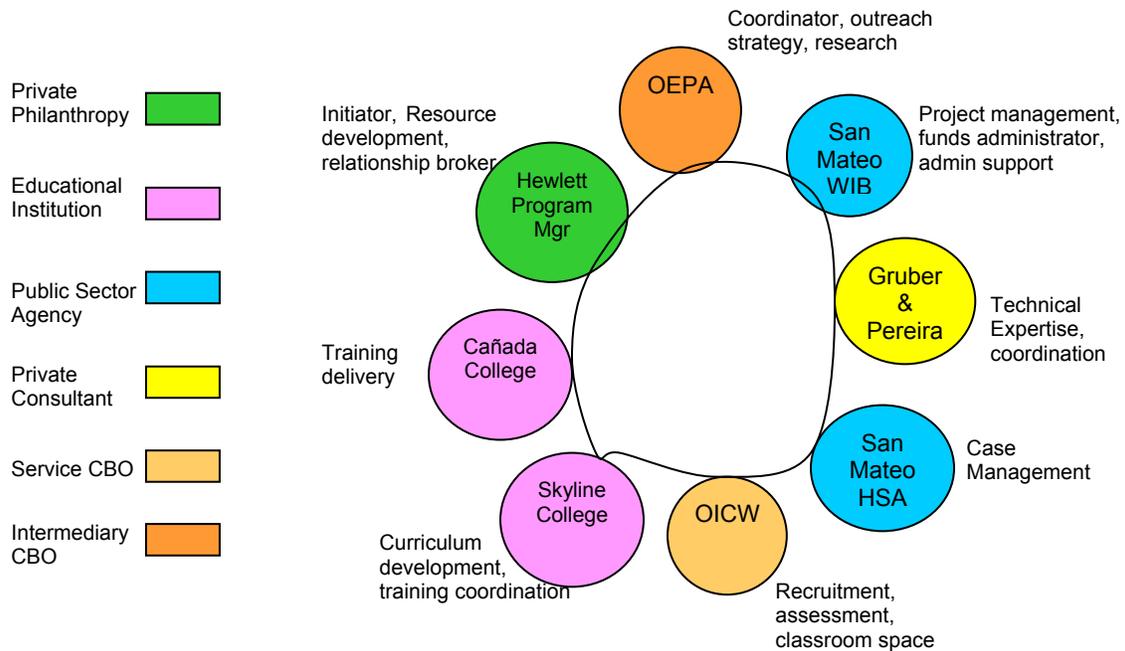
After that, both the EARN program director and the new OEPA executive director became more visible and active in the network. Along with OICW, OEPA took a lead in the design of outreach materials and their distribution to local organizations where they had developed relationships. OEPA also became the primary network convenor, meeting facilitator, and communications manager for group. Most importantly, as the individual interests of the other partners led to some friction and weakening of shared goals, OEPA became the holder of the vision for Gateway as a program for the benefit of the community as a whole.

In the fall, when recruitment for Gateway training became a top priority, OEPA's role in recruitment became an increasingly contentious issue among network partners. This deserves mention here primarily because it embodies an emerging point of confusion and conflict between intermediary and service organizations, with potentially huge implications for OEPA's long term sustainability. The differences center largely on assumptions and expectations around: (1) operationalizing OEPA's role as an intermediary organization, separate from services, and attaching a dollar value to it; and (2) proper sources of funding to support intermediary versus service activities. In the

absence of additional, designated funds, OEPA understood its role as support for outreach and recruitment *strategy*, with the execution of strategy falling to the service partners. Execution in this case might involve activities such as phone calls, door to door canvassing, creation of mailing lists, etc. In contrast, the service partners, making no distinction between strategy and execution, assumed that OEPA’s operations funding covered both. The short term outcome was a slow-to-start recruitment effort. In the longer term, such misunderstandings illustrate that the notion of strategic support and “intermediariness” has not yet gained recognition as a fundable enterprise.

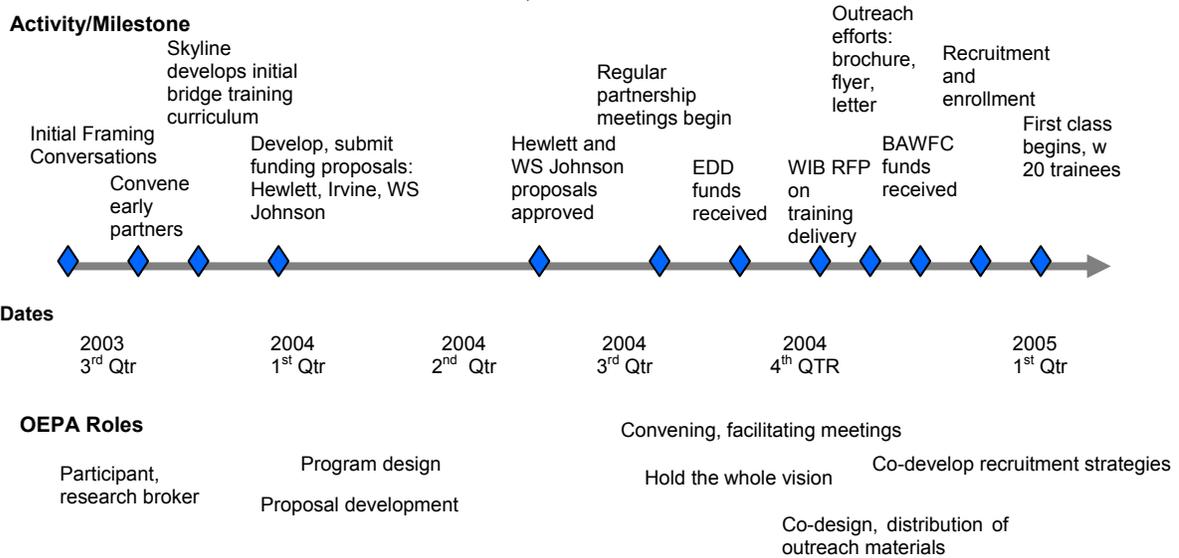
**Figure A3-1**

**Gateway Network: Members, Sectors, Roles**



**Figure A3-2**

**Gateway Network Implementation: Key Activities, Milestones, and OEPA roles**



**2004 Outcomes**

The outcomes of concern in this case study have to do with Gateway’s success in effecting systems change, and the degree to which it relates and reinforces the other components of OEPA’s EARN program.

Systems Change

As defined here, systems change means changes in policy, local capacity, and resources attracted to the community. Considered in these terms, and over the short period since beginning implementation in June 2004, Gateway has had modest achievements in each of these areas.

*Policy Change/Bureaucratic Reform*

Gateway serves as a demonstration project for major modifications to workforce development training as currently practiced.

- Gateway’s design reflects a recognition that for workforce development training to succeed with hard-to-reach populations, a comprehensive set of services from a variety of organizations need to be integrated, delivered, and tracked.
- Gateway has created a working partnership between organizations from different sectors and with radically different organizational cultures, interests, and areas of expertise, to deliver an integrated set of services to a hard-to-reach population.
- Public and private sector funders, more accustomed to investing in programs conducted by single organizations than partnerships, have responded positively to solicitations for funding from Gateway.

*Local Capacity*

Gateway made progress in building local capacity for both organizations and residents. At the organizational level, there is evidence of:

- improved cross-sector coordination, communication, and networking skills;
- successful organizational collaborations around resource development and program design;
- learning which outreach strategies and materials work effectively in EPA, and how best to implement them.

For EPA residents, the public launch of Gateway has so far:

- made hard to reach youth and non-English speakers aware of local opportunities to improve on basic skills needed to move into quality job training programs with real promise of a better livelihood, while receiving the support needed to do so;
- enrolled 20 trainees in a first class, beginning in March 2005.

### *Resources*

Gateway has so far enjoyed high levels of interest from multiple funding sources, responding to several different proposals.

- The resource picture is complicated by the number of different proposals and their submission by different network members, for Gateway programs in EPA and beyond. After reviewing these as carefully and conservatively as possible, it would appear that Gateway has so far attracted approximately \$360,000 to footprint residents, with additional funds, from college financial aid funds, slated to come into play later in the Career Pathways System program.<sup>46</sup>
- Funds raised thus far have come from federal, state, county and private sources, including the California Employment Development Department, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, in addition to Hewlett dollars.

### Relation to Earn Program Area

In OEPA's 2004 proposal to Hewlett, the Earn program states its community wide outcome as "increase the economic well being of EPA residents by developing their income and assets," and defines its target population as residents earning under a sustainable wage or facing significant barriers to economic self-sufficiency. Gateway's design is highly congruent with these outcomes and target population.

- Participation in Gateway has given OEPA greater visibility with regional public agencies, educational institutions, and local CBOs currently or potentially involved in other Earn projects, as grantees, partners, or funders. Examples are OICW, WIB, and Springboard Forward.
- Gateway has afforded the Earn program an additional platform from which to engage area employers, currently or potentially involved in Earn's other projects: on-the-job training programs for Gateway graduates (Genentech), skills training and career mentoring opportunities contributing to retention and career advancement for existing employees (IKEA); and community benefit agreements (IKEA).

