

# Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District

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## Senior Project Proposal: Gentrification of San Francisco's Mission District

Over the past two decades, San Francisco's Mission District has experienced a great deal of change. Like many neighborhoods throughout the United States, it has been undergoing a gentrification process in which redevelopment, increases in housing prices, and lack of rental units due to condominium conversions have left many low-income residents homeless or on the verge of becoming homeless.

The Mission was a neighborhood populated by mainly low-income Latino immigrants. Over the past ten years, or since the dot-com boom of the 1990s, there has been an influx of Anglo, middle income business owners moving into a predominantly Latino-working class neighborhood. Although the Mission District has not reached complete disinvestment, we have seen gradual changes in the neighborhood in terms of housing costs and increase in high-priced restaurants and lofts catering to the newly arrived residents of the District.

After the great migration from urban to suburbs in the 1940s and 50s, cities in the U.S. began to fall apart due to neglect. Initially, people in the 1970s saw a new phenomenon that was thought to save these cities plagued with disinvestment and decay. However, there has been a more negative connotation associated with gentrification. Gentrification can be described as the process in which high-income families move into low-income areas, thus manipulating existing resources and changing the character of the area.

There are few studies that incorporate perceptions of existing low-income residents of a gentrifying area. There is substantial scholarly literature discussing the role of the developers and

the gentrifiers, as well as the negative effects of gentrification on communities. This study will focus on gentrification's detrimental impact on existing low-income residents and its role in displacing these individuals. I have found peer-reviewed journal articles from the library's database, in addition to newspaper articles to help me better understand gentrification's impact on the Mission District.

Gentrification is a complex process in which a more thorough investigation is needed to fully understand how it impacts the indigenous residents of changing communities. By exploring the process in the Latino community of San Francisco, this research aims to contribute to a better and fuller understanding of how gentrification affects long-term residents. Insight in this subject matter may play a role in future policy aimed at creating more just, equitable and promising cities.

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### Annotated Bibliography for Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District

Godfrey, Brian J. *Ethnic Identities and Ethnic Enclaves: The Morphogenesis of San*

*Francisco's Hispanic Barrio*. 1985. *Vassar College*. Poughkeepsie, New York 12601.

This article analyzes the evolving human and physical features of an ethnic district. The author discusses how San Francisco plays an important role as a primary destination for Central American immigrants to the United States. More specifically, the Mission District has been the home for successive groups of immigrants. During the late nineteenth century, some wealthy San Franciscans settled in the Mission and built mansions. After the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906, the city's housing shortage encouraged the development of increased densities in the Mission. This led to large houses being steadily subdivided and remaining vacant lots were developed, often with higher-density flats and apartments built to house refugees from the ravaged areas. The author attained his information from newspaper articles such as the *San Francisco Examiner* and the U.S. Census for population data. This article is important for my senior project because it goes back to the very beginning of how the Mission District came to be what it is now.

Guillermo, Gomez-Pena. The Old Neighborhood. *State of Small Business*, 2000, pp. 103-104.

The author gives an eyewitness account of the hostility between the Latino residents of the Mission District and the newcomers. The scene takes place at a chichi lounge club that was once a Mexican cantina for local “winetos” and blue-collar brown workers. Now this lounge club is packed with upper-class hipsters and there is virtually no Latino customers other than the author. From the old décor, all that’s left were two Mexican murals on the back wall. All of a sudden an old Mexican homeless opens the door, yielding what appeared to be a sharpened stick and began to scream at everyone in Spanish, “I’m tired of all you yuppies.” Before the bartenders began to go after the man with baseball bats, the author instinctively jumps in and persuades them that he would take care of the situation. The man told the author that he felt threatened by the presence of these new kids who were arrogant and selfish and referred to the Mission District as his “hood” just a few months before this incidence. It is clear that this is man is one of many residents who are not happy with the rapid process of gentrification that has transformed the Mission. This is relevant to my senior project because this is a good example of what’s going through the minds of these Latino residents and how much pride they had of what was once what they called their “hood.”

Redfern, P.A. 2003. What makes Gentrification ‘Gentrification’? *Urban Studies Journal*. Vol.40, no.12, pp.2351-2366.

The author wrote this paper in order to understand the demand issues in gentrification. The author’s basic proposition is that everyone involved in the demand side belongs to

the same economic class and therefore possess the same set of motivations. He argues that the motivations of gentrifiers, suburbanites and displaced are the same. There is a growing concern for defining and preserving identity in the modern world. Gentrifiers and suburbanites use housing as status symbols to define and claim membership of those groups. The ones that are being displaced are just as concerned with their identity, but do not have access to the same amount of resources as the gentrifiers. Within this capitalist mode of production, there is always a constant struggle over status. The author uses sources from urban and regional research work, as well as economic and environmental work. This is important for my senior project because it lays the foundation for why gentrification occurs and what some of the demand issues are in gentrification.

Nyborg, Anne M. 2008. *Gentrified Barrio: Gentrification and the Latino Community in San Francisco's Mission District*. *University of California, San Diego*.

The author has conducted field research in the Mission District between September 2007 and January 2008 which included interviews with long-term Latino residents. The author also conducted an historical analysis of the neighborhood. The author found that although Latino residents were concerned about certain changes to their neighborhood resulting from gentrification, they did not blame all changes in the community on gentrification. Instead they mapped out relationships between family, crime, unemployment, youth and community culture. The author looks at both the negative and beneficial effects that gentrification produces. The aim of her research was to better understand how residents of the Mission District perceive gentrification in their community and how to incorporate their perceptions into policy. The author cites journals on urban and regional research as

well as other thesis papers. This is important for my senior project because it gives detailed information on current changes in the Mission District and provides actual perceptions and experiences from the Latino residents themselves.

Findley, Lisa. 2002. Soma Residences. *Architectural Record* vol. 190, no.2, pp. 160-163.

A multifamily housing project was established along Mission Street to accommodate the influx of young, hip dot-com employees. It allowed for small businesses to operate out of the project's street-level live/work spaces. David Baker + Partners were the chief architects for this large project. Until the dot-com boom drove up already high housing prices in San Francisco, the block between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> streets on Mission Street was run down despite its proximity to downtown. There were large numbers of homeless and panhandlers that wandered about the area. By building the SOMA residences, the author feels it has benefitted the neighborhood in terms of cleaning up the streets and daily commuting rhythms. The author does point out that even though this new project has cleaned up the neighborhood, social service advocates were not happy with the displacement gentrification brings. About 40% of the units are at lower rents, while the remainder of rent for market prices were about \$1,950 for one bedroom with a loft. Given the tight and expensive San Francisco rental market, many low-income Latino residents cannot afford it.

