

THE STATE OF THE STATE FOR WASHINGTON LATINOS

A Promise of Democracy

Lessons from Latino Underrepresentation in
Washington State

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I. INTRODUCTION

The right to vote freely for the candidate of one's choice is of the essence of a democratic society, and any restrictions on that right strike at the heart of representative government. And the right to suffrage can be denied by a debasement or dilution of the weight of a citizen's vote just as effectively as by wholly prohibiting the free exercise of the franchise.

- Chief Justice Earl Warren, Majority Opinion, *Reynolds v. Sims* (1964)

This report examines the history of local Latino political representation in ten counties of Washington State: Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Okanogan, Skagit, Walla Walla and Yakima. It builds on previous research conducted by the State of the State for Washington Latinos researchers who found that Latinos are drastically underrepresented in every locally elected office (Dollar 2008). This report also furthers research conducted by a former State of the State report, which found that the at-large election system in Sunnyside, Washington was likely a barrier preventing Latino political representation (Warner 2006). This report extends these analyses in order to answer the following questions: Has Latino representation improved in recent decades? What challenges have Latino elected officials faced while serving in office, and what barriers exist to Latino political inclusion, and more broadly, Latino political participation, in Yakima County? We answer these questions by constructing a 30-year history of Latino representation on city councils and school boards investigating the current political climate in Yakima County through interviews with Latino officials and candidates. We also analyze interviews with community leaders in Sunnyside to better understand how community dynamics and the process of electoral reform might influence the success of the newly created electoral districts.

We find that the Latino population of Washington State has been – and continues to be – systematically underrepresented on both city councils and school boards. As a former State of the State report suggests, “underrepresentation is likely a product of a confluence of structural and demographic factors that conspire to reduce both the turnout of Latino voters and the value of their votes” (Duffy 2009, 2). As we will discuss in the next section, it is likely that the very structure of most local elections directly contributes to the startling lack of Latino representation in counties where the Latino population is sometimes as high as sixty percent. In Sunnyside we find that the 2009 electoral reform was passed too recently for us to conduct numerical analysis on its impact on Latino political representation. However, in depth interviews with community members lead us to consider the impact of social, cultural and community dynamics on minority political engagement. Representation and participation are two inextricably linked issues, and our work in Sunnyside suggests that election reform needs to be supported with programs aimed at bolstering minority participation.

Though this report focuses on Latino representation on the local level, the implications of our findings extend to every citizen in Washington State. Currently local governments are not accurately representing local communities. This is not a minority issue; this is a democratic issue. We cannot lay claim to the government President Lincoln once described – a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people” – while some groups have an unheard voice in the political conversation. If we are to claim Lincoln's ideal of a representative democracy, we must ensure that all people have an equal opportunity to elect the candidate of their choosing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The History of the Right to Vote

As a representative democracy, the legitimacy of the American government is inexorably tied to the integrity of the electoral process. Accurate representation is not just an abstract notion toward which America strives; it is an ideal that strikes at the very heart of our national identity. Slogans such as “no taxation without representation” set the tone for the revolution and laid the foundation of an American political system that is inherently and essentially participatory. Suffrage is the most fundamental type of political participation, but it was not until nearly a century after independence was won that the first positive protections for the right to vote were enshrined in the Constitution. The Fifteenth Amendment asserts that “the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

Even with this Constitutional protection in place, many racial and ethnic minorities in the United States were systematically denied their right to vote. Minority suffrage continued to be limited by poll taxes, literacy tests, and a variety of other electoral mechanisms. It was not until 1965 that Congress decided to curb these practices, exercising its power to enforce the Fifteenth Amendment through the creation of the Voting Rights Act. This legislation remains the single most significant achievement in the long struggle for minority enfranchisement. In the words of Alexander Keyssar:

By 1965, the Constitution was interpreted to mean that individuals not only had the right to register, cast their ballots, and have their ballots counted, but also that they had the right to have their votes count as much as the votes of other citizens... The federal government, moreover, had assumed responsibility for judging the legality and legitimacy of federal, state, and local electoral arrangements (Keyssar 2000, 287).

The Voting Rights Act has been used to eliminate literacy tests and poll taxes, require that bilingual voting materials be provided in some regions, and generally ensure that every American citizen has equal access to and power at the ballot box. The VRA not only protects the ability of minority groups to cast their votes; it also guarantees that a minority group’s votes are not diluted. Vote dilution is the “process whereby election laws or practices, either singly or in concert, combine with systematic bloc voting among an identifiable group to diminish the voting strength of at least one other group” (Davidson and Grofman, 1994, 22). Bloc voting refers to the phenomenon in which a cohesive group of voters all cast their ballots for the same candidate while an opposing cohesive group does the same for another candidate. When these groups are racial or ethnic, the phenomenon is known as “racially polarized voting” (22). In a survey of voters in an race of mayor in Atlanta, Georgia, Bullock and Campbell find that approximately 75% of voters chose “a candidate of their own race because they have no particular reason to do otherwise” (Bullock and Campbell 1984, 162). Though this race did not involve any overtly partisan or divisive issues, results like these indicate that racially polarized voting occurs in local elections.

Numerous studies have shown that the combination of at-large elections and the phenomenon known as racially polarized voting can dilute the voting power of minority groups (Davidson and

Korbel 1981; Leal et al. 2004; Meier et al. 2005; Polinard et al. 1994). As Davidson and Korbel explain, “racial vote dilution takes place when a majority of voters, by bloc voting for its candidates in a series of elections, systematically prevents an ethnic minority from electing most or all of its preferred candidates” (Davidson and Korbel 1981, 983). This is especially dangerous in at-large systems, in which every voter is able to cast a ballot for every seat being contested. Duffy notes that “the tendencies of at-large electoral systems to depress minority representation ... on elected bodies have been borne out by a large body of scholarly literature” (Duffy 2009, 5). This potent combination has especially significant consequences in communities in which a majority of voters identify with a different ethnicity than do the majority of residents, and when ethnic communities are geographically concentrated in different areas of a city. To counter racially-polarized voting and the disenfranchisement of minority communities, the Voting Rights Act sometime requires local electoral systems be reformed in order to encourage more proportionally representative city governance. Most often, the VRA requires jurisdictions to move toward a “single-member district” system, which tend to “enhance minorities’ opportunities to achieve representation on elected bodies” by establishing voting districts in which minority groups are more likely to comprise a majority of voters, allowing them to elect at least one of their desired candidates to city-wide office (Duffy 2009, 5).

Substantial bodies of scholarly literature have established that at-large electoral systems have a tendency to restrict minority representation. Focusing on local jurisdictions in Texas that have moved from an at-large system to a single-member district or mixed system, Davidson and Korbel use a comparative analysis of the rates of Latino representation found before and after the change in electoral system. They conclude that at-large systems function primarily as barriers to minority representation, while single-member districts and mixed systems allow for more proportional representation (Davidson and Korbel). These findings were substantiated by another study of local jurisdictions in Texas conducted more than a decade later (Davidson, Brischetto, Richards, and Grofman 1994). Specifically controlling for the impact of demographic factors – such as age and education – this report found that “when [Anglo-majority] cities shift to districts, minority representation increases sharply, in contrast with cities that retain at-large elections” (252). When racially polarized voting is found within at-large systems, the Voting Rights Act provides a mechanism through which a jurisdiction can switch to the more equitable single-member district system so that the votes of a minority group are not diluted.