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<sup>46</sup> See footnote in the resource development section of the main report for explanation of the total amount of funds Gateway has attracted.

## Implementation

### Robustness

Gateway has a very mixed score on the components of a robust strategic network. From the beginning, the network has benefited from fairly active participation by a well rounded group of high capacity network members, albeit with different and sometimes conflicting interests. Network goals, while on the one hand clear and understood, were subject to frequent change as to specifics such as target area, number and timeline. Because the program's design has evolved piecemeal over time, partners and features have been added, and an action plan has been lacking, there has been confusion among partners around goals and partner roles. The same piecemeal approach characterized resource development, with varying degrees of overlap in the identity of implementing organizations and target populations.

**Table A3-3: Robustness<sup>47</sup>  
Earn: Gateway**

<b>Robustness Factor</b>	<b>Rating (scale 0-3)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Participation	<b>2</b> Most network members participate; some significant members missing	Cañada College has been in and out of the network several times. OEPA staffing insufficiencies at outset made for spotty involvement at outset.
Goals	<b>2, 3</b> Agreement on goals; goals translated into action plan	Following initial confusion, activities with clear goal underway, but without formal, shared action plan.
Activities	<b>2</b> Calendar of regular activities scheduled and agreed upon	Regular meetings initiated in September '04, following beginning of implementation.
Structure	<b>0</b> No clear process or roles established for decision-making	Poor role clarity is major shortcoming of network
Communications	<b>2</b> Mostly regular, timely communication	Improvement in communications, including meeting agendas and minutes, since OEPA took on facilitator role.
Projects/outputs	<b>1</b> Projects underway, awaiting outputs	First class of 20 recruited, enrolled, and ready for launch. Outputs expected by summer '05.
Logic	<b>1</b> Activities follow mostly logical progression	Despite lack of action plan, activities are aligned and logical, though with some gaps and redundancies.

Early in the life of the network, gaps in member communications and inconsistent meeting facilitation and follow-up made for inefficiencies in activities. Bureaucratic slowness in distributing funds, and the heaviness of public social service agency structures, also contributed to a slow start of implementation. All of these conditions had shown some improvement by the end of 2004, and coincide with OEPA taking a more

<sup>47</sup> Ratings for robustness and environment (following page, table A3-3), were made by Teamworks based on the strategic network instrument (see appendix A-6).

active role in coordination and communication. Muddled roles and decision making rules continue to be a problem. These assessments are summarized in the table A3-3.

Environment

Gateway unfolds in a larger environment that is moderately to highly favorable to its objectives. Other than likely budget cuts at the federal and state levels, interviewees and evaluators found no major environmental frictions or pressures that would make Gateway’s work more difficult.

**Table A3-4: Environment  
Earn: Gateway**

<b>Environmental Factor</b>	<b>Rating (scale 0-3)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Historic Load	<b>2</b> Some effective institutions in place; neutral outcomes	Abundance of county, local agencies and community-based organizations dedicated to workforce issues, but with minimal coordination of services.
Local Influentials	<b>2</b> Open, accountable	Major employers and public officials are open to collaboration and have vested interest in positive outcomes.
Access to \$\$ Resources	<b>2</b> Available, but highly competitive	Likely public sector budget cuts put available resources in jeopardy.
Community Support	<b>2</b> Growing support	Support highly correlated to awareness, which was minimal at outset, and improving.
Knowledge base	<b>3</b> Highly developed body of knowledge or interest in development	Gateway benefits from high quality, locally specific research, and high levels of expertise on workforce issues among its partners.

## **APPENDIX A-4**

**Safe**

**Priority Project:**

**Block Clubs**

**Strategic Network Case Study:**

**Crime Reduction Task Force**

## Safe Priority Project:

### Block Clubs

**Block clubs achieve three significant policy change outcomes. Safe surpasses many of its targets for block clubs. Although participation rates appear uneven, block clubs' ability to mobilize residents is evident, and leaders appear to be emerging. The specific role of block clubs in OEPA's program strategies becomes increasingly unclear as OEPA further defines itself as an intermediary organization.**

#### Background

OEPA re-engineered its program structure in 2002, out of which emerged an emphasis on neighborhood safety. According to the EPA police department, EPA in 2002 had by far the highest violent crime rate of any city of comparable size in northern California. OEPA began actively organizing block clubs as part of its safety and resident engagement strategies in 2003. This also included connecting with a number of block clubs and neighborhood associations in EPA that existed prior to the inception of OEPA.

Block clubs, neighborhood associations, and neighborhood watch are promoted by the California Attorney General's office as a primary strategy for reducing crime.<sup>48</sup> The rationale is that residents who know one another, and associate together, are more likely to watch out for each other and their homes, and to feel empowered rather than embattled in their neighborhoods.

The Safe program appears to have developed its strategy of organizing block clubs from advice from law enforcement. The Safe research archive includes several piecemeal documents on the use of block clubs in other similar cities, and as one of a range of organizing strategies for empowering resident leaders. Safe has also based its strategy on results from the community survey done by CDI, which it has incorrectly restated on several occasions.<sup>49</sup> Overall the strategy of organizing block clubs to increase community safety is not well grounded in credible research, although the rationale is plausible.

#### History

In Fall 2003, OEPA sponsored two citywide block club leader summits, facilitated by NCDI, with the intention of (1) identifying and training leaders, (2) creating a mission

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<sup>48</sup> For simplicity, block clubs is the term used throughout to refer to all three types of neighborhood groups.

<sup>49</sup> For example, OEPA has stated repeatedly in documents that the CDI survey shows that 62% of EPA residents rated block clubs as very good or good at addressing crime issues. The survey actually shows that 62% of those who know about block clubs rated them this way, but only 22% of respondents had ever heard of block clubs. This means that only about 14% of those surveyed rated block clubs as good or very good as addressing crime issues. This inaccuracy is likely a result of a lack of understanding of how statistics work on the part of OEPA staff.

and vision for the block clubs collectively, and (3) identifying a policy agenda that would pull together interests across the neighborhoods.

According to OEPA's final report for 2003, these events generated an action plan for 2004, including (1) monthly follow up meetings with block club leaders, (2) convening a public safety forum in Spring 2004 to present their policy agenda to the EPA city counsel, and (3) an agreement to collaborate with OEPA Safe on rolling block club rallies and advocacy to increase police accountability.

### **Implementation**

During 2004, OEPA's block club implementation has appeared to be robust in certain areas, and weaker in others. Focus on organizing and supporting block clubs has been uneven over the last two years because: (1) community organizing of this sort requires a lot of time and energy, and OEPA has had more or less of this at different points in its own development; (2) block club organizing became less clearly an appropriate activity as OEPA more actively fashioned itself as an intermediary organization; and (3) organizing block clubs appears to be a challenging task for any organization without leaders emerging from the community to take charge of the work.

The Safe program focused strongly during the first half of 2004 on organizing new block clubs in cooperation with PAPNA, and this activity dropped off in the second half of the year. Instead Safe moved from this direct organizing work to endeavors to train resident leaders who had been identified through the block clubs. Thus although participation and organizing rates may have dropped off, it appears that leadership development has actually deepened and increased.

In relation to the action plan generated in autumn 2003 at the block club leader summits, OEPA and the block clubs did follow through in two out of three areas. In May Safe together with block clubs convened Safe Homes, Safe Streets, a community action that brought particular attention to the concerns of Spanish-speaking residents. This action kicked off a five-month advocacy effort that culminated in the EPA police department offering its first ever citizens' academy geared for Spanish-speaking residents. In addition, five block club rallies were held over the course of 2004.

Support for the block clubs was uneven. Monthly follow up meetings with block club leaders that were part of a contract with NCDI were not implemented. However, the block club leader summits resumed in September and October with facilitation and planning from NCDI. Momentum was slow to get started again, an unfortunate effect of the long hiatus between summits. This hiatus may well have contributed to the drop in block clubs reporting consistent membership (9 in July to 5 in December).