Atkinson, Rowland. 2003. Introduction: Misunderstood Saviour or Vengeful Wrecker? The Many Meanings and Problems of Gentrification. *Urban Studies* vol. 40, no.12, pp.2343-2350.

The author questions whether neighborhoods are actually being gentrified or is it simply that there are more of those people that we now view as gentrifiers? He also questions



whether people are being displaced or are there simply fewer people working in blue-collar and manual positions? The author discusses gentrification in three aspects: what it is (definitional), why it occurs (theoretical), and who it affects and what should be done about it (political). A central problem of gentrification has been associated with population displacement. The author believes there is not enough coverage on this issue in literature mainly because in places where extensive gentrification has occurred, displaces are usually long gone and hard to track. Although this article is more focused on the gentrification processes occurring in Europe, it is still relevant to my research project because the effects of gentrification are still the same.

Kennedy, Maureen., Leonard, Paul. 2000. Gentrification: Practices and Politics. *The LISC Center for Home Ownership*.

The author breaks down gentrification into its component parts, including the home improvements and the tax revenue increases; the changing face of the neighborhood; and the housing and business affordability challenges. This paper also describes gentrification pressures in the San Francisco Bay Area as well as the consequences involved such as increased housing and neighborhood values, greater income mix and deconcentration of poverty, etc. The pace of gentrification and the level of distress in the neighborhood have much to do with how gentrification is perceived by residents, business owners, city officials, developers and local leaders. The article provides some strategies that should be supported, implemented and funded by regional, city, private sector, non-profit sector and philanthropic interests and they generally require the participation of public and private sector partners. The strategies may not resolve all the negative effects of gentrification.

The greatest challenge for policymakers and community groups alike is to anticipate gentrification pressures.

Hans, Lind., Anders, Hellstrom. 2003. Gentrification- An Overview of the Literature.

*Housing Project at the Division of Building and Real Estate Economics.*

The authors go into theories about why gentrification occurs and examples of policies to reduce gentrification/displacement. According to them, no city or community they examined made effort to unify new and old residents around a single community vision despite the fact that so much conflict occurs during the gentrification process. There are however, conflict management efforts in place. For example, the arts community in the South of Market area of San Francisco is working closely with the affordable housing community to find common ground as artists and high-tech firms convert housing and manufacturing buildings into studio space and offices in the area. The author believes that community-buildings should both honor the neighborhood's past and create new institutions for the future. This article will be helpful in my literature review because it highlights some key points on what gentrification is and the consequences of it.

Lagos, Marisa. Mission District Keeps Evolving. *Sfgate*, September 25, 2009.

In this news article, the writer notes the changes in the Mission District, more noticeably the growing number of bars and restaurants, and families shopping along Mission and 24<sup>th</sup> streets. The area's Latin culture has persisted through the years, despite gentrification and other changes. The writer interviewed a glass business owner who said that the neighborhood tends to change not only from block to block but also from day to night, when people are likely to flood in from other neighborhoods to take advantage of the area's restaurants and bars. The writer includes some positive effects on the

neighborhood in terms of its perennial recession prices. Many businesses such as restaurants offer affordable options for people from various demographics during the recession. The writer makes note of the gentrification issues but does not go into further detail. This article would be helpful for my senior project because it has current information on how the Mission is doing and I can use a quote or two from long time Latino residents that live there.

Profant, Michael, E. 2006. Defining, Measuring, And Predicting Gentrification in 1990s San

Francisco: A Diagnostic Tool for Planners Seeking to Impact the Course of Urban Revitalization. *California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo*.

In this thesis paper, the author presents a method for defining, measuring and identifying predictors of gentrification. The author uses GIS technology to analyze spatial pattern of gentrification in the city, including the relationship between public housing and levels of gentrification. A negative relationship was found to exist between distance to downtown and extent of gentrification. Additionally, public housing was found to impede the gentrification process. Another interesting finding was that gentrification levels tended to be higher in neighborhoods with lower proportions of residents who were not U.S. citizens in 1990s. Contrary to expectations, widescale gentrification appeared to have been less likely to occur in immigrant neighborhoods. The author also found that although rent gaps in neighborhoods containing public housing did not attract gentrifiers, the presence of public housing did not serve as a complete impediment to the occurring gentrification. The author uses cross-tabulation statistical data to see if there are correlations between two variables which may be useful for my research paper.

## Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District Outline

### I. Introduction

- A. Why I selected the topic
- B. Aspects of the topic I would like to focus on
  - 1. What is gentrification
  - 2. Why it's a problem
  - 3. Impacts on neighborhoods

### II. Literature Review

- A. What is gentrification
- B. Historic Overview
- C. Problems associated with gentrification
  - 1. Displacement
  - 2. Neglect by public services and other amenities
  - 3. Increase in rent prices
- D. Benefits
  - 1. Improved services
  - 2. Increase in amenities, redevelopment
- E. Impacts it has on ethnic enclaves

### III. Background

- A. Geography
  - 1. Border distinctions along the Mission District
- B. History of San Francisco's Mission District

1. Cultural context and Latino Identification
  - a. Arrival of Latino immigrants into neighborhood
  - b. Their Latino Mission culture and identity to the District
  - c. Educational and occupational status
2. Signs of gentrification in the neighborhood beginning in the 90s
3. Role of Google in the gentrification process of the Mission

#### IV. Urban Renewal, Early Community Activism

- A. What community-based activist groups have mobilized together to improve certain neighborhood problems
- B. First grassroots mobilization
- C. Obstacles/conflicting interests

#### V. The Mission District's Current Context

- A. Gentrification still a threat?
  1. Indicators pointing to gentrification
- B. Perceptions from Latino residents
- C. Why there has been an influx of high-income individuals into the Mission
  1. Attractions
- D. Impacts on the working-class community

#### VI. Conclusion

- A. Gentrification is a complex process with both positive and negative impacts
- B. Residents have different concerns and solutions
- C. Policy implication

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## Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District

### *Introduction*

The Mission District in San Francisco has always been a vibrant working-class community since the 1940s, cultivating a strong Latin American culture. However, after the great migration to the suburbs in the 1940s and 50s, many cities in the U.S. fell into a state of neglect and deterioration. In the 1970s, a new phenomenon took place in hopes of saving these cities plagued by disinvestment and destruction. Initially, many believed that *gentrification* – the process in which high-income households move into low-income areas thus exploiting resources and changing the dynamics of an area- could revive our cities. This attitude quickly dwindled and gave way to a focus on gentrification's detrimental impact on existing low-income residents and its role in displacing these individuals.