Since its initial adoption in 1965, the Voting Rights Act has been expanded multiple times. First, in 1975, Congress added Section 203 to protect language minorities – including Spanish-speakers – because it found that they face unique barriers to participating in the political process. Under this new section, a jurisdiction must provide voter materials and information in a language other than English when speakers of that language account for 5% of all voting age citizens or when there are 10,000 speakers of that language within that jurisdiction (Voting Rights Act of 1965). In 1980, the Supreme Court ruled that the Voting Rights Act only applied when the plaintiff demonstrates that an electoral system was designed with discriminatory intent (*City of Mobile v. Bolden*, 446 U.S. 55 (1980)). In response, Congress amended Section 2 of the Act to “explicitly prohibit any voting procedure that so much as resulted in members of the protected classes having ‘less opportunity than other members of the electorate to participate in the political process and to elect representatives of their choice’” (Voting Rights Act of 1965). Having removed this burden of proof, Congress made it possible for citizens to sue any

jurisdiction as long as there is evidence of minority vote dilution. Rather than focusing on the right to vote, the Act is now directed at equalizing the value of each vote with changes in redistricting, structures of representation, and language. In 2006, the Voting Rights Act was renewed for another 25 years.¹

The Importance of Local Minority Representation

In her canonical examination of representation, Hanna Pitkin introduced the difference between descriptive and substantive representation. Descriptive representation involves the election of a candidate physically or characteristically similar to voters, while substantive representation requires the election of a candidate who acts according to the demands of voters (Pitkin 1967). Geron explains this distinction in the context of racial minorities: “descriptive representation for people of color matches the race, ethnicity, or national origin of the representative and his or her constituents...the highest form of representation is substantive representation, where a representative acts in the interests of the represented, in a manner responsive to them” (Geron 2005, 11). Davidson and Korbel argue that depriving minority groups of a “committed advocate” in local government “may also deprive them of the substantial benefits that government bestows – from streetlights to storm sewers, municipal employment to fire protection, fair law enforcement to efficient public transportation” (Davidson and Korbel 1994, 23).

Some studies have indicated that Latino “voter preferences may be directly influenced by ethnicity,” suggesting that the desire for descriptive representation is particularly strong in Latino communities because the interests of those communities are best served by Latino representatives (Barreto 2007, 435). In other words, Latino representation tends to be both descriptive and substantive. In a study of the actions of Latino representatives on school boards throughout Texas, Polinard, Wrinkle, Longoria and Binder (1994) discover that the election of Latino officials generally means that “more Mexican-Americans are hired in the ranks of municipal employees,” and, more importantly, that Latino representation “will increase the number of Mexican American school administrators and teachers” (Polinard, Wrinkle, Longoria and Binder 1994, 137; 163). This increase in the number of Latino teachers and administrators “depresses the negative impact of” racially motivated class assignments and discipline; in other words, Latino students are less likely to be singled out because of their ethnicity when their teacher is also Latino (163). Leal, Martinez-Ebers and Meier complement this finding through a study of the hiring rates of more than 1,500 school districts across the United States. Controlling for relevant demographic factors, Leal et al. discover that “Latino representation on school boards is significantly associated with increases in the percentage of Latino administrators, and the percentage of Latinos in administration is the most important variable determining the presence of Latino teachers” (Leal, Martinez-Ebers and Meier 2004, 1242). In a later study of Texas school districts, Meier, Gonzalez Juenke, Wrinkle and Polinard (2005) question whether descriptive representation always translates to substantive representation for racial minorities. They hypothesize that this translation will hold true to different degrees depending on the

¹ Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act requires certain jurisdictions (mostly in the South) to obtain “preclearance” from the Department of Justice before making any changes to its electoral laws. This section is perhaps the most controversial provision of the VRA, but as it does not apply to Washington State we do not discuss it in detail. More information about Section 5 can be found in Keyssar (2000).

method of election, with minority officials elected at-large being less substantively representative than those elected by single-member districts. Through a statistical analysis of the hiring policies promoted by Latino and African-American school board members, Meier et al. conclude that minority representatives elected at-large tend to be less supportive of hiring minority teachers and administrators than their colleagues elected through district-based systems. The election of Latino officials to local positions has a direct and substantial impact on the opportunities and resources extended to the Latino community (Meier, Juenke, Wrinkle and Polinard 2005).

In a study on Latino voter turnout and choice in five mayoral elections in the United States, wherein a Latino candidate ran against a non-Latino candidate, Barreto finds that ethnicity contributes to minority turnout rates. Shared ethnicity influences vote choice for a co-ethnic, and further “when a viable co-ethnic candidate is present, Latinos will turn out to vote at heightened rates, and in some cases, vote at rates greater than those of other ethnic and racial groups – including whites” (427). In other words, a Latino voter is more likely to vote and engage in racially polarized voting if a co-ethnic candidate runs for office (Barreto 2007). This finding is substantiated by a study conducted by Brischetto and Engstrom, which focused on small towns and school districts in Texas. The authors used exit polls from recent elections to discover “that, had only the votes of Latinos been counted, seventeen of the nineteen Latino candidates would have been elected: two in three of the jurisdictions and one in each of the eleven others. In only one of the fifteen jurisdictions did Latino voters not support the election of a Latino candidate. In contrast, had only the votes of non-Latinos been counted, only two Latino candidates would have been elected” (Brischetto and Engstrom 1997, 982). These studies suggest that in addition to the descriptive and substantive benefits offered by Latino representatives, they are able to increase Latino political participation simply by their participation in public life.

Legal and Procedural Factors Influencing Minority Representation

As noted above, when racially polarized voting occurs within at-large electoral systems, minority candidates are routinely blocked from elected office and minority voters do not receive an equal opportunity to elect the candidate of their choosing (Davidson and Korbel 1981; Leal et al. 2004; Meier et al. 2005; Polinard et al. 1994). The case against at-large electoral systems has been substantiated by studies focusing on minority representation on school boards. Through a study of more than 100 school boards in North Carolina, Arrington and Watts found that, when “compared to [school districts using] at-large systems,” the school boards chosen through “[single-member] district elections” tend to have minority candidates who “win office proportionally by [the] voting strength” of the minority group to which they belonged (Arrington and Watts 1991, 1100). More recently, Leal, Martinez-Ebers and Meier (2004) studied rates of Latino representation in particular. Using data collected from more than 1,750 school districts which have 5,000 students or more, Leal et al. found that while minority representation is not guaranteed by any system, “at-large elections are significantly more detrimental to Latino representation than ward elections” (1235). As these and other studies indicate, electoral systems using single-member districts tend to create rates of minority representation in proportion to the size of the minority group.

Some scholars have complicated this finding by arguing that single-member districts have negligible effects on minority representation when enacted in isolation. MacManus uses a survey

of 243 cities across the United States, measuring the size of racial minorities within their populations and determining which type of electoral system they use. She finds that single-member districts increase minority representation by a minimal amount, and argues that prior studies have grossly overestimated the benefit of such systems (MacManus 1978). More than a decade later, Welch extended this analysis to Latino representation specifically, conducting a study of 314 cities with populations of at least 50,000 people, at least 5% of whom were Latino. Controlling for contextual variables, including demographic information and the regional politics surrounding each city, Welch finds that the generalizations made by prior research about the effectiveness of single-member districts in improving minority representation cannot be extended to Latinos. She argues that “the ability of Hispanic populations to benefit from district elections appears to depend on their degree of residential segregation, their population proportion, and the state or region in which they are located,” indicating that structural reform can improve Latino representation only when coupled with particular demographic and political factors (Welch 1990).

In an analysis of local jurisdictions switching from at-large to district-based elections, Trounstine and Valdini also find that such reforms do not guarantee an increase in minority representation. Further, district-based systems appear to have no influence on the rates at which Latina women, or other minorities within the Latino community, are elected. While single-member systems have since been shown to be an effective tool for increasing Latino representation in a variety of contexts, the argument about the importance of community factors ought to be considered (Trounstine and Valdini 2008).

Social Factors Which Influence Minority Political Engagement

A recent study by Rigby and Springer shows that procedural changes can be ineffective or even counter-productive if they are not complemented by particular political conditions within the community. Rigby and Springer conduct a statistical analysis of voter turnout over a thirty-year period to determine whether mail-in registration, Election Day registration and early voting have had any impact on the efficacy of minority groups. They find that increased registration opportunities tend to increase voter turnout, especially among lower income voters, but that early voting actually brought about a decrease in turnout from these same groups. They conclude that such procedural electoral reforms alone cannot produce changes in minority turnout and representation (Rigby and Springer 2010). In other words, the barriers to minority representation are not just legal, structural, or procedural; the political attitudes and demographics of specific communities can either inhibit or contribute to the ability of minority groups to make their voices heard in the political process.