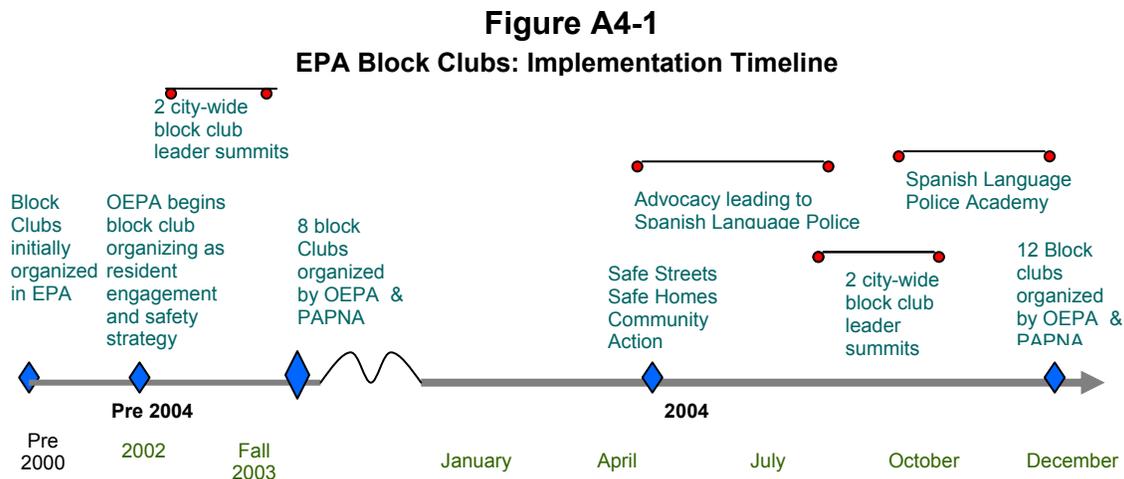
### Uniqueness of Block Clubs

The block clubs have always held a unique position in OEPA as a programmatic activity that is performed by Safe's program director. This has created a lack of clarity within OEPA regarding the best strategies for, and the appropriate amount of time and energy dedicated to organizing, building, and maintaining block clubs.

On the one hand, the block clubs organized by, and working in association with, OEPA have played a key role in relation to program objectives. The OEPA Safe program has worked to the extent possible with the EPA Police Department to organize new block clubs, nurture those that preceded OEPA, and partner with active local groups such as the PAPNA to develop a wider and more diverse range of block clubs. Interviewees and survey respondents credit block clubs for increasing perceptions of safety for those who know about them. Despite the apparent ups and downs in participation, block clubs have been fertile ground for leadership development, as evidenced by events such as the march by Mothers Against Violence, and the Safe Streets, Safe Homes, as well as for organizing rolling block club rallies (5 during 2004).

On the other hand, block clubs have served as the primary resident engagement strategy for OEPA as a whole. This has meant that, in addition to the specific objectives of the Safe program, the block clubs have acted as interface points between OEPA and the EPA community. According to interviewees, there is a core group of residents who may be counted on to disseminate information, and mobilize residents for meetings and other events. Even so, as OEPA has worked to define itself as an intermediary organization, its role in organizing the block clubs has become increasingly unclear. In addition, with increasing responsibilities related to other more intermediary work, the Safe program director has not had the necessary time to devote to such a labor intensive enterprise.

The Safe program director has been actively seeking an organization with which to partner that would take over the organizing aspect of the work, and enable him to focus more on brokering, facilitating and convening roles. PAPNA, which is in the process of becoming a 501c3, was approached to play such a role, along with an offer of funding, but declined for 2005.



### 2004 Outcomes

OEPA more than succeeded in meeting its stated 2004 outcomes for the block clubs in terms of developing local capacity, fostering resident participation, and making policy

changes at the municipal level. These outcomes imply movement toward systems change.

### Systems Change

#### *Policy change/bureaucratic reform*

- Spanish Language Police Academy. Block Clubs in association with PAPNA worked with OEPA Safe to undertake a significant advocacy effort to pressure the EPA police department to offer one of its academy's for citizens for Spanish speakers.<sup>50</sup> Educating the police department on the need for more sensitivity to and more capacity for connecting with EPA's majority Latino population has been a primary strategy of the Safe Program. Safe organized an initial meeting in which Spanish-speaking residents communicated their specific concerns to the police liaison. This led to a bigger community event, Safe Streets, Safe Homes, in which block clubs reportedly played a major role mobilizing the ~150 participants. This was followed (May-Aug.) with advocacy efforts targeting the police department to actually offer the Spanish-language academy. The academy was finally offered Oct-Dec 2004, with 21 graduates who were recognized by the EPA city council on 18 January 2005. Reportedly the police department has now agreed to at least one of its academy's for Spanish speakers per year, also now understanding the need for more bilingual staff.<sup>51</sup>
- Memorandum of Understanding/OEPA and EPA Police Department. OEPA succeeded in drafting with the EPA police department and EPA community services department an MOU for services to be granted by these city departments to block clubs organized by and associated with OEPA in exchange for a \$5000 grant. These include (1) beat officers meeting at least quarterly with residents groups in their patrol areas; (2) EPAPD providing at least one 2-hour training session per block club per year; and (3) community policing policy and principles will be practiced by the police department, particularly cultural sensitivity. The Safe program director had been advocating for this MOU for over a year, and with the interim police chief has been able to make significant strides forward.
- Nuisance Abatement Ordinance: According to data input to the JMPT system, the first nuisance abatement hearing in July 2004 resulted in all drug selling tenants leaving the cited property. OEPA Safe in cooperation with PAPNA, and the EPA city attorney, helped to provide affidavits for this hearing, which is part of larger effort toward a nuisance abatement ordinance designed to drive out tenants who are selling and using drugs.

#### *Local capacity*

- The formation of six new block clubs.
- More than 64 more active residents have regularly participated in block clubs.
- More than double the number meetings (2 to 5) attended by EPAPD beat officers during the second half of 2004.

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<sup>50</sup> The police academy was geared toward EPA's Latino population, and classes were delivered in English with simultaneous translation into Spanish. OEPA and Latino block club members and other residents advocated for an academy in Spanish, but that was not provided.

<sup>51</sup> OEPA Final Report for 2004, pp. 43.

- Increased neighbor to neighbor relations as evidenced by over 300 residents participating in events sponsored by block clubs.<sup>52</sup>
- 20 residents attended two block club leadership summits in September and October, receiving training on facilitating meetings, community organizing, and recruiting cross-culturally. OEPA created handbooks for the block clubs that include instructions for tracking their meetings, developing agendas and making decisions, and creating an advocacy campaign. The handbooks also include the neighborhood watch guide from the crime and prevention center of the California attorney general's office.
- An increased understanding of US law and judicial system among 21 graduates of the SLPA and an increased knowledge among EPAPD of the concerns of EPA's Spanish-speaking residents
- Increased leadership among those block club captains, reportedly three, who have initiated significant actions on their own. These include the captain of Illinois Street block club who organized the Mother's Against Violence march in July 2004, and leaders in PAPNA, also members of the OEPA board of directors, who played a key role in gathering affidavits to support the nuisance abatement ordinance.

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<sup>52</sup> We have reported that Safe's data is incomplete. Data in the JMPT system suggests numbers higher than this, but this number was selected as a conservative estimate of the number of participants in these events. It is possible that the actual number is almost twice this much.

## **Case Study: Safe Strategic Network**

### **East Palo Alto Crime Reduction Task Force**

**The East Palo Alto Crime Reduction Task Force (EPA CRTF) brings regional attention to crime reduction in chronically under-resourced East Palo Alto. Its report recommends addressing crime systemically rather than symptomatically, with an emphasis on community involvement.<sup>53</sup> County supervisor passes baton to OEPA as convener of the task force. Short term outcomes include greater coordination and reallocation of resources within law enforcement efforts. Longer term systemic outcomes await community input on a specific plan of action.**

#### **Background**

The East Palo Alto Crime Reduction Task Force was created to address gaps in (1) the coordination of law enforcement efforts at the county and municipal levels, and (2) community infrastructure that supports viable alternatives for youth to gangs and drugs as a systemic approach to reducing crime. The overarching goals of the task force are to reduce violent crime in EPA, increase residents' sense of safety, and create a healthy environment in EPA in which young people become functioning members of the community. The coalition of law enforcement and community is particularly significant in an area in which police accountability has been a major issue, and the parties historically have been mistrustful of one another.

Connections between OEPA and the county supervisor's office in relation to crime reduction began in early 2004, when the Safe program director reportedly approached the county supervisor regarding creating an anti-drug coalition, as outlined in OEPA's proposal to Hewlett for 2004. The Safe program director had been researching the East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership, and was interested in creating something similar in EPA. Although nothing specific emerged from these conversations, the county supervisor did attend and speak at the OEPA press conference held in May during which the results of OEPA's Community Survey were released showing that 65% of residents surveyed feel unsafe or very unsafe in their neighborhoods.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Palo Alto Weekly headline notes that "New East Palo Alto 'Crime Prevention Task Force' outlines a comprehensive, high-impact, multi-agency effort to both fight crime and build a new community vision." 9 February 2005, pp. 14.

<sup>54</sup> These statistics are from the One East Palo Alto Community Survey Report by the Community Development Institute, March 2004.