In order to fully understand the process of gentrification, I decided I needed to take a more thorough look at the experiences of an existing community undergoing gentrification. Although the Mission District has not reached the same levels of disinvestment and abandonment as Harlem New York, we do see indicators that this neighborhood is gentrifying quite rapidly. The impact of gentrification on the Mission community has been substantial where the most significant indication of the occurring changes was the tremendous increase in housing prices.

In my research, I explore the history and development of the Mission and the effects of gentrification on long-term Latino residents in the neighborhood. My purpose is to show that the process of gentrification can negatively impact vibrant ethnic enclaves and hinder their ability to retain their cultural pride which has been a dominant characteristic of the Mission over the decades. Latino residents feel they should continue to maintain a sense of ownership over the “barrio” given that they play the key role in making the Mission what it is today.

While gentrification may be seen as an unacceptable tragedy according to community activists of cultural and economic diversity, its impact is not as black and white as many insist. Gentrification produces both negative and beneficial effects. By taking a closer look at low-income residents’ experiences, we may be able to find solutions in promoting gentrification’s benefits while offsetting its negative impacts. Communities react differently in gentrification so it is important for policymakers to understand how different kinds of communities experience the process and develop effective policies accordingly.

I have mainly used secondary sources for this project which includes books, research papers/reports, and articles from newspapers. I also want to incorporate an in-depth background of the Mission District and how its history, development, demographics may shape gentrification. It is important to look at the neighborhood context when analyzing the impact of gentrification so I have used a variety of secondary sources to create a more thorough neighborhood context. Newspaper articles have been a reliable source for local voice on the gentrification of the Mission. Articles written on the topic have considerably slowed since the beginnings of the gentrification process but continue to inform readers of new developments in the gentrification story. In understanding how gentrification affects certain communities, we

have to take into consideration the historical background of the neighborhood which will help in predicting what impact gentrification will have on the community.

### *Literature Review*

As gentrification entered cities worldwide in the 1970s and the 80s, the recession was able to slow its progress in the early 90s at which point many scholars predicted the end of gentrification (DeFilippis and Smith 1999: 43). We see today that this is clearly not the case as inner cities continue to experience redevelopment brought on by gentrification. A simple definition of gentrification that has been attained from the Encyclopedia of Housing describes it as, “The process by which central urban neighborhoods that have undergone disinvestments and economic decline experience a reversal, reinvestment, and the immigration of a relatively well-off, middle- and upper middle-class population” (Hamnett 1984: 198). To provide a more detailed account, Chris Hamnett (1984: 284) says this:

Simultaneously a physical, economic, social and cultural phenomenon. Gentrification commonly involves the invasion by middle-class or higher-income groups of previously working-class neighborhoods or multi-occupied ‘twilight areas’ and the replacement or displacement of many of the original occupants. It involves the physical renovation or rehabilitation of what was frequently a highly deteriorated housing stock and its upgrading to meet the requirements of its new owners. In the process, housing in the areas affected, both renovated and unrenovated, undergoes a significant price appreciation. Such a process of neighborhood transition commonly involves a degree of tenure transformation from renting to owning.

For others, gentrification was simply the expression of broader forces in society. Some have extended gentrification to include both sides of the middle-class housing market, the renovation of old properties and the redevelopment of new units which both serve as a broader restructuring of the city. Gentrification usually means that the “old” population is replaced by other groups.



This process is called displacement in the literature. The focus in the literature is *how* the “old” population is being displaced. A distinction is made between “direct” and “indirect” displacement. Directly displaced persons are forced to leave their residence through extreme forms such as eviction or harassment (Lind, Hellstrom 2003: 8). Direct displacement requires the residents to move. They have no choice whatsoever. In some cases, they may be offered some form of compensation, but they still must move out. Indirect displacement covers more economic and social reasons. One example of this could be the old residents were “priced” out as rent levels might rise or the property taxes might increase when the market value of the property rises (Atkinson 1998: 43). Another reason why old residents might move out is because they do not feel at home anymore. The types of shops have changed, friends and family have moved on, and people move out in order to avoid being socially isolated. Indirect displacement occurs even though residents are free to stay if they want to. The only problem is that they cannot afford it. Rising rents and house prices make them leave the area.

Gentrification has also been seen as a kind of urban redevelopment, which commonly refers to structural changes and interventions within cities designed to reduce urban problems and improve urban institutions as well as the standard of living for residents (Nyborg 2008: 7). Gentrification can be most prominent in central cities located in metropolitan areas experiencing economic, housing market, and socio-demographic changes. The process is most notable in areas where emerging office construction is taking place. This marks a post-industrial transformation where the offices serve to support managerial and professional occupations in which services and government play a larger role than manufacturing (Spain 1992: 125). While the influx of middle-class residents to these areas was once thought to be a “back-to-the-city” movement from the

suburbs, the majority of gentrifiers actually make the move from other neighborhoods within the city (Nyborg 2008: 16).

Gentrification can arise through a number of different types of changes in the housing stock. The construction of new buildings and apartments can take place without the replacement of older ones. This is done by loft conversions, or new houses built in brown- or greenfield areas (Atkinson 2002: 54). In the brownfield areas, previous industries are being torn down and replaced by houses with attractive apartments aimed at high-income groups. In the greenfield areas new construction takes place on vacant lots. In the 1960's this form, in which no immediate displacement takes place, was not thought of as gentrification. This view has changed since then where gentrification can and often does take place via construction without replacement. In addition, gentrification can arise during construction of new "luxurious" houses and apartments replace old houses that are torn down. When luxury renovations in old residential houses occur, landlords then use this improved standard as a justification for raising rents on the regulated market. The conversions from rental to different forms of condominiums may pose a problem for the original tenants who might not be able to invest in their own condominium and continue to rent, but this time, their neighbors are the landlords. After awhile, those who have bought their apartments move out as they are replaced by high income groups (Lind, Hellstrom 2003:10). For a number of reasons, landlords might prefer high-income groups when they have a choice because they are able to maximize their profit even if rent regulation keeps the rent level rather low.