Schildkraut shows that a sense of discrimination can inhibit political participation. She argues that a contributing factor to Latino political nonparticipation is the perceived presence of discrimination. Through analyzing data from a 2002 national survey on levels of political activity and perceptions of racial discrimination, Schildkraut finds that the perception of racial discrimination, when an individual identifies as American, negatively affects likelihood of civic engagement. When an ethnic minority, feels discriminated against, he or she is less likely to engage in electoral activities like voting, or trust in the political process (Schildkraut 2005).

Other authors have studied how living environment influences political engagement. For example, Cho studies the dynamics of immigrant voter turnout. She notes that previous research argues that there is a positive correlation between voter turnout and increased socioeconomic status, and hopes to see if this applies to immigrants as well. However, Cho argues that because immigrants are often socialized with different cultural values, socioeconomic status is not an accurate indicator of voting or political participation. Instead, she suggests that if individuals are raised in an environment which fosters belief in democratic ideals and the importance of voting, an immigrant is likely to vote or engage in political activities (Cho 1999). Similarly, Simon argues that voters must be socialized into political behavior (Simon 1989).

A wide array of research discusses the importance of generational status on political participation. Santoro and Segura also write about the influence of socialization and values on minority political participation, though a lens of Mexican American generational status. The authors collect surveys on political engagement spanning five generations of Latino families and individuals. Santoro and Segura argue that political participation types change across different generational groups. They find that the more recent the generation, the more likely an individual is to engage in ethnic politics, but the less likely the individual is to vote. They also find that the later generation Mexican Americans are more likely to vote but less likely to engage in ethnic politics (Santoro and Segura 2009).

Additionally, Garcia examines how generational status impacts political representation. Looking specifically at the LA area, Garcia finds that Latino elected officials tend to be “socially distant” from their constituents. She finds that the majority of Latinos in office are second and third generation, monolingual English speaking citizens with higher levels of education and income than the Latino communities they represent (Garcia 2005).

Jones-Correa’s research also studies generational political participation, finding that political activity of first-generation immigrants corresponds with maintenance of ties to one’s country of origin. Jones-Correa cites both perceptions of personal and cultural ties to the home country, as felt within many immigrant communities, and the neglect shown by American politics and politicians as together contributing to this political positioning. He framed the issue as the “politics of in-between,” in which both the host country and previous home are incorporated into a political framework that generates a distinctive, non-traditional form of citizenship (Jones-Correa 1998).

A 2003 report by Barreto and Munoz expands on the concept of the “politics of in-between,” using data from the National Survey on Latinos in America, which surveyed about five thousand adults in the summer of 1999. The data shows that only fourteen percent of foreign-born Latinos said that they were neither currently applying nor planning to apply for U.S. citizenship, leaving a large majority of immigrants who are actively participating in the American polity. The research looks specifically at non-voting political participation of first generation Latino immigrants, such as working on political campaigns, attending public meetings or events, and contributing money to political campaigns. They argue that non-citizen immigrants are as likely to be as politically active as foreign-born, naturalized citizens, and their research suggests that the aspirations and actions directed towards attaining citizenship are a major cause for political involvement (Barreto and Munoz 2003).

Barreto and Munoz's research goes on to look at traditionally-cited causes for discrepancies in political activity within immigrant groups. While they find that socio-economic standing, language ability, percentage of one's life spent in the US, and perceptions of opportunities available to immigrants affected participation rates, they did not discourage political involvement of noncitizens any more than they did political involvement of naturalized immigrants. This ultimately confirms the importance of considering political activity that is not measured directly at the polls, especially when looking at the successes and challenges faced by candidates whose constituencies include a large number of residents who do not yet have the ability to vote (Barreto and Munoz 2003).

In sum, there exists a wealth of scholarly literature which suggests that there are a variety of non-legal variables which influence minority voter participation, including national identification, perceptions of discrimination, political socialization, and generational and citizenship status.

Voter Outreach and Engagement

Previously mentioned research discusses how historically, Latino political representation and participation is proportionally low, and other authors discuss ways to mobilize Latino political involvement (Keyssar 2000). These materials necessitate the following question: what efforts might address social and cultural barriers to Latino political engagement and foster increased participation?

To answer this question, Latino voter outreach must be considered. Several authors have attempted to study how Spanish language voter outreach affects Latino voter turnout. In a study examining Spanish language political radio advertisements, Panagopoulos and Green (2011) ask the following question: given that Hispanic voters are less likely to be politically than white voters, but are more likely to listen to the radio, how do Spanish language radio advertisements aimed at voter mobilization impact Latino voters? The authors examined 206 congressional districts from 38 states where nonpartisan, Spanish language ads were broadcast. They found that the groups that were treated to Spanish language advertising were "profoundly" impacted and were more likely to vote (Panagopoulos and Green 2011).

Similarly, Abrajano and Panagopoulos (2011) study Latino voter outreach by examining ads in Spanish language versus English language. They have interesting findings: voter outreach to Latinos, regardless of what language it is in, has high likelihood of positively impacting Latino voter turnout. However, while English language advertisements tend to be effective for all Latinos participants in the study, Spanish language was only effective, at targeting monolingual and politically inactive Latinos (Abrajano and Panagopoulos 2011).

Other studies examine the effects of non-media based voter outreach on Latino turnout. Messeri examines the role of soccer in a predominantly Hispanic community in Richmond, California. He argues that soccer both creates and strengthens community bonds and social networks (Messeri 2008). Ramirez's study on canvassing complements existing work on Latino voter outreach by specifically looking at face-to-face contact, rather than Spanish language advertisements. Ramirez finds that canvassers speaking in English to Latino voters greatly

increased the likelihood that the individual would vote. Ramirez concludes that that low Latino voter turnout is related to a lack of outreach, and that face to face GOTV efforts have the capacity to change this (Ramirez 2007, 175). These articles indicate that any voter outreach is likely to engage Latino voters, but also that Spanish language radio outreach is particularly effective in areas where there are concentrated populations of monolingual Spanish speakers.

The research discussed in this section helps to illuminate the scholarly work that has already been done on addressing barriers to political engagement. One body of research suggests that voter outreach programs, particularly through Spanish language media and face-to-face voter contact, help address low voter participation.

Conclusion

Historically, minorities' legal right to vote in the United States has been undermined by legal, procedural and societal barriers that impair the ability of these groups to elect officials who truly represent their interests. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was created to enforce the 15th Amendment and eliminate these barriers, protecting both access to and the power of the ballot box. Over time, the Act has been expanded to provide protections for language minorities and to ensure that proof of vote dilution was enough to provide a legal remedy. These protections are particularly important on the local level, where proportionate representation on city councils and school boards has been shown to provide tangible benefits to minority groups. Further, a range of scholarly literature demonstrates that the legal structures of local elections play a critical role in the proportional representation of minority groups, and that the at-large systems used in most local jurisdictions are particularly prone to suppress minority representation. Historic underrepresentation is also related to the ways minority groups perceive political activity. Research shows that, due in part to social and historical disparities, civic engagement is not always an interest for minority ethnic communities. However, scholars have also found that the presence of co-ethnic candidates can provide a spark which ignites the desire of a minority group to become more politically engaged. A variety of other mechanisms, such as sports or church involvement, can also spark community engagement and help residents become interested in local politics. In sum, the vast body of scholarly literature on the political participation of minority groups indicates that in order to address both the structural and social shortcomings of minority politics, legal reforms must operate in tandem with community programs to foster civic engagement.

III. METHODS

Constructing an Electoral History

In order to gain a more complete understanding of the history of Latino representation in Washington State, we decided to extend our electoral analysis back to 1983. This 30 year period encompasses all 15 local election cycles since the Voting Rights Act was amended in 1982. We decided to analyze the ten Washington counties with the highest Latino populations, as determined by Duffy in his 2009 report: Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Okanogan, Skagit, Walla Walla and Yakima. Because Duffy found that Yakima accounts for a disproportionate amount of Latino representation, we analyze it separately from the other nine counties. To construct the electoral history these counties, we requested the complete precinct-

by-precinct electoral results for all city council and school district races from 1983 to 2011 from each county auditor. We obtained the great majority of these electoral records (see Appendix A for a complete list). We examine Yakima County's electoral history in a more targeted fashion, analyzing elections in eleven municipalities, including Sunnyside, with large Latino populations.² We obtained data for all city council and school board elections in these municipalities from 1991-2011 with assistance from the county auditor.