The CRTF began its work in May 2004 in response to a series of murders of young people in East Palo Alto.<sup>55</sup> The county supervisor received enthusiastic responses from many major stakeholder groups (see diagram below), which met from May 2004 to January 2005. The short term objective of the CRTF was to create a report with a series of expert recommendations. This report was released to the public on 31 January 2005.<sup>56</sup>

The report is organized according to the task force's four subcommittees: community safety, community values and standards, prevention and alternatives, and research and analysis. The report presents a holistic vision that broadens accountability for crime reduction from law enforcement to include other municipal departments, such as community services, community-based organizations, such as OEPA, and residents themselves. Task force members and the press all recognize that the issues in EPA are so large, and include so many sectors, that law enforcement, even with additional resources, is not an adequate approach.

The CRTF is a strategic network that brings together partners from differing sectors and geographical orientations to focus attention on a small and under-resourced municipality. Even though additional funding has not yet been secured, the fact that regional stakeholders, such as the county supervisor, sheriff's department and chief parole officer, are collaborating brings greater resources into East Palo Alto than the city is able to deliver on its own. OEPA has strategically positioned itself to help determine how those greater resources will impact its target population.

### **OEPA Roles**

OEPA has played important roles on the task force, (1) as the main community-based organization at the table, and (2) as the incoming convener. Because of both previous relationships between the county supervisor and members of OEPA's staff, and OEPA's reputation as the "go-to" organization in EPA, OEPA was one of very few community-based organizations invited to participate on the CRTF.<sup>57</sup> OEPA's Safe program director and executive director played key roles on the values and standards, and prevention and alternatives, subcommittees respectively, and the chair of the board of directors also attended the task force. Reportedly their input helped task force members deepen their understanding of the need for a holistic approach to crime reduction.

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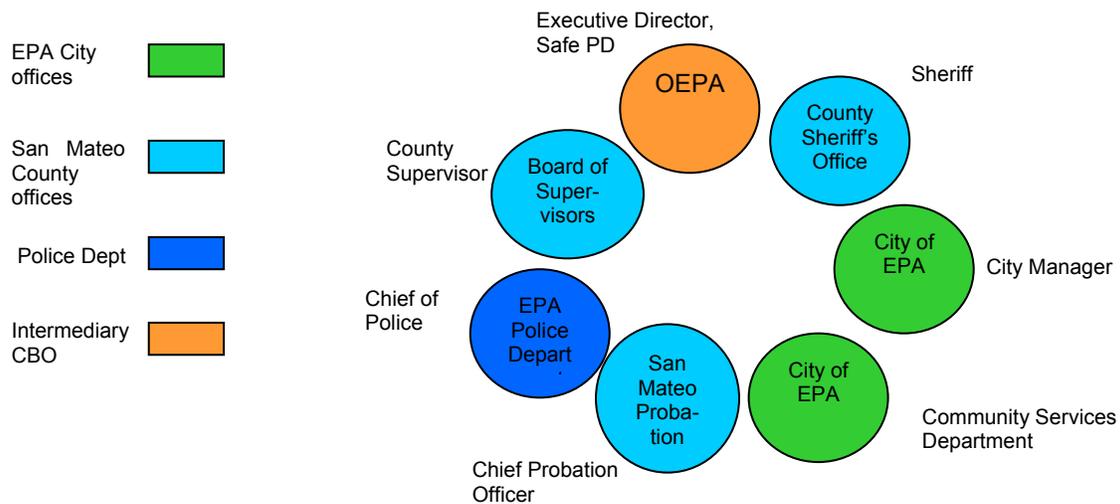
<sup>55</sup> Many parties within and outside of EPA saw the need for an immediate response to the situation, because it reminded them of the early 1990s when EPA was known as the murder capital of the United States. Murder rates are much lower in EPA now than they were 15 years ago, but EPA nevertheless in 2003 reportedly had by over 15% the highest violent crime rate of any city of a similar size in California (source: EPAPD).

<sup>56</sup> The task force held a press conference attended by approximately 100 people at EPA City Hall on 31 January 2005. News articles commented that (1) the report is refreshingly substantial and specific in its recommendations, (2) the emphasis on the revitalization of the community as a whole is important and new, and (3) the task force includes a new configuration of stakeholders with promising implications for the future. See, for example, Palo Alto Weekly, 9 February 2005, pp. 14 and pp. 3; Mercury News, 31 January 2005, pp. B1-2; and Mercury News, 1 February 2005, pp. B1 and B6.

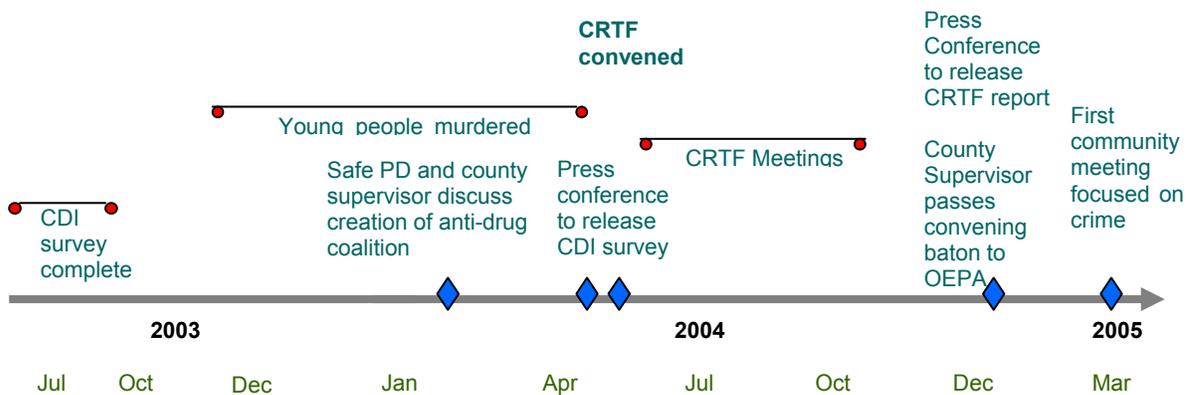
<sup>57</sup> Other organizations invited to attend include Community Development Institute (CDI), Ministers in Action Outreach, and Little League. These other organizations reportedly played relatively minor roles.

The task force is now moving into its second phase. The county supervisor selected OEPA as the community-based organization to take the task force's recommendations to the EPA community for feedback, and for an action plan to be created with community input. Plans are for the task force as a whole to continue meeting on a quarterly basis with OEPA as its convener, and the county supervisor's office as a participant. Subcommittees with tasks that may be addressed now have already begun implementing their recommendations. For example, the county probation department, working for the community safety committee, is stepping up its surveillance of the 25-50 most violent offenders located in EPA. And OEPA is carrying forth the recommendation of the prevention and alternative committee by dedicating its March 2005 membership meeting to crime reduction, the first community meeting in which the CRTF recommendations will be vetted by residents.

**Figure A4-2  
Crime Reduction Task Force Partners**



**Figure A4-3  
Crime Reduction Task Force: Implementation Timeline**



## **2004 Outcomes**

The outcomes of concern in this case study are the CRTF's success in effecting systems change, and the degree to which those outcomes relate to and reinforces other components of the Safe program.

### Systems Change

We have defined systems change as occurring by way of changes in policy, local capacity, and resources attracted to the community. CRTF has created significant outcomes in the area of local capacity. Under this rubric we include the capacity building of this strategic network, an informal entity, to address gaps in the systems of which each of the participants is a part.

### *Policy change/bureaucratic reform*

The attention of the CRTF has brought about re-allocation of existing resources within law enforcement agencies serving the area.

- Reportedly San Mateo County probation department is in the process of reassigning three or four additional officers for a total of seven or eight (up from four) to the juvenile division of Probation Services for East Palo Alto. This reallocation of police power has come as a result of attention called to the situation in EPA by the CRTF.
- San Mateo County probation is increasing its surveillance of the 25-50 most violent offenders located in EPA and East Menlo Park, including weekly visits and drug tests.

### *Local Capacity*

Most of the outcomes of the CRTF may be categorized as local capacity because 2004 was primarily a planning year for the task force.

- The short term outcome of greater communication and coordination among county and city law enforcement agencies has already led to new agreements to focus on EPA as a hot spot for crime reduction that potentially will create a model for other regions to follow.
- The CRTF Report recommendations assert that approaches to crime reduction need to be comprehensive, holistic, and community-based in order to be effective. This is a new perspective, in contrast to recent past approaches in the area that have focused solely on more police responsiveness and accountability. There is a recognition that community members need to be involved in creating and implementing solutions, and that there needs to be a greater degree of cooperation among law enforcement agencies and with community members. This is particularly significant in a municipality in which the police and residents have historically been wary of each other.
- Although no new funds have yet been dedicated to the work of the CRTF, task force members met with the understanding that much could be done through better coordination of services and efforts, cooperation among disparate groups, and reallocation of funds already allotted, such as those noted in section above.