The proposed explanations for gentrification tend to focus on either the demand side or supply side. The supply side explanations assume that some high-income groups have a higher willingness to pay for housing in the specific area. Demand side explanations of gentrification

focus on changing preferences and demographic factors that might lead to an increased demand from high income groups for centrally located housing (Lind, Hellstrom 2003:11). One factor include the maturing of the baby-boom generation where a growing percentage of 25-35 year olds has placed tremendous demand on housing supply which has led to gentrification. Another explanation deals with the growing “white-collar” employment sector. It has been argued that financial corporations require “spatial proximity” to “reduce decision times” and that the growth of the “white collar” employment sector have gentrified housing locations in the inner city close to the managerial or professional jobs as people move downtown. It has been further argued that for some people, housing has become a sort of “cultural investment” (Lind, Hellstrom 2003: 12). This suggests that new-middle class value status symbols such as apartments in beautiful, old buildings in order to express their social distance from classes below them. Supply-side explanations of gentrification are associated with “gap” theories of gentrification which are the rent and value gap. A gap exists when the current rent or property value is far less than the potential value of the property ( Nyborg 2008: 14). While each side certainly plays a role in explaining gentrification, neither is thorough and today we see a shift in literature that places emphasis on how the arguments are complementary rather than competing. Neil Smith argues that rent gaps are “property-specific, but that value gaps are less place-dependent and more area-specific, as they depend on wider housing policy issues” (Smith 2002). Supply-side explanations provide an understanding of how gentrifiable properties are produced through the logic of “rent gap”, while demand-side theories focus on the production of gentrifiers and their cultural attributes and preferences of housing (Lind, Hellstrom 2003: 15). There are other factors, including the role of the state that should be taken into account. Gentrification is not something that is caused by housing renewal policies, although these may affect the process.

Initially, in the early 70s, gentrification was seen in a positive light for its potential to “save” the decrepit and crime-ridden central cities. A person who sees gentrification as an investment in the construction or improvement of buildings in an area previously run down, view it positively. He or she will find that it stimulates private investment in the area, allows governments to allocate more funding to infrastructure and streetscapes, raises service provision standards and attracts new businesses (Lind, Hellstrom 2003: 17). The term now has negative connotations that are associated with displacement and the destruction of working class communities (Smith, 1996). People who view gentrification negatively will concentrate on the demographic and socio-economic changes in which they will find rising rents, rising land values, rising prices of food and beverages, loss of affordable housing (which often leads to displacement), and a decline in the cohesiveness of the community. If gentrification does cause considerable displacement, what then are the responsibilities of urban policy? It is essential to better understand gentrification in order to inform political activists regarding the threat to working-class communities. Furthermore, gentrification today is often categorized as the postmodern version of the urban renewal programs of the 1950s and 60s which has produced unfavorable results for many communities across the nation (Nyborg 2008:18).

People began to see that while gentrification restored some communities, it deteriorated existing working-class communities. Some gentrification advocates argued that the process brought great benefits to the city in the form of improved housing and tax revenue but these improvements to cities cannot be directly correlated to gentrification as other areas in the city that are not reporting or experiencing the similar improvements. The threat of displacement resulting from gentrification has been the most debated issue. Smith strongly believes that

gentrification and its detrimental effect hits hardest on low-income and working class communities. He argues that the benefits of gentrification only accommodate the capitalists instead of the existing residents that are faced with displacement (Smith, 1996). Even though gentrification may not force residents to leave their homes, it may break up the existing community by preventing other working-class individuals who revitalize that community to move into the neighborhood. Moreover, while increasing rent may not drive residents completely out of the neighborhood, it may force a greater number of residents to share a single living space which results in cramped and difficult living conditions.

Proponents of gentrification see the process as an inevitable process, while community activists feel that developers are using the land for its “highest” and “best” use (Blomley 2004). This poses the question then, who has the right to decide the future of the neighborhood? Many low-income residents do not own property but feel a sense of entitlement to these spaces by being part of the community. They do not have the resources to invest in property but they do demand certain rights of use and access to neighborhood space and a say in what direction neighborhood development should go towards. Indigenous residents do not have a placeholder in the literature of gentrification. The supply side explanation focuses on the developers, landlords and capital while the demand side focuses on the elite and middle-class (Nyborg, 2008: 26). The most challenging question we face regards the role policy should play in supporting low-income residents and preserving what they believe to be the symbols of an ethnic community. There is little evidence to support the idea that gentrification is the key to eliminating poverty. However, it does help improve various aspects of the individual’s quality of life such as the level of public services and other amenities. Policy intervention is needed to ensure that low-income households continue to have access to gentrifying neighborhoods as well as the amenities they provide.

### *Geography*

My research is focused on what is considered to be San Francisco's "barrio", the Mission District- the area being bordered by the U.S. 101 on the East, Church Street on the West, Cesar Chavez on the South, and Duboce Ave on the North. Other border distinctions include the Inner Mission, the Outer Mission and Mission Dolores.

### *History*

The Mission San Francisco de Asis, popularly known as Mission Dolores, was founded in 1776. As San Francisco expanded from Yerba Buena Cove after the gold rush, settlers squatted on the former ranchos in the Mission District (Godfrey, 1988). A street grid was attached in the "Mission Addition" in the 1860s and 1870s, opening the way for residential growth. Initially, the Mission attracted recreational facilities and resorts, featuring theaters, racetracks, gardens and zoos. Over time, the District was transformed from countryside to cityscape as larger plots of land were subdivided for housing development.

The San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906 spared most of the Mission District. Although the Mission Street initially benefitted from increased retail activity while the downtown was being rebuilt, the 1906 earthquake ultimately ended the District's aspiration for affluence (Godfrey, 1988). The city's housing shortage encouraged the development of increased densities in the Mission. The larger old houses of the District were being subdivided and the remaining vacant lots were developed often with higher-density flats and apartments that catered to refugees from areas that were ravaged by the fire. Many displaced Italians from North Beach moved into the District, as did Irish, Germans, and Scandinavians from the South of Market area.

Latinos have long since been one of the largest and fastest growing ethnic groups in the United States and have built strong working class communities throughout in the nation, specifically in the Mission District since the 1940s. It also has substantial historical significance for being a national epicenter of Latino culture and politics in the 1960s as well as the 1970s (Nyborg 2008: 27). The mobilization of the group in the community has helped defend against urban renewal projects in the 1960s, anti-discrimination movements in the 1970s, demonstrations involving the U.S. intervention in Central American civil wars in the 1980s and today, the fight against gentrification. Looking into the neighborhood's history depicts how Latinos created a loyal and tight knit community within the Mission District. The Latinos' identification with the neighborhood has enabled them to organize at a high level and is able to unite when necessary to defend against urban renewal initiatives in the 1960s as well as push for neighborhood improvements. The Mission District was attractive to blue-collar workers because it was centrally located and convenient to public transportation routes that lead to the city's blue-collar employment centers south of Market Street and along the waterfront.