We examine the electoral results for three reasons. First, the raw results are often the most accurate and complete set of results maintained by the auditors of each county. In many instances, the auditors were able to find the raw electoral results but not the neatly organized certified results. Thus, using the raw results allows us to construct a more accurate history of Latino representation. Second, these results allow us to identify Latino candidates in addition to Latino office-holders. A simple list of elected officials would not allow us to determine how often Latino candidates ran for office, how often Latinos run against non-Latinos, or how often Latino candidates challenge other Latinos. Finally, these detailed results allow us to determine if there are any patterns to Latino representation. As we discuss later, such patterns may be indicative of particular barriers to Latino representation that exist across the state.

We organized the electoral data based on whether or not office-holders and candidates possessed a Latino surname. We determined which surnames are Latino by comparing the names of officials and candidates with a list of Latino surnames compiled by the Department of Justice. According to David L. Word and R. Colby Perkins Jr. (1996), surname-based analysis can accurately determine Hispanic ethnicity in the vast majority of cases:

With very few exceptions every frequently occurring surname is either Heavily Hispanic or Rarely Hispanic and there is no middle ground. This finding is the determining factor why Spanish surname is such an excellent proxy for identifying Hispanics within the United States...Fewer than 1,000 surnames are sufficient for capturing 80 percent of the Hispanic population in the United States. Moreover, householders with those surnames are Hispanic 95 percent of the time. (16)

The Department of Justice list contains approximately 13,000 surnames, and has been used in official Department of Justice determinations of racially polarized voting. As such, we have complete confidence that our use of this list creates an accurate portrayal of Latino representation. To ensure the accuracy of our findings, we contacted the county auditors to ensure that, to the best of all knowledge, candidates had not been falsely identified as Latino.

Conducting Interviews

While we looked at counties and cities across Washington State to understand minority underrepresentation broadly, we also wanted to examine the dynamics of Latino representation and political involvement through a close case study. We chose Sunnyside for three primary reasons:

² This report does not include an analysis of Yakima City due to a specific request from our community partner that we focus on other municipalities in Yakima County.

- 1) Our quantitative analysis focuses on the counties in Washington with the highest percentages of Latino residents and Sunnyside currently has over an 80% Latino population.
- 2) Scholarly literature suggests that at-large election systems prevent proportional Latino political representation. Historically, Sunnyside has had few Latino elected officials and, until changed by an ordinance in 2009, an at-large election structure.
- 3) In 2009, Sunnyside changed to a hybrid at-large and districted election system (described in full in Part IV of this report). This change provided us with the unique opportunity to see how the election reform had impacted Latino electoral success.

To begin our case study in Sunnyside, we first gathered basic data to understand the community and process of reform in Sunnyside. In addition to the elections records discussed above, we looked at census data, media coverage regarding the 2009 election reform, and election reform documents.

We gathered data from the 2000 and 2010 census records to understand recent racial demographic shifts in Sunnyside. For media coverage of the reform, we searched for articles and editorial writings from the *Yakima Herald* and *Daily Sun News* web pages, using the search terms “reform”, “electoral”, “Warner”, “Whitman” and “district”. These terms pulled relevant pages from 2006 – 2011. Through examining these articles, we hoped to understand how the reform was portrayed in media, in case this impacted the success of the reform. Lastly, under guidance of our community partner Professor Joaquin Avila, we contacted the Sunnyside City Clerk to ask why kind of city Sunnyside is, which would determine how the actual process of districting occurred. Sunnyside is a noncharter code city, meaning that the city was able to create districts through local government. Our partner asked to see the document to look at the language which was used, so we asked the City Clerk for the specific ordinance that the Sunnyside City Council voted on to change Sunnyside’s election structure, and the City Clerk sent it to us.

In addition to examining the aforementioned sources of quantitative information, we also conducted an extensive program of interviews in Sunnyside. Parts of our Sunnyside-specific research were answerable by numerical data. However, we wanted to contextualize the reform in the political and social climate in Sunnyside and understand how the process of reform was perceived by community members. Surveys, while useful for gathering a certain amount of information from a wide array of people, would not have been useful for gathering this kind of information. Further, interviews allow for flexibility. We were able to ask interviewees specific follow-up questions, giving depth to our research we would not have been able to obtain through surveys.

We designed and used a targeted, but diverse, set of questions which were relevant to findings from our literature review and our community partner’s preferences. For example, scholarly literature indicates that community dynamics and presence of voter outreach impact the effectiveness of the reform, warranting questions about Sunnyside and whether there was voter outreach after the reform. Other studies indicated that racial and ethnic identity as well as immigrant generational status was an important variable impacting political involvement, so we

asked questions regarding these areas. Though we initially thought that we might need different sets of interview questions for different interviewees, we quickly found that the set of questions we designed was sufficiently comprehensive. (See Appendix C for our full list of interview questions.)

We employed the snowball sampling method for recruiting interview participants. As explained by Bijker in his book, *Of Bikers, Bakelites and Bulbs: Toward a Theory of Social Change*, this method can be summarized as follows, “Typically one starts interviewing a limited number of actors (...) and asks them, at the end of each interview, who else should be interviewed to get a complete picture” (Bijker, 1995). Though this method would not provide a comprehensive inventory of interviewees, it was highly useful for the purposes of our work. Our case study examines the process of election reform and studies how community dynamics in Sunnyside impact political representation and participation. Accordingly, our goal was to understand the social and political context in which the electoral reform was enacted. Therefore, we interviewed a wide spread of community leaders to gain multiple perspectives, but in particular, spoke with people involved in city politics.

Additionally, our research in Sunnyside seeks to understand the impact of the reform on Latino electoral success. Therefore, it was important for us to interview those who identified racially/ethnically as Latino. Further, the scholarly work referenced in our literature review indicated that race/ethnicity is a relevant factor for understanding political participation and representation. Generally the interviewee would indicate racial or ethnic identity without being asked. If it did not naturally come up, we asked directly but stressed that the interviewee need not answer. We found that asking, rather than presuming, was important. For example, one of our interviewees, a third generation resident of Sunnyside, preferred not to identify with any racial or ethnic identity. Interviewees also reflect availability, interest and communication – for example, we attempted to contact various principals and teachers from Sunnyside Public Schools through a variety of mediums but were unable to make contact.

We initiated this interview process by contacting Paul Garcia, who was Sunnyside’s only Latino city council member. After the interview, Garcia suggested people to meet with. We contacted these individuals and were able to gain other contacts from following interviews. We conducted a total of ten interviews with various Sunnyside community members and city officials). A list of interviewees follows:

- One Latino city council member (current)
- One Latina city council member (former)
- One Anglo city council member (current)
- One Latino school board member (current)
- One prospective Latina school board member
- One business leader
- Two Anglo religious leaders
- One Latina community leader
- One Latino law enforcement official

We asked interviewees to suggest a place that was convenient and comfortable for them, while also quiet enough for the interview setting. One interview was conducted in a local coffee shop (owned by the interviewee's friend), three interviews were held in community organization Nuestra Casa, and six interviewees were in the interviewee's place of work (generally in a private office space). We distributed consent forms prior to each interview (see Appendix C), and also explained the form verbally. We offered a pseudonym to interviewees who were not elected officials. One interviewee, called Rosalinda Martinez in this report, accepted the offer. All interviewees spoke English. With the consent of each participant, we recorded each interview with an audio recording device. Interviews were standard face-to-face interviews, with two exceptions. We conducted a six minute follow up conversation on the telephone, after an interviewee had to leave abruptly for non-interview related reasons. Additionally, one segment of an interview involves two interviewees who were friends. One walked in while the other was answering a question, and stayed for some duration of the interview. Both agreed that it was acceptable to have the other individual present. Though the interviews ranged from thirty minutes at the shortest, and 90 at the longest, the average interview lasted approximately one hour. The ten interviews yielded a total of over nine hours of interview material.