### Relation to Safe Program Area

- The OEPA proposal to Hewlett for 2004 calls for building the capacity of the EPA neighborhood to combat crime by increasing the accountability of the EPA police department to residents and neighborhood community organizations and institutions (pp. 28). OEPA's participation in the CRTF reportedly has served to increase the accountability of the EPA police department to residents.
- The OEPA proposal to Hewlett for 2004 calls for OEPA to develop an EPA anti-drug coalition (pp. 28). The Safe Program Director strategically elected to fold this activity into OEPA's participation in the CRTF because (1) the goals of the task force and of the anti-drug coalition are so similar, (2) many of the same parties would necessarily be involved, and (3) the clout of the county supervisor to bring together key players was well recognized. Indeed, the fact that the county supervisor began the process pushed up the level of participation, enthusiasm, and commitment more than would have been possible had OEPA convened an anti-drug coalition on its own. Importantly, the CRTF is also a regional, rather than a municipal, network, which is particularly significant given the under-resourced character of the city.
- Participating in the task force has been very strategic for OEPA. OEPA has had the benefit of making major connections a wide range of regional stakeholders. Yet OEPA has not had to be responsible for the behind-the-scenes work of organizing the task force.
- Taking on the role of convener presents new challenges for OEPA. It is congruent with its intermediary role as convener, and potentially as a broker of services. It also will require OEPA to step up, both in relation to the EPA community, and in relation to its network partners, in a way that it has not done in the past.

## **Implementation**

### Robustness

Overall the CRTF receives strong marks as a strategic network, taking into account that 2004 was a planning year. During its first phase, the clout of the county supervisor's office attracted enthusiastic participation from all key partners, especially those well associated with it. Less well represented were other important players, such as the Ravenswood City School District and the Sequoia High School District, and other community groups in addition to OEPA.

Nevertheless, the CRTF was a very well functioning strategic network that met regularly, both as a whole and in subcommittees, and accomplished its initial goal of generating a report with specific recommendations for next steps. It was generally agreed that with the release of its report, the CRTF would enter a new phase in which a community-based organization should convene the community in order to develop a plan of action. It remains to be seen what will be the impact of moving the task force from under the auspices of the County Supervisor's office to that of OEPA.

Pros of this move are that OEPA is community-based, and is widely recognized as the only organization in EPA capable of convening a broad cross section of the community to

address the issues. Cons are that (1) OEPA does not have the clout of the county supervisor’s office to keep everyone at the table; (2) OEPA (and particularly the Safe PD) does not have experience convening a project of this size and importance; (3) OEPA does not have in its budget the \$40,000 it estimates it will cost to convene the community for one year, and funds are not forthcoming from the county to support the effort.

The following table details our assessment of the robustness of CRTF as a strategic network. The ratings were made by Teamworks based on the strategic network instrument (see appendix A-6).

**Table A4-4: Robustness<sup>58</sup>  
Safe: Crime Reduction Task Force**

<b>Robustness Factor</b>	<b>Rating (scale of 0-3)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Participation	<b>2</b> Most network members participate; some significant members missing	Many major players consistent participants. Schools and other CBOs not well represented.
Goals	<b>2</b> Clear agreement on network goals	Short term goal of producing recommendations accomplished; long term goals yet to be established.
Activities	<b>3</b> Regular and ad hoc activities attract interest and full participation	Regular meetings and press conference all well attended.
Structure	<b>2</b> Decisions made consistent with roles and rules	Not that many decisions made yet, but those made were done consistent with roles.
Communications	<b>3</b> Consistently regular and timely communications	Excellent communications facilitated by the county supervisor’s office.
Projects/ Outputs	<b>1.5</b> Projects underway, awaiting outputs	Report completed; some subcmnt projects underway; longer term projects awaiting development
Logic	<b>1</b> Activities follow mostly logical progression	Initial plans followed logical progression; action plan yet to be developed.

### Environment

Crime has been an issue in EPA for decades, and efforts to reduce it have risen and fallen over time. The EPA police department historically has not been responsive to residents, and has been very under-resourced in relation to the need. The hiring of an interim police chief in summer 2004 brought a new level of responsibility, responsiveness, and integrity to the police department. Reportedly police responsiveness has increased markedly in that last half year. However, a search is currently underway for a new police chief, and much depends upon the integrity and responsiveness of this leader. Law enforcement agencies tend to be uncoordinated in their efforts; county agencies historically have not attended to the issues of EPA. The CRTF has done much to shift these attitudes and habits.

<sup>58</sup> Ratings for robustness and environment (following page, table A4-5), were made by Teamworks based on the strategic network instrument (see appendix A-6).

EPA as a city is chronically under-resourced, running at a \$2 million deficit each year, despite increased tax revenue from major new developments in the area. The police department is allocated 55% of the city budget, which is enough to maintain approximately 40 officers on the street, but not provide for needed supports such as a crime analyst. Discussions are underway regarding the county sheriff's office and the EPAPD combing their resources to hire a crime analyst. Public budget constraints at the county and state level make an increase in resources difficult to attract.<sup>59</sup>

The CRTF seeks to create a comprehensive approach to crime reduction that includes prevention and alternatives. Therefore other major factors affecting its work include a high-school drop out rate of 26%, the lowest income indicators in San Mateo County, and an unemployment rate more than double that of San Mateo County as a whole.

**Table A4-5: Environment  
Safe: Crime Reduction Task Force**

<b>Environment Factor</b>	<b>Rating (scale 0-3)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Historic "load"	<b>2</b> Some effective institutions in place, neutral outcomes	Law enforcement does have a considerable history, but tends to be uncoordinated. CBOs in need of coordination and cooperation.
Local Influentials	<b>3</b> Interested and cooperative	Public agencies enthusiastically came to the table.
Existence of and access to \$\$	<b>1</b> Minimal funds or blocked access	Public budget constraints make increase in resources difficult or unlikely. Private funding uncertain w/o more specific goals.
Community support and interest	<b>2</b> Growing support	Cmty interest grows as efforts are made to address the issue. Support is very strong among some residents.
Knowledge base/intellectual infrastructure	<b>2</b> Highly developed body of knowledge or interest in development	Research on crime reduction is considerable. Its efficacy for this situation is uncertain.

<sup>59</sup> Sources include interviews with representatives from major law enforcement agencies.  
 Appendices: OEPA Evaluation Year Four Implementation  
 Teamworks: April 2005

## **APPENDIX A-5**

### **Evaluation Report Methodology**

## Evaluation Report Methodology

Teamworks has followed OEPA's progress since its inception and the report draws on knowledge and documents gathered since 1999. The criteria that were used in this report to assess progress were detailed in the scope of work, approved in June 2004, and further developed in a set of amendments that were finalized in December 2004. The starting point, or baseline, for the year four evaluation is OEPA's proposal for year 2004 that was submitted to Hewlett in October 2003. Thus we examined what was proposed for the year in relationship to what happened. Below is a description of the information gathering tools used as the basis for the findings in this report.

- *Interviews:* Sixty-three interviews were conducted with a broad range of stakeholders, including the Hewlett Foundation's program officer, the executive director of OEPA and its senior staff, OEPA board members, the chief participants in the strategic networks and priority projects, advisory committee members, and technical assistance providers. Interviews were conducted in August 2004 and in February-March 2005.
- *Observations:* Teamworks staff observed 24 meetings, including retreats leading to the hiring of the executive director, annual planning sessions with the board and staff, regularly scheduled board meetings, a special session on logic modeling with the president of the Hewlett Foundation, meetings of the strategic networks, a block club leader summit, and two meetings of the advisory committee.
- *Document Review:* Teamworks provides Hewlett and OEPA with a formal request for documents. This request has a detailed list and instructions for how the documents should be organized and transmitted. Documents are provided to Teamworks twice a year, roughly 10 weeks before the draft report is submitted to Hewlett. Documents were received in July 2004 and again in January 2005 to close out the year. OEPA's final report for 2004 was to have been submitted in January, however, was delayed and not finalized until March. Despite its lateness, material from that document was used as a source. Financial information, which was to follow the Hewlett template was not complete, requiring additional work by the team to attempt to assemble data particularly in regard to completing the picture on leveraged monies.
- *JMPT:* JMPT has a web-based technology (referred to as Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting DCAR<sup>TM</sup>), that allows for the input of tracking data and also analysis of this information against demographic, census-based data. Hewlett sets a schedule for partners to provide tracking data that JMPT then analyzes. The scope and quality of the data varies from good to weak, a point that JMPT's makes clear in its report.

The concept of analyzing strategic networks grew out of the Learning Exchange that was conducted in August 2004. The team developed an instrument to use for case studies, a copy of which is included in appendix A-6.

## **APPENDIX A-6**

### **Strategic Network Instrument**

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**Research Framework for Strategic Network  
Case Studies**

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## Preface

The following document was prepared for the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to explain how Teamworks is planning to address the evaluation research question regarding OEPA's "strategic networks." This is a new question that has considerable subtleties and challenges starting with what is meant by this term. In the enclosed we provide a working definition, hypothesis, and outline the tools that we will be testing for application in the OEPA year four report. We enter into this effort knowing that we face several research limitations which are explained within the document that follows, but concluded it was essential to go forward with this testing phase so that we can refine the tools for the year five report.