The arrival of Latin American groups in San Francisco took various forms that shaped the beginning and now existing landscape. Certain common cultural traits, most notably, the Spanish language itself help unite a heterogenous Hispanic community that is made up of diverse Latin American nationalities. Among major American cities, San Francisco probably has the highest proportion of Central American Hispanics. The city's fastest-growing Central American groups, which together outnumber Hispanics of Mexican origin, are from Nicaragua and El Salvador (Godfrey, 1984: 25). Mexicans made up the majority of Latin Americans within San Francisco until the 1950s, where they not only exhibited certain cultural traditions but also a certain labor market framework (Nyborg 2008:76). Mexican migrants commonly made their way to the city

via land, moving north from one agricultural settlement to another until finally leaving the fields in order to find a better life in the city. The unskilled and working-class Mexican migrants quickly filled the industrial jobs the city had to offer. Prior to World War II, Mexicans were concentrated in two neighborhoods: South of Market (SOMA) zone and a barrio in North Beach surrounding Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe Church.

Immigration from Central America increased during the early twentieth century. Many Salvadorans, Nicaraguans and other Central Americans were recruited to work on construction of the Panama Canal. Unlike the Mexicans who moved northward on land, much of this mobile labor force joined shipping lines operating in the Canal, leading many Central Americans to come to San Francisco (Godfrey, 1984: 2). By the 1950s, Central and South Americans outnumbered Mexican residents in San Francisco (Godfrey, 1988). The second wave of Central American immigration, post 1950, resulted from severe political strife within the region. Many fled to San Francisco for political reasons rather than economic motivations, knowing that the city was renowned for a strong Latin American community.

Many Latin American males worked as laborers near the San Francisco waterfront, especially south of Market Street. Coffee companies, canneries, agricultural refineries and industrial plants needing manual labor were located there. In addition, the United Fruit Company Docks was situated nearby where a banana boat arrived weekly from Central America (Godfrey, 1988). The United Fruit Company operated three freight and passenger steamships between San Francisco and the west coast of Central America where banana plantations were moved in the late 1920s and 1930s to escape a banana plague on the Caribbean side (Godfrey, 1988).

There was a huge change in San Francisco's existing Latino neighborhoods when World War II exploded. The residents of the barrio surrounding Guadalupe Church were already being



displaced by the building of the Bay Bridge in the 1930s. Latinos from North Beach and SOMA were being pulled southward into the Mission District for war time production needs. This not only provided low-cost housing but also a large bulk of employment opportunities (Sandoval, 2002). The Mission was previously an Irish neighborhood and when the Latinos started to arrive, the population went from 11 percent Latino in 1950 to 45 percent Latino in 1970 (Nyborg, 2008: 35). The Mission District has a proportion of youth, consisting about a third of the population. Crowded living spaces in the Mission due to lack of recreational facilities and high unemployment make the street a logical place for young people.

### *Latino Identification*

Unlike the Italian and Irish immigrant groups, the Latino population as a whole did not use the Mission as a temporary settlement. Since their arrival to the neighborhood in the 1940s, Latinos have tied their culture and identity to the District. Latino Mission culture and politics peaked in the 1970s and 1980s. During the 1970s, the streets of the Mission were filled with Latino artists, radicals and even intellectuals. Latino artists made the Mission District their canvas, creating a culturally dynamic, ethnic neighborhood. Alejandro Murguia, a writer and activist of the time recalls,

“La Mission wasn't one individual but a community, an unofficial group of artists who interacted, exchanged ideas and helped each other in our projects...we'd meet in a little Nicaraguan bar on Mission Street, "El Tico Nica," to drink rum and talk about back home, and how back home seemed to be La Mission. In 1971, nothing beautiful had ever happened to Latinos in the United States, so we set out with our art to remake the world a beautiful place for ourselves. And we didn't ask anyone's permission to do it. Not knowing any better, we just went out and did it...And like any pueblito, everyone knew everyone, and you'd bump into friends at receptions, parties, street fairs, or just shopping for pan dulce. Or I'd walk down Twenty-fourth

street and hear the Spanish inflections of the entire continent - Nicoya slang, Chicano calo, rapid-fire cubanismos, the elegant phrasing of Chileans.” (Murguia 2002: 124- 126)

Murguia’s description of the neighborhood illustrates the strong Latino identification with the Mission. The abundance of artistic expression, including the murals that the neighborhood is now famous for resulted in the creation of The Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts and La Galeria de la Raza. These are the two institutions that became significant not only within the Mission but to the general Latino community as well.

Despite the vitality of the Mission District, it is tainted with the characteristics of any American ghetto- poverty, drugs, crime, slums, prostitution, overcrowding and inadequate public services. Historically, the Mission District’s educational and occupational status as well as family income, has remained well below the city’s average. Prior to the 1990s dot-com boom accompanied with the hard gentrification hit, the Mission attracted city dwellers and acted as a magnet of urban life. Castells explained in 1983,

“The Mission presents a unique case of a Barrio that remains a center of attraction for urban life, improving the real estate values while still maintaining most of its character as a neighborhood for immigrants and the poor. Some of the trends of this urban achievement seem to be related to the popular mobilization that has taken place in the Mission District since the mid-1960s...the characteristics of neighborhood mobilization account not only for the urban revival but also for the shortcomings of this urban situation, as a consequence of the contradictions and pitfalls of the grassroots movement...The complexity of the Mission’s urban reality is in fact the result of the tortuous path undertaken by the neighborhood’s mobilization” (Castells, 1983: 107-109).

Despite the deficiencies the neighborhood experiences in terms of income and occupational status, Latino culture thrives and contributes to the neighborhood’s urban charm.

### *Mission Gentrification: Historical Development*

Beginning in the early 1990s, the Mission faced the encroachment of gentrification sparked by the dot-com boom sweeping the Bay Area and San Francisco's "new economy." In many areas, particularly the Outer Mission, industrial buildings were being converted into high-priced lofts as new homeowners flocked to the "hip" and "up and coming" neighborhood. The area surrounding Valencia and 18<sup>th</sup> streets saw an increase in trendy boutiques and expensive restaurants catering to the newly arrived residents of the District (Nyborg 2008: 47). Since then, the Mission has followed a classic pattern of a run-down and dangerous neighborhood that has attracted young artists, college students and homosexuals. The dot-com boom and rapid job growth in the Silicon Valley spurred the influx of high-income individuals into the Mission.