We transcribed the audio recordings of the interviews and, through careful textual analysis, identified common themes and narratives from each interview.

To further enrich the qualitative dimension of our research in Sunnyside, we also found it relevant to provide a limited sampling of additional interviews in other cities in Yakima County with high percentage Latino populations.

We interviewed a variety of community members in Sunnyside, but were only able to interview three Latino officials. Therefore, we hoped to gain additional perspectives from other Latino elected officials through work more broadly in Yakima Valley. We initiated the interview process in Yakima County by contacting various Latino city council members using contact information available on city websites. All interviewees identified as Latino during the interview. A list of the interviewees follows:

- One Latino city council member (current)
- One Latina city council member (current)
- One Latino city council member (former)
- One Latino city council candidate (lost two elections)

We followed the same procedures as in Sunnyside while designing a set of interview questions (see Appendix B), organizing the interviews and conducting the interviews. We had a total of nearly six hours of interview material. The shortest interview lasted approximately 40 minutes and the longest, over an hour.

IV. ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY RESEARCH

30-Year Electoral History

In order to more fully understand the issues surrounding Latino representation in Washington State, we begin our analysis with a 30-year electoral history. Since 1983, Latinos have comprised nearly 22% of the population in Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Okanogan, Skagit, Walla Walla and Yakima Counties. In that same period of time, Latinos were elected to just over 5% of all city council and school board offices.

Table 1

Number of City Council and School District Elections, 1983-2011	Number of Elections Won by a Latino	Percent of Elections Won by a Latino
5882	309	5.25%

This representation gap is particularly striking in light of the fact that Latinos have achieved significantly more success in recent elections than in previous decades. These victories are certainly indications of the political progress made by Latinos, but they also mask extent of the underrepresentation that Latinos have faced over the last 30 years. Moreover, the relative success of Latino candidates in Yakima County obscures the almost complete lack of Latino representation in the other nine counties, as illustrated by Table 2. Although Latinos have constituted nearly 18% of the population in the other nine counties since 1983, in that same time they have been elected to only 2.4% of city council seats and 2.7% of school district seats (U.S. Census 2010).

Table 2

Number of City Council and School District Elections Excluding Yakima County, 1983-2011	Number of Elections Won by a Latino	Percent of Elections Won by a Latino
4753	122	2.57%

Consequently, this section will focus on the electoral history Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Okanogan, Skagit and Walla Walla Counties. We conduct a more focused investigation of Yakima County in subsequent sections.

In order to gain an accurate picture of how Latino representation has evolved over time, we will begin by examining the electoral results in three periods: 1983-1991, 1993-2001, and 2003-2011. We will then conduct an analysis of the counties that stood out from the overall trend in order to create a more accurate picture of Latino representation. Finally, we will examine the differences in Latino representation between city council and school district offices. In each of these analyses, the data shows that Latino communities have been unable to attain proportional representation in local offices despite significant population growth.

A. Representation by Decades

1983-1991

This first period is, not surprisingly, the least favorable for Latino representation. In 1980, the combined Latino population of Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Okanogan, Skagit and Walla Walla Counties was 25,537, more than 6% of their total populations (U.S. Census 2010). Over the course of the subsequent decade, this number swelled by nearly 28,000, topping out at about 11.6% of the total population. Despite the substantial demographic shift produced by this nearly 110% increase of the Latino population, Latino representation was negligible at best.

Table 3

Median Combined Population, 1980-1990	Median Combined Latino Population	Percentage of Population that was Latino
436935	39348	9.01%

Table 4

Number of City Council and School District Elections	Number of Elections Won by a Latino	Percent of Elections Won by a Latino
1297	6	0.46%

In the five election cycles which occurred between 1983 and 1991, there were over 1800 candidacies in nearly 1300 city council and school district elections. Out of all these races, Latino candidates were elected to only 6 seats. Latino candidacies were rare in this decade, but not as rare as Latino victories. Even with this relatively small sample of elections, we can begin to discern two barriers to Latino representation that emerge more clearly in later periods.

First, there was a significant lack of Latino candidates between 1983 and 1991. Even if all 15 Latino candidacies in this period were successful, Latinos would have comprised just over 1% of total office-holders. The median Latino population over this decade was 9.01%, meaning that in the best case scenario, Latino representation would have been about 1/9th of what was needed for proportional representation. We will refer to the lack of Latino candidates as an *absolute barrier*, because Latino representation cannot be proportional until Latino candidates run at rates at least proportional to the size of the Latino population. In other words, Latinos could not have been represented in the 9.01% of seats necessary to establish proportional representation unless Latino candidates ran for at least 9.01% of the offices. Unless Latinos run for a percentage of seats that is at least equal to the percentage of the population that is Latino, proportional representation is impossible.

Table 5

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies	Percentage of Candidacies that were Latino
1844	15	0.81%

Table 6

Number of Latino Candidacies	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (%)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (%)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (%)
15	5 (33.33%)	0 (0.00%)	10 (66.67%)

In his study of minority candidacy in California’s local elections, Juenke finds that “minority candidates... understand the difficulties of winning in at-large elections” (Juenke 2006, 1). Taking this into consideration, Latino candidates often “choose not to run for office under these rules, even at levels of Latino population that approach majority status” (1). Thus, Latino candidacies are likely discouraged by the prevalence of at-large elections in Washington’s local elections, as has been suggested in previous State of the State reports (Warner 2006; Shadix 2008; Duffy 2009).

The second barrier to Latino representation is the presence of non-Latino candidates. Out of the 15 Latino candidacies in this period, only 5 were able to run unopposed. Out of the 10 races in which Latinos were opposed by non-Latinos, the Latino candidate was elected only once. If race were not a factor in these elections, we would expect Latinos to defeat non-Latinos about half of the time. However, in this period, only 10% of Latino candidacies were successful when opposed by a non-Latino.

Table 7

Number of Latinos Elected	Latinos Elected Unopposed (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by another Latino Candidate (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (%)
6	5 (83.33%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (16.67%)

Table 8

Number of Elections in which a Latino was opposed by a non-Latino	Elections in which the Latino candidate won	Elections in which the non-Latino candidate won
10	1 (10.00%)	9 (90.00%)

The presence of non-Latino candidates is likely a barrier to proportional Latino representation because of the electoral systems in which they are running. As noted above, a number of studies have found that majority candidates are likely to dominate minority candidates in at-large electoral systems (Davidson and Korbelt 1981; Leal et al. 2004; Meier et al. 2005; Polinard et al. 1994). The prevalence of these systems – in many cases required by the Revised Code of Washington – is likely at the root of Latino candidates' poor performance against their non-Latino opponents in this period. Recall that when combined with racially polarized voting, at-

large systems have the effect of suppressing minority representation. Even when voting is not racially polarized, at-large systems can suppress the representation of a minority, racial or otherwise. Although our broad research on electoral history in this report does not provide the detail necessary to fully explore this possibility, we will return to it in a later section.

We will refer to the presence of non-Latino candidates as a *partial barrier* to proportional Latino representation because the representation gap is unlikely to close completely until Latinos are able to defeat non-Latinos about as often as they are defeated. Although 10 races is a small sample, the suggestion that non-Latino candidates pose a significant obstacle to the election of Latinos is substantiated by the electoral data of later periods.

1993-2001

Despite massive increases in the Latino population of the ten counties in question, during the second period of elections Latinos remained proportionally underrepresented in city council and school district elections. Between 1990 and 2000 the Latino population in these nine counties surged from 53,158 to 116,188, an increase of nearly 120% (U.S. Census 2010). By the turn of the millennium, Latinos comprised 1/5th of the total population of these counties. While the Latino population has grown rapidly, Latino communities have made negligible gains in terms of addressing the representation gap.