The research and tool development was conducted by Renee A. Berger (president of Teamworks) and Liz Vasile Galin (senior associate) during the fall, 2004. Teamworks worked closely with JMPT, specifically Andy Wong. We met several times with JMPT to draw upon its experience from its "rubric" work carried out for the Mayfair initiative, to brainstorm variables, and to explore the potential for eventually using its technological capacities. With JMPT we are continuing to brainstorm possible applications of its technology that we might apply in the year 2005 report.

This document is divided into three parts: overview, methodology, and summary of the literature scan. Questions regarding this framework may be forwarded to Renee Berger at [raberger@sfteamworks.com](mailto:raberger@sfteamworks.com) or telephone (415) 469-0300.

## **Part I: Overview**

## Overview

A large and well established body of literature exists on the subject of social capital and its relationship to community welfare. The NII's own theory of change is built on the premise of such a relationship, and is clearly reflected in the decision to focus NII resources on the creation of an intermediary organization. In contrast to the more traditional nonprofit organization role of service delivery, the central purpose of an intermediary is to foster the linkages that connect and leverage critical resources on behalf of the community. How to measure these linkages and assess their value is essential to evaluating the work of OEPA as an intermediary.

Our research is anchored in a hypothesis that is: If an intermediary organization strategically builds networks, it will be in a position to make measurable progress toward achieving intermediary program outcomes. Achieving such outcomes involves a complex set of activities, including research, brokering, organizing, and advocacy in an effort to reform policy, build infrastructure, and enhance resources for the OEPA footprint. The ability to strategically build networks across businesses, governments, and nonprofits is a critical competency for an intermediary organization.

### *Research Questions*

We will organize the case studies to address four research questions. They are

1. Has OEPA developed strategies for building networks believed necessary to achieve intermediary program outcomes?
2. Are those strategies (i.e. plans) implemented in a manner that evidences a logic for actions taken, adjustments made, and actions not taken?
3. Does OEPA's participation in these networks achieve key intermediary goals such as policy reform/bureaucratic change, build capacity (i.e. close critical system gaps, build local infrastructure), and/or enhance resources.
4. What factors contributed to progress made/not made by OEPA toward achieving goals?

### *Working Definitions*

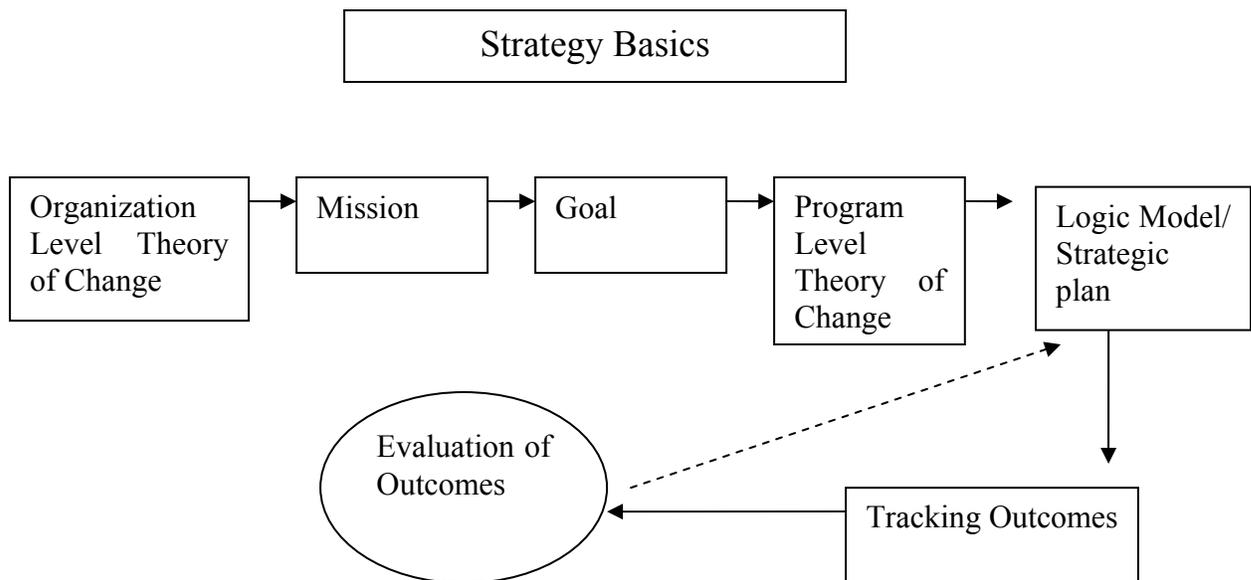
We will use the following working definitions of strategy and networks.

**Strategy:** Here we will define strategy as a set of organized actions that provide a plausible approach to meeting proposed outputs and outcomes. Strategy begins but does not end with a plan.

Strategy has been variously defined by many different authors and experts. For evaluation purposes, we draw from the definition of strategy expressed in Paul Brest’s “Update on the Hewlett Foundation’s Approach to Philanthropy”. There, strategy is described as an organized plan for achieving a desired goal, which includes the following components: clarity of mission, goals, theory of change (causal model), logic model (strategic plan for implementation), tracking of progress, and evaluation of outcomes, both *intermediate* and *ultimate*.

To this definition of strategy, we add another key aspect, that of learning from doing. A leading thinker on strategy, Henry Mintzberg (1998), calls this “strategy as emergence”, described as the practice of reflection and learning based on experience and experiment, such that over time the course of actions undertaken reflects progress towards more robust or effective plans. In an inherently unstable and unpredictable universe, strategic capacity must include the capacity for learning and adjustment. Evaluation is a beginning, a necessary but not sufficient move in the quest to be strategic.

From this, it would follow that for a network to be strategic, it must have a clear goal, a theory of change, and a logic model, followed by activities that flow from and adhere to the logic model, and the tracking of those activities.



**Networks:** During the past couple of decades there has been a burgeoning of literature written by sociologists, economists, psychologists, and anthropologists about the importance of networks and the role they play in either contributing to or preventing success (see part three of this document for a bibliography of key writings). At the most basic level, networks are relationships between and among persons, between persons and organizations, and between organizations. Joining networks is regarded as a primal

characteristic of human social behavior. Networks can be counterproductive as in the case of gangs, or they can be gateways to gathering information and developing contacts that lead to successful outcomes.

There is considerable support in the literature for the importance of networks in community building. The research that formed the basis of Hewlett's Neighborhood Improvement Initiative was based on conclusions drawn by William Julius Wilson that a central reason for the inability of lower income individuals and communities to access the economic mainstream is that they act as islands, and lack critical bridges to organizations and individuals that could bring needed resources. Studies have shown that the most productive network for attracting resources to lower income communities is of the "bridging" type, meaning networks that have heterogeneous characteristics. Thus, when low income people or their advocates connect in homogeneous ways, existing conditions are reinforced rather than changed. The potential for change increases when connections are made to organizations and individuals that represent different sectors and offer resources and access different from those already available in the community. For example, the potential of EARN's Gateway network to provide pathways to greater economic choices for community residents is directly related to its ability to convene and connect multiple players from government, education, and the private sector at the local, county, and state level, to work together towards a common goal.

Networks take many forms. They can be broad or narrow, informal or formal. OEPA daily engages in networking that ranges from contacts made by staff with colleagues, to staff efforts to create a network of individuals and/or representatives from other organizations with goals that might include promoting policy change, increasing resources, or growing the capacity of critical organizations in East Palo Alto.

Our work will focus on the OEPA staffs' explicit (i.e., as articulated in logic models) efforts to build networks and examine the extent to which they have been planned and implemented strategically. We will distinguish OEPA's various roles and positions within the network being evaluated. Is OEPA the convenor? Is it a funder? Is it the initiator? We will focus on evaluating OEPA's strategic effectiveness, i.e., its ability to carry out its plan, make appropriate adjustments, and otherwise act strategically. While we will seek to identify network outcomes, given the number of players in each network and variables outside of OEPA's control, our task will not include evaluating the network as a whole. Also, tracking is done for components of some of OEPA's networks, but the network's themselves are not supported by tracking systems. For example, while there is tracking data for OICW which plays a role in the Gateway network, there is no means of tracking the outputs of each of the actors in the overall network.

### ***State of the Community***

At the macro-level, it is essential to recognize that East Palo Alto has had an environment that historically has not been conducive to productive networking. Until recently, East Palo Alto has been marked by isolation from its neighbor cities and region. Its founding

as an African-American city in the 1960s was inspired by a desire for separation. The city suffered a weak and corrupt government for many years, many of its nonprofit organizations are known to suffer from limited capacity, and it has long struggled with racial tensions.