The Mission then and today illustrates a neighborhood suitable for gentrification. For starters, the District exists in a city prone to high levels of gentrification. San Francisco's housing supply is greatly constrained while the city itself is within proximity to the twenty-something workers at Silicon Valley firms looking for a dynamic city instead of quiet suburbs in which to live, making it particularly favorable for redevelopment at the expense of lower income residents (Alejandrino, 2000). Furthermore, the neighborhood has many amenities attractive to newcomers. The neighborhood gets plenty of sunshine unlike most other neighborhoods in San Francisco, offers two BART stations that are one stop City Hall and two stops from the financial district, and provides easy access to major freeways to get to Silicon Valley. Most of the neighborhood is also within walking distance to other popular neighborhoods such as the Castro and Noe Valley. According to Kennedy and Leonard, the Mission's Latino population is especially vulnerable to gentrification pressures where "84 percent are renters, incomes are low,

language barriers are high, and American citizenship is not universal” (Kennedy and Leonard 2002: 45).

Another factor that has helped speed up the process of gentrification of the Mission is the 1988 ordinance that allowed for the conversion of industrial spaces into live/work lofts originally fought for and won by local artists. This ordinance enabled artists to build or convert spaces in areas zoned for industry thus bypassing building codes, avoiding affordable housing contracts and a significant portion of school taxes (Solnit, 2000). Artists were frustrated about not being defined at City Hall therefore requesting special zoning without providing city officials the ability to properly enforce the ordinance. Developers used this to their advantage who easily worked around regulations sparking an expansion of lofts, which led to price increases and displacement of blue collar-jobs. Other indicators documented in the Mission including a rapid increase in housing values and rents relative the city, disproportionate eviction rates, rapid growth in the number and value of commercial sales relative to the city and greater business growth trends to the city (Alejandrino, 2000).

One of the newest and increasingly controversial additions to the neighborhood is a shuttle service run by Google that transports employees from San Francisco to company headquarters in Mountain View. One of the shuttle’s pick up points is the intersection of Mission Street and 24<sup>th</sup> Street. This easily accessible transportation opportunity has encouraged Google employees to find housing specifically in the Mission District, contributing to the housing constraints and increasing rents (Elliot, 2007). The impact of gentrification on the Mission community has been dramatic with the most significant indication of occurring changes appearing in the substantial increase in housing prices. As documented in this 1999 *New York Times* account:

The entire Mission District, port of entry for San Francisco's Hispanic immigrants for more than 50 years, is changing by the day. New people, people who have money, are moving in, altering life for everyone. Sagging Victorian houses that landlords had chopped into two or three rental units are sold for a half million dollars, and warehouses are becoming loft condominiums in the \$300,000 to \$400,000 range... In the last three years, rents here have jumped from \$600 a month for a two-bedroom apartment to \$1800; a house that cost \$150,000 is now \$450,000. More tenants have been evicted in the last three years than at any other time by landlords using a city ordinance that allows eviction if the owner or a relative plans to move in for a least a year. Last year, 1400 apartments in the city were emptied for this reason, most of them in the Mission District. Tenant advocates say the real numbers are much higher because scores of families simply moved out when asked by their landlords... "Eviction are all we do these days," says Matt Brown, a lawyer who directs the St. Peter's Housing Committee in the Mission, a tenants' advocacy group. "We'd like to do other things, like community organizing, but the housing situation has made it almost impossible."... So Mission residents are increasingly moving out of the city. Those who stay often rent space in friends' or relatives' apartments, miserable singleroom-occupancy hotels, garages, storage barns or even vans." (Nieves, 1999)

Displacement hits renters the hardest, particularly when they do not have permanent legal immigration status or do not speak English, which is often the case in the Mission District. These low-income residents are simply unable to afford the rapid and substantial price increases. Many of the neighborhood's non-profit organizations are experiencing displacement. Many are being evicted and displaced as a result of the massive redevelopment (Kennedy and Leonard, 2001). In one example, 20 small businesses and non-profit organizations were operating out of a building on Mission Street when they were evicted to accommodate a "dot-com" company (Kennedy and Leonard, 2001). The very organizations helping to offset the negative consequences of gentrification are being displaced, leaving the low-income community at an even greater risk.

Although gentrification can bring in a new wave of consumers which could potentially increase commercial activity for local businesses, indigenous Mission District businesses have

not benefitted from this newcomer consumerism (Kennedy and Leonard, 2001). Not only does this hurt local business owners, but it also threatens the neighborhood's cultural character. As Leonard and Kennedy point out,

“Under great pressure are the same Latino groceries and religious stores that give the neighborhood character and attract twenty something newcomers. The owners of El Herradero Restaurant face a 63 percent increase in rent after 12 years in business, while the Los Jarritos Restaurant and Mi Rancho Market were displaced as the buildings' owner put them up for sale. The street's mix of businesses is shifting gradually from those serving the basic needs of the Latino population, to the more eclectic preferences of its new upscale residents” (Leonard and Kennedy, 2001: 21).

Within the Mission's working-class community, taquerias are being replaced by trendy bistros and the corner produce and grocery stores are being replaced by high-priced specialty food stores catering to upper-income patrons.

### *Community Activism*

The late 1960s and 1970s saw a rise in the number of community-based activist groups and mobilizations in response to redevelopment plans initiated by the city for the neighborhood and dissatisfaction with the living conditions in the Mission. For a short period of time, these organizations and movements succeeded in improving certain neighborhood problems like discrimination and inadequate public services. The first grassroots mobilization in the Mission was established in 1966 by the threat of the same urban renewal program that produced disastrous results for the Filmore and Western Addition in the late 1950s (Sandoval, 2002). Many residents were concerned that state-sponsored improvements to the neighborhood which included bulldozing of certain areas for new housing sites and the construction of two BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) subway stations would “price out low-income residents by increasing

the presences of middle-class and small business owners (Nyborg 2008:41). The Mission Council on Redevelopment (MCOR), the initial group formed to defend against the urban renewal proposed by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA), succeeded in organizing a major campaign to protest and convince the board of supervisors of the city of San Francisco to override the mayor's approval of the renewal proposal (Castells, 1983). In addition,

“The efforts of MCOR brought together a diverse base of the Mission District together in a successful campaign. Achieving a victory that revealed their power as a coalition the residents increasingly saw themselves as a community of mutual interests rather than disparate ethnicities. Symbolically, the fight against Urban Renewal helped to engender a growing perception within the community that this discreet space of the Mission District belonged to its residents. More than mere tenants renting from an absentee landlord, or migrants scraping out a living until they could move on, the Mission District was home to the diverse body that fought to include themselves in any vision of the future” (Sandoval, 2002: 151).