Table 9

Median Combined Population, 1990-2000	Median Combined Latino Population	Percentage of Population that was Latino
519040	84673	16.31%

Table 10

Number of City Council and School District Elections	Number of Elections Won by a Latino	Percent of Elections Won by a Latino
1430	33	2.31%

Only one out of every twenty-five elections were won by Latinos. Nearly than 1500 city council and school district elections were held in this period, yet only 33 Latino candidates were elected. This huge representation gap is matched by an almost equally wide gap between population size and proportion of Latino candidates. Here we see the emergence of the first barrier to Latino representation: the lack of Latino candidates. Only about 2.8% of all candidacies in this period were Latino. If a Latino candidate had won every election in which a Latino ran, they would have won only 2.7% of city council and school district offices. In other words, even with every possible success in elections, Latino representation would have been less than 1/7th of what would be needed to achieve proportional representation. This best-case scenario clearly demonstrates the absolute barrier to Latino representation described above. Representation cannot be proportional until Latino candidates run at rates at least proportional to the size of the Latino population.

Table 11

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies	Percentage of Candidacies that were Latino
1846	52	2.82%

Table 12

Number of Latino Candidacies	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (%)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (%)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (%)
52	28 (53.85%)	6 (11.54%)	18 (34.52%)

During this decade, more than a third of Latino candidates ran against non-Latino candidates. Of all Latinos elected in this period, two defeated a non-Latino candidate, three defeated other Latinos, and the rest ran in uncontested races. This comparison reveals the second major obstacle to Latino representation: the presence of non-Latino candidates. Recall that this is a partial barrier, meaning that the representation gap is unlikely to close until Latino candidates are able to win against non-Latino candidates about half of the time. In this period, only two of sixteen Latino candidacies were successful when opposed by non-Latinos.

Table 13

Number of Latinos Elected	Latinos Elected Unopposed (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by another Latino Candidate (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (%)
33	28 (84.85%)	3 (9.09%)	2 (6.06%)

Table 14

Number of Elections in which a Latino was opposed by a non-Latino	Elections in which the Latino candidate won	Elections in which the non-Latino candidate won
18	2 (11.11%)	16 (88.89%)

If a non-Latino declares his or her candidacy for a city council or school board seat, the likelihood that a Latino candidate will be elected to that seat immediately drops to about 10%. In other words, Latino candidacies in this period had about the same rate of success against non-Latino candidates as they did in the previous period, despite a significant increase in the Latino population. Recall that if race played no part in these elections, we would expect Latinos to defeat non-Latinos in about half of the races in which they run against each other. Thus, if the race of candidates did not affect voting, we would expect Latinos to defeat non-Latinos about five times more often than they did in the first two periods. This disparity between the expected results and the actual results strongly suggests that the race of candidates affects voter behavior. This effect, combined with at-large elections, may have produced the kind of voting patterns that have been shown to systematically deny minority groups an equal opportunity to elect the candidates of their choosing (Davidson and Korbel 1981; Leal et al. 2004; Meier et al. 2005;

Polinard et al. 1994). Combined with the fact that fully a third of Latino candidates ran against non-Latinos, the dismal rate of Latino success when opposed by non-Latinos suggests that the most significant barrier to the election of a Latino candidate in this period was the presence of a non-Latino candidate. To put it another way, the limited representation Latinos achieved in this period is largely a result of the absence of non-Latino candidates from some races.

As noted above, both the relatively small number of Latino candidacies and the abysmal rate of Latino success against non-Latinos are likely caused – at least in part – by the at-large elections used in most of Washington State’s local elections.

2003-2011

The most recent period of elections has shown another limited improvement in the fortunes of Latino candidacies. During the last decade, the Latino population in Washington State has continued to increase at a rapid rate. According to the most recent census, there are now 186,217 Latinos – nearly 30% of the total population - in the nine counties analyzed (U.S. Census 2010). Despite this continuation of the demographic shifts seen in previous periods, Latino representation still lags behind the growth of the Latino population. Of the 2060 city council and school board elections in the past decade, barely one in twenty-five has been won by Latinos.

Table 15

Median Combined Population, 2000-2010	Median Combined Latino Population, 1990-2000	Percentage of Population that was Latino
634380	151203	23.83%

Although the trend of Latino underrepresentation continues, there are signs that Latino candidates are reaching unprecedented levels of electoral success. For the first time, the percentage of elections won by Latinos is nearly equal to the percentage of candidacies that are Latino. This suggests that Latino candidates are being elected about as often as they are running.

Table 16

Number of City Council and School District Elections	Number of Elections Won by a Latino	Percent of Elections Won by a Latino
2060	83	4.03%

Table 17

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies	Percentage of Candidacies that were Latino
2614	107	4.09%

Unlike the previous two periods, Latino candidates in the most recent period are finding widespread electoral success. Given that Latinos have recently become the majority of the populations in several jurisdictions (particularly in Adams and Franklin Counties) it is not surprising that the number of Latino office-holders is rising (U.S. Census 2010). This is

consistent with the trends common in the “transition zone cities” described by Bezdek, et al (2000, 212). These cities are marked by demographic shifts in which a former minority group becomes the majority, and tend to experience gradual increases in representation as the barriers created by at-large election systems diminish over time. The Latino population in Washington State is beginning to experience these transitions, and Latino representation will likely grow more proportional at an ever-increasing rate as they continue.

While certainly significant, the new Latino-majority populations are not the only source of this new found electoral success. The proportion of Latino candidates running against non-Latino candidates has dropped dramatically since the last period, sinking from 35% to 29%. Even though Latino candidates have been significantly more successful against non-Latino candidates in the past decade than in the last two cycles studied, a majority of these candidates still lose to their non-Latino opponents. Thus, a large part of the increased electoral success of Latino candidates can be attributed to the fact that fewer Latinos are running against (and losing to) non-Latinos. Nearly two-thirds of Latino candidates in this decade have run unopposed, leading directly to a higher rate of representation. It seems possible that more recent Latino candidates are deliberately avoiding the relative difficulty of running against non-Latinos by seeking uncontested offices (Juenke 2000). Whether this strategy is deliberate or coincidental, it has significantly improved the rate at which Latino candidates are elected. And yet, Latino representation remains disproportionately low considering the large and increasing size of the Latino population.

Table 18

Number of Latino Candidacies	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (%)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (%)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (%)
107	70 (65.42%)	6 (5.61%)	31 (28.97%)

Table 19

Number of Latinos Elected	Latinos Elected Unopposed (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by another Latino Candidate (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (%)
83	70 (84.34%)	3 (3.61%)	10 (12.04%)

Perhaps the most significant development in this decade is that Latinos have won an unprecedented 32.3% of their races against non-Latinos, nearly tripling the 11.1% success rate of the last period. This rate of success slightly exceeds the 32% of the population that is Latino, suggesting that Latino communities may have begun overcome the partial barrier that the presence of non-Latino candidates has posed to proportional Latino representation. However, even this improved rate of Latino success against non-Latinos falls far short of the 50% rate we would expect if the race of candidates played no role in these elections. The data from all three periods suggests that Latino candidacies are less likely to be successful when opposed by non-Latinos because of the race of the candidates involved. Though this effect seems to diminish in the most recent period, Latinos continue to lose a disproportionate number of races to non-Latino candidates.

Table 20

Number of Elections in which a Latino was opposed by a non-Latino	Elections in which the Latino candidate won	Elections in which the non-Latino candidate won
31	10 (32.26%)	21 (67.74%)

Given the booming Latino population and the improved success of Latino candidacies throughout the last decade, it is probable that the persistent underrepresentation of Latino communities is not entirely caused by the electoral systems of local jurisdictions. Latinos now comprise a majority of many communities using at-large systems, suggesting that Latino candidates ought to dominate elections in those jurisdictions in much the same way non-Latinos have dominated at-large elections in previous periods. However, our research has uncovered very few instances in which a new demographic majority has translated neatly into proportional Latino representation. This lack of electoral success in majority Latino at-large jurisdictions suggests that a lack of political participation, including but not limited to voter registration and turnout, is a major factor behind the current rates of underrepresentation. Our discussion of interviews with community leaders in the sections that follow takes up this issue in more detail.