Over the last decade, East Palo Alto has undergone dramatic demographic changes, evolving from its founding by African-Americans who once constituted over 90% of the population into a now majority Latino city. Its landscape is now dotted with major new commercial and residential development, with more promised on the near horizon. There is little doubt that the East Palo Alto of the next decade will have a very different face than it had a decade ago. With a larger and growing tax base and growing competency in its local government, regional interests that were once inclined to steer clear of the city now are showing interest in working with the city and its community based organizations. Thus, OEPA's intermediary function and its efforts to do strategic networking are being carried out in a changing climate, one that has evolved from isolationist to more open to partnering.

To be sure, East Palo Alto faces serious challenges, many of which are well documented and form the basis for OEPA's priority focus areas of LEARN, EARN, and SAFE. Each of these three areas has its own unique environmental characteristics that will affect OEPA's strategic networking. Our work will acknowledge the broader context of East Palo Alto but more specifically will examine the political, resources, and organizational context of the focus of the strategic networking of each of the three program areas. This is discussed further in part two of this document (refer to research question #2).

### ***Research Limitations***

It is our goal to use the year four report which covers 2004 and will be produced in April 2005 as a testing period for the examination of strategic networks. There are several limitations that we know will affect our work.

- **Quality of Information:** For OEPA year 2004 we will confront two critical limitations. They are (a) the modest level of utility of the 2004 logic models (completed midway through 2004) as a predictor for actions, and (b) there were no systems built for OEPA to generate intermediary program outcome information. Important also, the decision to use a case study framework for this work was made late in 2004, with the goal of developing the methodology and instruments for initial testing in the fourth year report (due April 2004). Thus, we are faced with extremely limited time to conduct a scan of the strategic networking literature, integrate lessons, and develop a methodology and tools.
- **Control Groups:** The research methodology that we outline does not include a "control" group. Thus we are not assessing OEPA's work in contrast to the work of other intermediary organizations, or comparing it with situations where strategic networking is not occurring. The task we set forth is descriptive, i.e. identifying the work underway and characterizing whether or not it had a cogent

plan, if it was soundly implemented, and the relationship between its implementation and program outcomes.

- Relationship between OEPA and outcomes: As noted, our focus is on OEPA's role and whether it is being strategic. We are keenly interested in identifying outputs/outcomes associated with each of the networks but caution the following (1) OEPA will be one of a number of participants, thus we cannot trace a straight line between its role and outcomes (i.e. causality cannot be shown), and (2) currently, the networks do not have systems in place for tracking outcomes. We will largely rely on documentation provided by OEPA and a limited set of interviews to assess changes in policy, resources, and capacity that are related to the strategic networks.

### ***Deliverables***

For the year four report we will generate two to three case studies. We anticipate focusing on the findings in the main body of the evaluation report. The complete case study will be in an appendix to the report. Each case study is expected to be about 3-5 pages maximum.

### ***Methodology***

Each of the research questions requires a distinct set of criteria and will have information gathering tailored to its requirements. The information gathering will include review of documentation, meeting observation, and interviewing. We will be using both qualitative and quantitative techniques to assess the strategic networking. Attached is an explanation of the information gathering approach and tools that we will be beta-testing for the strategic networks case studies in the year four evaluation report.

## **Part II: Methodology**

## Research Question #1

### Has OEPA developed strategies for building networks believed necessary to achieve intermediary program outcomes?

Our data gathering for this question will largely draw from documents that provide evidence of developing strategies for building networks related to intermediary program outcomes. These documents include (1) logic models, (2) proposal to Hewlett, (3) annual plan, (4) credible research, and (5) minutes related to developing plans. Each has a set of criteria that will be used to make judgments about the quality of the work. Below is a sample of the criteria and evidence that will be sought to assess progress. We will rely on document analysis to address this question.

Question/Criteria	Evidence	Tool
Planning process informed by data (e.g., uses analysis of existing programs, takes into consideration the socio-political and economic environment, develops programs consistent with mission, develops programs consistent with capacity)	Annual plan	Document Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the research take account or reflect knowledge of relevant work in the larger field of study?</li> <li>• Are the research questions and approach aligned with the intended uses of the research?</li> <li>• Is the research methodology sound?</li> <li>• Does analysis and interpretation follow a logical flow from data?</li> <li>• Are research findings clear, relevant, and actionable (e.g., does research consider policy/political/economic environment and capacity of key potential actors? Does the research enable the development of a sharp focus with potential for impact?</li> <li>• Was the work conducted by an organization that has technical research competencies and a history of working in the subject area?</li> </ul>	Credible Research	Document Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a direct and clear relationship to the theory of change for the program area;</li> <li>• Reflects a stated priority of OEPA (based on a clear set of criteria and review by the executive director/board);</li> <li>• Make clear the baseline, i.e. the starting point, that will be used for assessing the extent to which change has occurred;</li> <li>• Based on the best information possible, is doable (i.e., should not be an idealized notion of what ought to be done, but rather what can be done) and makes clear where “threats” to progress might occur;</li> <li>• Is articulated in a manner that useful data can be generated to assess progress; Is integrated into staff functioning so that it is used as a workplan.</li> </ul>	Logic Model	Document Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the proposal to Hewlett have a clear, consistent, and logic set of connections to work that has been undertaken, its status, and what is proposed for the future?</li> <li>• Is what is proposed grounded in the TOC(s), and successfully outlined in logic models per criteria listed above.</li> </ul>	Proposal to Hewlett	Document Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do minutes demonstrate that OEPA staff grow their understandings of what is required to plan their strategic networking.</li> </ul>	Minutes	Document Analysis

## Research Question #2

**Are those strategies (i.e. plans) implemented in a manner that evidences a logic for actions taken, adjustments made, and actions not taken?**

This question focuses on implementation. For the 2004 report we will be beta-testing tools to address this research question. Our principal focus will be on two variables: (1) the robustness of the network, and (2) the extent to which the environment (e.g. resource, political) affects the implementation of the strategies. We are exploring on how to weigh the environmental factors in relation to how they impact the robustness variable.

### **Robustness**

The first variable, robustness, is a measure of performance of the key activities entailed in the formation and operation of the networks, as called for by the objectives set forth in the logic model. Under robustness, we include the following measurable activities and criteria for each network examined:

- Membership: Recruitment, stakeholder coverage, participation
- Goals: Communication and agreement
- Structure: clear, well understood decision-making structure
- Communications: density and regularity of exchanges between network members
- Formal activities: announced, planned activities (meetings, etc)
- Projects and Outputs: tasks undertaken and their associated outputs,
- Logic: progression of activities and tasks is logical and aligns with the plan

The following table is the first draft of a tool for assessing robustness along these sub-variables.

## INDEX OF ROBUSTNESS

**Network Name and Purpose:**

**OEPA's Role:**

**Network Members and their Roles**

Index	Variable Measures				Sources of Evidence
	0	1	2	3	
<b>Recruitment and Participation</b>	No evidence of effort to recruit proposed network members	Proposed members contacted, invited; low level of participation	Most network members participate; some significant members missing	Full membership enrollment; active participation, clear sense of network identity	Meeting minutes; meeting agendas; network related job announcements, hiring; records of calls and correspondence (e-mail messages, etc); network outreach materials; network surveys (self evaluation)
<b>Goals</b>	Goals have not been articulated to network members	Goals articulated and discussed; acceptance pending	Clear agreement on network goals	Network has translated shared goals into plan of action.	Network / project plan; correspondence; interviews with program director, select network members
<b>Activities</b>	No formal activities scheduled	Ad hoc activities scheduled	A calendar of regular activities established and agreed upon	Regular and ad hoc activities attract interest and full participation	Network calendars, meeting minutes, agendas, press releases, news stories; announcements
<b>Structure</b>	No clear process or roles established for decision-making	Decision making roles and rules established but ineffectual	Decisions made consistent with roles and rules	Consistent effort made by participants to follow through on decisions	Direct observation of meetings; meeting minutes; action plans and activities; correspondence
<b>Communication</b>	No evidence of communication between network members	Irregular, often incomplete or dropped communication	Mostly regular, timely, communication	Consistently regular and timely communications	e-mail lists and message records between OEPA program director and network members; newsletters; interviews with select network members;
<b>Projects and outputs</b>	No evidence of specific projects underway or outputs achieved	Projects underway, awaiting outputs	Significant projects and observable outputs achieved	Work of network completed. If appropriate, new tasks defined.	Proposals prepared or underway; outreach materials, brochures, newsletters, etc.; funds secured; influence exercised; positions filled; new research outlined or completed
<b>Logic and Alignment</b>	Progression of activities lacks logic and/or poorly aligned with plan	Activities follow mostly logical progression	Activities follow highly logical progression and/or adhere strictly to the plan	Logical flow of activities with capacity to improvise effectively in response to changes	Plan and logic model; direct observation; interviews with program director, select network members

## Environmental Context

Though we have not proposed a separate tool for tracking or rating environmental context, the table below provides a first cut at potentially relevant items in this area, and ways to rate them. The average of findings from such a rubric yields a “critical context” rating against which robustness outcomes can be weighted. The table is constructed such that a high environmental “score” means a favorable environment and fertile ground for the growth and success of the strategic network in question. A low score, in contrast, means the local environment offers little to support this issue or, alternatively, that the particular strategic network faces environmental friction, which it will need to overcome, work around, or compensate for in some way.