With the success of MCOR, the Mission community realized that a coalition could be formed to counteract the redevelopment plans that were aimed predominantly towards downtown interests. Latino identification with the neighborhood enabled a high level of organization that was necessary to defend against urban renewal initiatives in the 1960s as well as push for neighborhood improvements. This particular united front, which took form in the Mission Coalition Organization (MCO), was determined to improve the Mission neighborhood life by creating new playgrounds, installing community representatives in the new Mission Mental Health Center, banning pawnshops and aggressively fight discrimination against minorities (Castells, 1983). At its peak, the MCO successfully engaged over twelve thousand Mission District residents to improve their own neighborhood and plan for its future. However, in the 1970s, the MCO failed to uphold its vision with its inability to outline cohesive goals and its continuous infighting led to the organization's downfall. Another substantial blow to the

organization's legitimacy was the accusation and belief among many Mission Latinos that the MCO was "dominated by an Anglo-Alinsky-inspired staff, insensitive to the Latino culture: the MCO was using a Latino image, so the argument ran, to win power in city hall for a non-Latino organization" (Castells, 1983: 116). Even though the MCO ultimately collapsed, it laid the foundation for future collaborative work by Mission residents and led to other Latino community-based activism during its time.

By the late 1980s, over a decade after the Mission Coalition experience, many community organizations failed to solve the social problems facing the District or change the political system as a whole (Godfrey, 1988). Various factors contributed to the lack of success by these organizations. Firstly, recruiting community participation remained a hefty challenge due to the many illegal immigrants within the Mission. Many of these residents saw little faith in the ability of politics to change their living circumstances due to their status. Each organization had its own priorities. Instead of working together to improve the neighborhood one issue at a time, organizations frequently fought over limited resources and energy. Castells concludes that, "the experience of the Mission offers the paradox of a highly mobilized community that achieved substantial changes at the urban, social and cultural levels, while being totally unable to become politically influential in the local power structure" (Castells, 1983: 136). As noted, however, these organizations did contribute to improving certain aspects of Mission life and in keeping the Latino neighborhood culture alive (Godfrey, 1988).

Since the dot-com boom, gentrification has been an uphill battle where Latino Mission activists have been successful in assembling community support with their ideas and feelings of possessing true ownership and their rightful belonging in the neighborhood. The high attendance and many testimonies at various San Francisco Planning Commission hearings at City Hall



illustrate how passionate the group of Latino Mission residents is towards the future of their neighborhood. At one hearing regarding a redevelopment site, a resident activist created a stir with his speech:

“Despite the dot-com boom that hit the Mission hard, hundreds of Latinos, working people were being displaced, evicted, taking an economic beat-down, leaving us black and blue, broken, busted. Despite the loss of PDR jobs, despite the desperation of family housing, despite the growing gulf of income and inequality for a family of four, this struggle continues. Commissioners, we're here to tell [the developers] and company that this ain't Mister Rogers' neighborhood! No, this is Mrs. Rodriguez's barrio! And she and her grandchildren deserve affordable housing!” (Freidenfeld 2006: 87)

This activist suggests that not only should Latinos maintain a sense of ownership over the barrio, but that they also play a key role in making the Mission what it is today. The Latino community argued that although they may not be wealthy enough to be property owners, they still deserve certain rights with regard to their barrio. This sentiment led to the formation of the Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition (MAC). MAC strove to incorporate the voices of the people of the Mission in development plans arguing that many times neighborhood associations will claim to represent the people when, in fact, they speak for only a handful without actively reaching out to the community at large (Nyborg, 2008:53). MAC held meetings and went door-to-door informing residents about zoning and listening to their concerns in addition to their visions for the future of the Mission. MAC was probably one of the most organized gentrification mobilizations to date, but there were other community groups that sprung up to combat the encroaching redevelopment. The Mission Yuppie Eradication Project put up posters calling for class war and encouraged the vandalism of property belonging to higher income residents. Fighting Mission gentrification has posed a difficult task and one with an uncertain outcome.

Antonio Dias of People Organized to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER)

summed up the MAC efforts,

“When we are talking in the late nineties about the dot.com boom, it became obvious that the single-issue groups had to come together. Fighting gentrification wasn’t going to be a short-term campaign. It would mean effective organizing, mass mobilizations, and more. MAC brought together groups that were already doing work and created a force that could counteract the displacement push. Since the dot.com bust MAC has been trying to dig deep into our constituencies. In the beginning we needed to make a swift impact. Now we’re making sure that we pay attention to bringing in new activists and doing popular education. I think that if we had incorporated more of this in the beginning we would have made more of a change” (Castells 1983: 186).

Dias suggests that time played an important role in the ability of groups to influence the process of gentrification. The dot-com boom produced gentrification at an unstoppable speed where the community had little warning of the redevelopment threat before it hit and was unable to properly mobilize (Castells, 1983).

### *The Mission District: Current Context*

The Mission community’s disorganization and inability to agree upon a common goal and plan of action in response to gentrification left it vulnerable to the negative consequences of the process. Conflict has revolved around the idea of who truly “belonged” to the Mission and who had the right to decide what future was in store for the neighborhood. Some non-Latinos felt that parts of the neighborhood were permanently off-limits to them, even if they had lived there for years. This suggests there is a strong Latino versus Anglo divide in the community. On the other hand, newly-arrived legal and illegal Latino migrants were encouraged to immediately join fellow working-class neighbors in defending the right to live and work in the District

(Freidenfeld, 2006). Today, gentrification threatens to permanently alter and weaken the Latino Mission culture and diversity for which the neighborhood is known. In general, rapid gentrification brings many more problems than slow but steady revitalization. The Mission District was unfortunately hit hard and fast as a result of the dot-com boom. It will continue to evolve as the edges of the neighborhood have been “gentrified” by youngish, affluent Anglos, who have started new businesses and restored many older residences in one of San Francisco’s principal Victorian neighborhoods (Godfrey, 1988). The Mission can change from block to block. Mission Street is still packed with produce stands and other inexpensive grocery stores, discount clothes, furniture businesses and taco shops. Just a block away on Valencia Street, clothing boutiques and restaurants are geared towards young and more affluent clientele. Moreover, 16<sup>th</sup> Street has become a mix of the old and new, with dive bars and taquerias located alongside high-end cafes and restaurants (Lagos, 2009). It is ironic that more than thirty years later, the area surrounding Valencia Street is now described as “the hippest in America” by *Vanity Fair* magazine (Sinclair 2004: 149). As a result, the Latino community may eventually no longer survive in the neighborhood in which they have cultivated pride and character.