While an increase in Latino turnout would likely boost rates of electoral success, our data also indicates that if more Latinos ran for office, Latino representation would likely improve. This is related to the absolute barrier noted above: too few Latino candidates are running for local offices. If every Latino candidate had been elected to the office for which they were running this period, they would account for only 5.2% of total office-holders. This proportion nearly doubles the rate of representation that would have been produced by the complete success of all Latino candidacies during the previous period. At the same time, the percentage of elections won by Latinos has grown by 77%, suggesting that the increase in the number of Latino candidacies is closely related to the increase in Latino victories. However, it is important to note that Latino candidacies in this period increase in a very specific way in order to produce this improved rate of representation. Specifically, Latinos run unopposed much more often in this period than in previous periods, and run less often against non-Latinos. In total, there have been 55 more Latino candidacies between 2003 and 2011 than there were between 1993 and 2001. Of these, 42 have been unopposed. As a result, the vast majority of the increase in Latino candidacies translates directly to electoral success. Since non-Latinos continue to defeat Latinos at a disproportionate rate, an increase in the number of Latino candidacies opposed by non-Latinos will not significantly improve the rate of Latino representation. Thus, it is disingenuous to suggest that a simple increase in Latino candidacies is enough to increase Latino representation. The success of Latino candidacies continues to depend largely on the absence of non-Latino candidates, and Latinos’ underwhelming rate of success against non-Latino candidates continues to suggest that the race of candidates plays a role in Washington’s local elections.

This historical analysis does not involve a precinct-level analysis, so we cannot say for certain that racially polarized voting occurs in these races. However, the ongoing failure of Latinos to win the 50% of elections against non-Latinos that we would expect them to win if race were not an issue strongly suggests that the race of candidates does indeed influence voter behavior.

B. Divergent Counties

Of the nine counties analyzed in this section, three exhibit patterns of Latino representation which diverge from the regional trend. We examine each of them in more detail to determine what factors may be creating these discrepancies.

Adams County

Nearly 60% of Adams County residents are Latino, making it the most heavily Latino population of any county we examine in this report (U.S. Census 2010). Despite the fact that Latinos comprise a strong majority of the population, Latino representation in Adams County falls far short of being proportional. Since 1983, Latinos have been elected to less than 3% of the city council and school district offices.

Very few Latinos have even attempted a run for office in the past thirty years. Of the 441 candidates who have run for city council or school district positions, only 12 have been Latino. This 2.72% rate of candidacy is nearly identical to the 2.78% rate of representation Latinos have attained in Adams, suggesting that a lack of Latino candidates is the primary barrier to Latino representation in Washington State's most heavily Latino county. As we note above, previous studies suggest that this barrier is likely perpetuated by unfair electoral structures which make it more difficult for minority candidates to be elected. While Latino representation has increased by 200% in the most recent period, this rate of success is undermined by the continuing lack of Latino candidates.

Nine of the eleven Latino candidacies were successful, suggesting that these candidates were careful to pick races they were generally sure they could win. Seven of these candidates ran unopposed, guaranteeing a victory. The one Latino candidate who ran opposed by a non-Latino actually won that race back in 1997. The seemingly selective process of running for office as a Latino in Adams County masks the barrier presented by non-Latino candidates found throughout most other counties while overemphasizing the barrier created by a lack of Latino candidacies. Despite hosting the largest Latino majority in the state, Adams County continues to lag behind the other counties in terms of both Latino candidates and Latino office-holders.

Benton County

The electoral history of Benton County stands out from that of other counties on the strength of one statistic: Of the three Latinos who have run for city council in Benton County since 1983, all three have been elected against non-Latino candidates. Despite the fact that the one Latino candidate who ran for school district against a non-Latino was defeated, Latinos in Benton County have enjoyed an unparalleled 75% rate of success against non-Latino candidates.

However, this incredible rate of success is not evidence that the barrier created by the presence of non-Latino candidates is absent in Benton County. The fact that only 3 Latinos have run for the 281 available city council positions suggests that this barrier is very present, to the point that it is systematically discouraging Latino candidacies. Contributing to this discouragement is the fact that all 3 Latino candidates had to defeat non-Latinos in order to be elected. This means that at no point during the last thirty years was a Latino candidate able to run for city council unopposed. As we mention above, the vast majority of Latino office-holders have been elected

while running unopposed. The fact that Latino candidates did not have the opportunity to run unopposed in any city council race demonstrates how pervasive the barrier posed by non-Latino candidates has been in Benton County. A non-Latino has run for every single city council seat in the past thirty years, which has sharply diminished the chances of Latino candidates to find electoral success.

As we note above, the presence of electoral structures which suppress minority representation also tends to depress minority candidacy. It seems likely that the at-large structures, paired with the ubiquitous presence of non-Latino candidates, discourages Latino candidacies by making electoral success unlikely. Such systems are the most likely cause of the lack of Latino representation in Benton County.

Douglas County

In stark contrast with Benton County, Douglas County's three Latino candidates for city council have all been elected unopposed. In fact, not a single Latino candidate in Douglas has won any election against a non-Latino candidate in the past thirty years. Only two Latinos have attempted to challenge non-Latinos, both in school district races. This result is more in line with the overall trends of Latino representation throughout the state: Few Latino candidacies challenge non-Latinos, and even fewer succeed in doing so.

Douglas County is unique in that it has not elected a single Latino to city council in the most recent decade. Even more surprisingly, there has not been a single Latino candidate for city council in that time. The school district races were similarly unbalanced until the most recent election, when 4 of the 5 Latino candidates ran unopposed (the fifth was defeated by a non-Latino candidate). Though this result may mark a turning point for Latino representation in Douglas, the overall lack of Latino candidates in the past decade is striking. Again, this lack is likely due largely to the presence of at-large electoral systems.

Adams, Benton and Douglas Counties all diverge from the overall trends of Latino representation in Washington State by falling short of even the lackluster average rates of Latino candidacy and representation. The other six counties followed the average trend of slowly increasing Latino representation, coming mostly through races in which the Latino candidate is able to run unopposed.

C. City Council vs. School District Elections

Our analysis of Latino representation in the past 30 years would be incomplete without a discussion of the substantial differences that have emerged between city council and school district elections. It is important to enter this discussion with an understanding of the primary obstacles to proportional Latino representation that we discover in our historical analysis, as each barrier has had its own effect on the proportion of Latino representation found in city council and school district positions.

The most significant and apparent difference between the two types of offices we analyze is that nearly two-thirds of all Latinos elected from 1983-2011 were elected to school district positions.

Table 21

Total Number Latinos Elected, 1983-2011	Latinos Elected to City Council (%)	Latinos Elected to School District (%)
122	56 (45.90%)	66 (54.10%)

As we note at the beginning of this section, since 1983 Latinos have held 2.7% of school district offices and only 2.4% of city council positions. Because school district elections are almost exclusively conducted through at-large systems, the fact that Latinos have had more success in school district races would seem to contradict the scholarly literature which found that such systems are a barrier to Latino representation (Davidson and Korbel 1981; Leal et al. 2004; Meier et al. 2005; Polinard et al. 1994). However, a deeper analysis reveals that this is false. Of all Latinos elected to school district positions nearly 90% ran unopposed, meaning that the at-large systems had no bearing on the outcomes of those races. Of the 23 Latino candidacies that were opposed by non-Latinos for school district seats only 5 were successful, all but one of whom were elected in the most recent period. The 21.7% success rate attained by these candidates is expected given the improved success of Latino candidacies in the past decade, but is actually slightly lower than the overall rate of success against non-Latino candidacies from 1983-2011.

This result suggests that at-large systems disproportionately privilege the majority candidate by allowing a slim majority to decide the winners of every seat, resulting in substantial minority underrepresentation. This is substantiated by the studies referenced above, as well as by a previous State of the State report. In his 2008 analysis of school districts in Granger, Toppenish and Wapato, Dollar found that the at-large election structures systematically dilute the influence of the Latino vote (Dollar 2008).