The environment in which OEPA works – political, resource, and organizational – will play a vital role either supporting or hindering the development of OEPA’s networks. There are two levels of analysis: there is the broad landscape of East Palo Alto and there is the narrower lens of the factors that distinguish the environments for LEARN, EARN, and SAFE. While the dynamics of East Palo Alto are critical and will be acknowledged in our work, our emphasis will be on the specific conditions that affect LEARN, EARN, and SAFE. Our principal sources of evidence for assessing the environmental context in each of these areas will be interviews with local officials, agency heads, and community leaders, along with scans of news archives and local government and grantmaker funding (i.e. related to OEPA program area).

Environmental Context

Factor					Sources of Evidence
	0	1	2	3	
Historic “load”	Negative history, and/or corrupt institutions, leadership	no history with issue; no institutional framework	Some effective institutions in place, neutral outcomes.	Strong legacy of positive cooperation and public success, interest	Interviews with community leaders, scan of news archives
Local Influentials	Stated opposition to issue	Difficult to engage, not trusted	Open, accountable	Interested and cooperative	Interviews with local govt., CBO, and industry officials, media archives
Existence of and access to \$\$ Resources	None	Minimal funds or blocked access	Available, but highly competitive	Abundant, little competition	Interviews with agency heads, scan of archives and funding levels
Community support, interest	Strong resistance	Divided	Growing support	Highly unified support	Meeting attendance records, interviews with community leaders, news archives.
Knowledge base/intellectual infrastructure	Little or no research, access	Some research, access, interest	Highly developed body of knowledge or interest in development	Developed, freely accessible research findings	Interviews with research TA providers

### Research Question #3

**Does OEPA’s participation in these networks achieve key intermediary goals such as policy reform/bureaucratic change, build capacity (i.e. close critical system gaps, build local infrastructure), and/or enhance resources.**

In fulfilling its work as intermediary organization, OEPA is striving ultimately to achieve outcomes that fall within three broad categories: Policy/Bureaucratic Reform, Building Capacity, and Resource Enhancement. For example, EARN’s efforts regarding EPA’s community benefit agreement policy in the form of a commitment to stronger monitoring (e.g. as evidenced by a MOU with the city), it would be categorized as a policy change/bureaucratic outcome. LEARN’s role in the creation of Nuestra Casa is an example of building capacity (and its success attracting money for afterschool programming is an example of resource enhancement.)

Outcome Area	Evidence	Tool
Policy/Bureaucratic Reform	Executive order, MOU, record of vote by city council, agreement of schools regarding monitoring afterschool, agreements made by CRTF	Documentation, interviews
Building Capacity	Strategic plan (Nuestra Casa), report on board development (Nuestra Casa)	Documentation, interviews
Resource Enhancement	Record of funds applied for and attracted, e.g. for Gateway efforts, funding specifically for OEPA footprint needs	Documentation (proposals, financial data)

#### **Research Question #4**

##### **What factors contributed to progress made/not made by OEPA toward achieving goals?**

This research question will drill into what helps to explain the progress or lack of progress toward planning and implementing strategic networks and toward achieving goals. Ultimately, what explains OEPA's progress/lack of progress? We expect that progress will be different in each of the three program areas. Each program has different political/organizational contexts (locally and regionally), differences in the complexity of what is involved to achieve goals, and brings to bear different staff competencies. These are several of the many factors we expect to explore to satisfactorily address this research question.

The analysis will draw from the information gathered to address questions #1-#3.

## **Part III: Literature Scan**

On social capital and networks:

Barabasi, A.L. 2002. *Linked: The New Science of Networks*. Cambridge, Perseus.

Cross, R., Parker, A., Prusak, L., & Borgatti, S. 2001. Knowing what we know: Supporting knowledge creation and sharing in social networks. *Organizational Dynamics*, 30(2): 100-120.

Cross, R., Borgatti, S., & Parker, A. 2002. Making invisible work visible: Using social network analysis to support human networks. *California Management Review*, 44(2): 25-46.

Cross, R., Nohria, N., & Parker, A. 2002. Six myths about informal networks - and how to overcome them. *Sloan Management Review*, 43(3): 67-76.

Cross, R., & Prusak, L. 2002. The people that make organizations stop - or go. *Harvard Business Review*, 80(6): 104-112.

Gittell, Ross, and Avis Vidal. 1998. *Community Organizing : Building Social Capital as a Development Strategy*. Sage Publications.

Jarillo, J. Carlos. 1988. "On Strategic Networks." *Strategic Management Journal* 9:31-41.

Johannisson, Bengt, and Anders Nilsson. 1989. "Community Entrepreneurs: Networking for Local Development." *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development* 1:3-19.

Johannisson, Bengt. 1990. "Community Entrepreneurship—Cases and Conceptualization." *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development* 2: 71-88.

\* Krebs, Valdis and June Holley. 2002. Building Sustainable Communities through Network Building." White paper.

\* Narayan, Deepa and Michael F. Cassidy. 2001. "A Dimensional Approach to Measuring Social Capital: Development and Validation of a Social Capital Inventory," *Current Sociology*, March 2001, Vol. 49(2): 59–102.

Perry, Martin. 1996. "Network Intermediaries and Their Effectiveness." *International Small Business Journal* 14(4):72-80.

Putnam, R.D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community*, New York: Simon and Schuster.

Putnam, R.D. (ed.) 2002. *Democracies in Flux: the Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society*, New York: Oxford University Press.

AnnaLee Saxenian, *Regional Advantage: Culture and Competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994). This groundbreaking study by an economist showed that the openness and fluidity of the networks in Silicon Valley contributed to its more rapid recovery from an economic downturn than Route 128 around Boston, which was marked by greater isolation.

Scott, John P. 2000. [\*Social Network Analysis: A Handbook\*](#). SAGE Publications; 2nd edition.

\* Sirianni, C. and Friedland, L. (undated) 'Social Capital', *Civic Practices Network*, <http://www.cpn.org/tools/dictionary/capital.html>.

An extensive review of the concept of social capital as it applies to community improvement and civic engagement work. Provides forms and examples, and a solid annotated bibliography. The Civic Practices Network is also a terrific resource for case studies as well as more theoretical literature, that may be of value to OEPA program directors.

\* Social Enterprise Partnership (GB) Ltd. *Quality and Impact Project: Project Briefing Note*.

A European project led by the New Economics Foundation (nef) to develop and make available appropriate tools for assessing the value added of social enterprise, including measurement of social capital. Steering group includes social accounting expert John Pearce and several key organizations working in the area of social auditing and philanthropy in Britain and Europe. Resources will be made available through a central website, which will bring together all existing work on the issue, including tools and case studies. *Prove It!* is an evaluation tool developed by nef with the intent of helping organizations measure their impact of building social capital, and which may be of value in assessing strategic networking in the NII.

\* University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension. 1998. *Evaluating Collaboratives: Reaching the Potential*. Includes methods and techniques, and reporting tools.

Warren, Mark R. 1995. *Social Capital and Community Empowerment: Religion and Political Organization in the Texas Industrial Areas Foundation*. Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University.

Probably the most in-depth and perceptive study to date of community organizing from the perspective of social capital. It examines the Texas network of the IAF, and emphasizes the issues of mobilizing social capital through religious institutions and building new social capital across communities, and particularly across racial lines. It

also provides a case study of Project QUEST in San Antonio. The author is currently revising it for publication as a book.

Wasserman, Stanley, Katherine Faust, and Mark Granovetter, eds. 1994. *Social Network Analysis : Methods and Applications* (Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences). Cambridge University Press.

#### Key community development literature

William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987. Extremely low-income communities are disadvantaged because of a lack of understanding about how to access power brokers that can make resources available. Developing bridges to government, in particular, is seen as central to gaining the power to foster policy change. This is one of the most difficult things for low income communities and their advocates to accomplish (Anne Kubisch, et al, *Voices From the Field II: Reflections on Community Change*. Washington, DC: Aspen Institute: Roundtable on Comprehensive Initiatives for Children and Families, 2002).

#### On case study and narrative methods:

Brinkerhoff, Robert O. 2003. *The Success Case Method: Find Out Quickly What's Working and What's Not*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

\* McClintock, Charles. 2003. Using Narrative Methods to Link Program Evaluation and Organization Development, *The Evaluation Exchange*, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Vol IX No. 4.

\* Walker, Margaret J. 2004. Carrying the Ideas Forward, pp 63-65 in *End of One Way*, Mcknight Foundation Report.

#### Other

Mintzberg, H., Ahlstrand, B., and J. Lampel. 1998. *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour through the Wilds of Strategic Management*. New York: Free Press.