While I have explored the views of activists, policymakers, and community organizers, the only narrative I am missing are the indigenous Latino Mission residents. At the onset of gentrification in the 1970s, it was viewed favorably in its potential to save our inner cities. However, the perception gave way to a growing concern over gentrification’s role in class conflict and the displacement of the poor. According to Nyborg’s interviews with the residents, she found that many of the Latino residents she spoke with were not outwardly hostile towards gentrification. Most noted both pros and cons associated with gentrification- benefits gained and prices paid (Nyborg 2008: 60). The deterioration and displacement aspects of gentrification has

upset long-term residents but their experiences and perceptions illustrated how gentrification had a much more complex impact on communities. In reflecting on the changes occurring in the Mission over the last twenty years, Nyborg found that the loss of a strong family presence was cited as the most upsetting among long-term residents. April, a woman who has lived her entire life in the neighborhood notes, “Growing up there were a lot more Latino families. My grandma’s house is on Harrison between 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> and it was the central meeting point for my entire family and everyone we knew there were Latino families and you just don’t see that anymore” (Nyborg, 2008: 61). This lost sense of community and personally knowing your neighbors has been a recurring complaint among the residents.

The story of displacement in the Mission is also more complicated than Latinos being pushed out by the influx of higher-income individuals. Displacement is certainly a serious concern and higher housing prices are making it more difficult for low-income individuals to live in the Mission. Every resident that Nyborg spoke with said they had a friend or family member move away from the Mission. Although many of them attribute the majority of family departures to being unable to afford the neighborhood, others mention the role of safety in these decisions. The decision for a family to move away consisted of a variety of factors. For example, many families may be able to afford to live in the Mission but realize they can get much more for the same price in Oakland or Richmond. They are able to buy an entire house with a backyard instead of being confined to an apartment complex (Nyborg, 2008:64). In addition to the lure of bigger houses and a backyard, the Mission hasn’t always been a desirable place to live and many Latino families use the neighborhood as a temporary settlement before they move on to better areas and the suburbs. Crime and other factors continue to play a role in people’s desire to leave

the neighborhood. Diana, a woman who grew up in the Mission was asked if the Latino families wanted to stay in the Mission or were they forced out. She said this:

“I grew up in the Mission but went to a good Catholic school with kids at another class level. So for Latinos going to this school, living in the Mission was not a good thing. It was like the suburbs were the place to be and for Latino families being able to move to the suburbs when I was growing up was like a big step up. But for my family it was more important to be around family and because they owned a business in the neighborhood it was more important for them to stay near family and didn't want to go to the suburbs for that reason. But growing up there was sort of a stigma of living in the Mission. The Mission was not moving up in class” (Nyborg, 2008: 65).

There are undoubtedly families that desired to stay in the neighborhood and unlike Diana's case, many families did not have the resources to do so, however there were also other families who were working to leave the neighborhood.

The Mission is no longer the close-knit Latino family community it used to be. Latino families concerned about safety were already interested in moving to safer suburbs and that paired with the rise of housing prices resulting from gentrification, created a push-pull effect that lead them out of the neighborhood and into the East Bay or down in the Peninsula. Residents no longer know who their neighbors are and face neighborhood crime which is often spurred by the role of unemployment. The Mission used to house huge industrial warehouses and large manufacturing companies that employed thousands of people. Many remaining residents believe many have all left because of rising rents and because city taxes for businesses are too high (Nyborg, 2008: 71). Residents of the Mission can provide productive insight into ways in which more equitable development can be established within the community.

### *Conclusion*

Ethnic enclaves, and in particular the Mission District which has long been a destination for Latin American migrants, attract immigrants seeking a home and work in the U.S. The Mission District has historically been an immigrant enclave- first as Irish, then Italian and most recently Latin American. Although the Mission District is still home to many Latinos, the strong display of Latino culture that the neighborhood is famous for has waned over the last twenty years. Walking through the Mission, it is still easy to see the strong Latin American influence over the area but slowly, different Latino family-owned businesses have been converted into high-priced boutiques and restaurants.

The goal in this research is to understand how gentrification impacts communities so that we can better identify early warning signs and implement policy changes to help prevent negative consequences while promoting the positives such as cleaner streets. Gentrification cannot be easily stopped but we can, however, learn how policy may help guide its process in promoting its benefits while mitigating its harmful consequences. Many residents are well aware of problems associated with gentrification and also problems associated with proposed solutions like low-income housing. While low-income housing can help some, it can carry over another set of concerns and setbacks. Displacement is still undoubtedly a concern for the working-class Latino community. Activists have gathered to represent the community in spreading the anti-gentrification message and succeeded in making their presence known.

There are different ways in mitigating the negative impact of gentrification. Government and city officials should promote home ownership schemes as well as additional affordable housing programs including tax increment financing (TIC), inclusionary zoning, and a modified version of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). In addressing gentrification, cities

must also acknowledge early indicators and give residents the opportunity to participate in neighborhood development plans. More case studies of neighborhoods with different organizations will help us understand the implications of the process and how it affects different communities.

The story of a working-class ethnic enclave raises other considerations. Many residents were enthusiastic in seeing old abandoned buildings being renovated until they realized that they may be forced to evacuate their home or shop. Likewise, the loss of families in the Mission resulted from a variety of push-pull factors such as increased housing prices. However, many families also actively wanted to move to larger homes and safer streets in the suburbs. High prices were not the only reason driving families out of the neighborhood—crime played a large role. Mission residents also discussed the need for more education and job training opportunities. Workforce development may be another key component in assisting residents in gentrification-prone ethnic enclaves. Doing so could help ease the impact of gentrification by not only assisting job seekers in preparing for different kinds of employment opportunities but also by supporting at-risk youth in becoming a part of the workforce instead of gangs. On top of leaving the area because of rising housing prices and the loss of suitable jobs, families left the Mission because of crime and lack of educational opportunities for their kids. By exploring the process of gentrification in a Latino enclave in San Francisco, we see that gentrification is a complex process and need more thorough investigations into how it impacts indigenous residents of varying communities.

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