Given that the vote dilution created by at-large elections has a substantial impact on races in which Latino candidates are challenged by non-Latinos, it is clear that the success Latino candidates find in school district races is due largely to the relative lack of non-Latino candidates. While 65.9% of Latinos running for school boards were able to run unopposed, only 52.9% of Latinos running for city council enjoy the same privilege. This statistic is particularly striking when compared directly to the total number of Latino candidates elected to each type of position. The 13% gap in unopposed Latino candidates is almost perfectly matched in the electoral results, which show that Latino school district candidates are elected 11% more often than their peers. Here we see the manifestation of the partial barrier to Latino representation discussed above: Latino electoral success appears to be strongly correlated with a lack of non-Latino candidates. Further, in both city council and school district races, Latino success against non-Latinos is less half of what we would expect if race played no issue (22.86% and 21.74% respectively). This further illustrates the severity and extent of the barrier to Latino representation posed by the candidacy of non-Latinos. Not only is it present in all three periods, its effects are consistent between city council and school district elections.

The other barrier to Latino representation - a lack of Latino candidates - is notably absent from our comparison of city council and school district races. Tables 21 and 22 show that while there have been more Latino office holders on school boards than on city councils, each type of seat

had almost exactly the same number of Latino candidacies. Perhaps even more strikingly, Table 23 shows that Latinos comprised essentially the same proportion of all candidates for each type of office.

Table 22

Total Latino Candidacies, 1983-2011	Latino Candidacies for City Council (%)	Latino Candidacies for School District (%)
173	86 (49.7%)	87 (50.3%)

Table 23

Total City Council Candidacies, 1983-2011	Latino Candidacies for City Council (%)	Total School Board Candidacies, 1983-2011	Latino Candidacies for School District (%)
3148	86 (2.73%)	3109	87 (2.80%)

The equal rates of candidacy, paired with the disparity in rates of representation seen in Table 21, suggest that the barrier posed by a lack of Latino candidates is not the most significant detriment to Latino representation. If a lack of Latino candidacies were the most important barrier to Latino representation, we would expect to see approximately equal representation when rates of candidacy are this close together. This is not the case, and so it seems that the lack of Latino candidates, though certainly a barrier to proportional representation, is not the most substantial barrier. As we note above, the fact that Latino candidates found more success in school district elections can be understood through the realization that non-Latino candidates were more present in city council elections. These numbers suggest that while a lack of Latino candidates makes proportional representation impossible even in the best case scenario, the presence of non-Latino candidates is the more pervasive barrier to Latino representation in Washington State.

D. Summary of Electoral History

Latino underrepresentation has been and continues to be a rampant condition of local politics throughout Washington State. In the nine counties we analyze in this section, all of which have populations that are at least 15% Latino, Latino candidates have rarely been elected to more than 5% of the available city council and school district seats. We find two barriers to Latino representation: 1) A lack of Latino candidacies; and 2) The candidacy of non-Latinos. Previous research suggests that both of these barriers are likely produced – at least in part – by the at-large elections used in most of Washington State’s local elections. Juenke shows that at-large elections tend to discourage minority candidacies (2000). Several other studies show that at-large elections, when combined with the racially polarized voting that the data suggests may have been present across 30 years of local elections, tend to produce results which are disproportionately favorable to majority candidates (Davidson and Korbelt 1981; Leal et al. 2004; Meier et al. 2005; Polinard et al. 1994).

Of these two barriers, the data clearly suggests that non-Latino candidacies are the more pervasive cause of Latino underrepresentation in Washington’s local elections precisely because

the race of candidates seems to influence voter behavior. Between 1983 and 2011, a total of 173 Latino candidates ran for 4753 city council and school board seats. Of these, 122 were elected. This success is largely due to the fact that 103 of those elected – nearly 85% of all Latino office-holders – were able to run unopposed. A further 6 were elected over other Latino candidates. Of the 58 Latinos who were opposed by non-Latinos, only 13 were elected (22.4%). At this dismal rate of success, Latinos would have to account for more than half of all candidates in order to achieve a rate of representation proportional to the percentage of the population that is Latino. In other words, Latino representation could only be proportional if a majority of all candidates were from a minority of the population. This 22.4% rate of success is less than half of what we would expect to see if race played no role in these elections. Thus, the data strongly suggests that the race of candidates does affect voter behavior, and this effect may have produced racially polarized voting several times in the past 30 years. When combined with at-large elections, these voting trends tend to deny minority voters an equal opportunity to elect the candidate of their choosing (Davidson and Korbel 1981; Leal et al. 2004; Meier et al. 2005; Polinard et al. 1994). If voting is affected by race to the extent that the data suggests, then the very structure of most local elections is likely diluting the votes of the Latino communities across Washington State and removing their voices from local government. Our analysis of more than 4750 elections strongly suggests that race has been – and continues to be – a factor which influences the behavior of voters. It is therefore clear that Washington’s local elections ought to move away from at-large systems in order to protect the equal rights of Latino voters.

In the next section, we turn to a more focused analysis of the electoral histories of 10 jurisdictions in Yakima County. In addition to these histories, we will discuss a number of interviews with community leaders from these municipalities in which they spoke about their perspectives on Latino participation and representation.

Analysis of Yakima County

In order to more fully understand the issues surrounding Latino representation in Yakima County, we continue our analysis with a 30-year electoral history of the eleven Yakima municipalities with the highest Latino populations: Mabton, Granger, Wapato, Toppenish, Grandview, Tieton, Harrah, Union Gap, Zillah, Moxee, and Selah. Under direction of Professor Avila, we have not included an analysis of Yakima City in this report. Sunnyside will be discussed in the last section of our report. Although Latinos have constituted 53% of the population in these eleven cities since 1983, in that same time they have been elected to only 16% of elected positions on city councils and school districts.

A. Municipal Histories

Mabton

Mabton is a city on the Eastern edge of the Yakama Indian Reservation, in Southwest Yakima County. The town began with the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad and the displacement of the Yakima peoples, in the late 1880’s (Mabton School District Website 2011). Today, the agricultural sector sustains the community. Local radio and television stations exist in both Spanish and English.

According to the 2010 Census, Mabton has a population of 2,286, of which 2,100 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, forty-nine of the one hundred twenty-one citizens who have run for local office have been Latino. Twenty-one of these candidates ran opposed, seven against another Latino and fourteen against a non-Latino. Seven out of those fourteen were elected. There have been thirty-seven elections in which a Latino candidate won, out of a total ninety-two elections in the last thirty years. The average term has been seven years.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
121	49 (40.50%)	28 (57.14%)	7 (14.29%)	14 (28.57%)

Mabton has the most proportionate Latino representative in the last decade out of the eleven cities in this study. It is the city with the highest percentage of Latinos, according to the 2010 census, the highest percent of Latino candidacies, and the highest rate of Latino representation on the city council and school district. The change over the last thirty years is extreme, with Latino representation jumping from 12%, between 1983 and 1991, to 70% between 2003 and 2011.

Opposed by a Non-Latino Candidate	14
Won against a Non-Latino Candidate	7
Success Rate against Non-Latinos	50.00%

Elections which involve Latinos running against non-Latinos have proved more successful in Mabton than in most other cities in the Yakima valley, producing the fifty percent success rate we would expect if race did not affect voter behavior.

Granger

Granger lies about fifteen miles east of Mabton. It also is a former Yakama tribal area and a locus of agricultural activity. A tile and brick factory, and accompanying clay mine, brought settlers to the area in the early 1900's as did the Northern Pacific Railroad (Official Website of Granger, WA 2011). Granger has had a noncommercial, Spanish-language radio station since 1979, the only full-time station of its kind in the nation (La Voz del Campesino 2011).

According to the 2010 Census, Granger has a population of 3,246, of which 2,862 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, thirty-four of the one hundred one citizens who have run for local office have been Latino. Eighteen of these candidacies were opposed, one against another Latino and seventeen against a non-Latino. There have been twenty-three elections in which a Latino candidate won, out of a total seventy-five elections in the last thirty years. The average term has been seven years.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
101	34 (33.66%)	15 (44.12%)	2 (5.89%)	17 (50.00%)

Although Granger’s size and Latino population are nearly equal to Mabton’s, Granger has a much lower rate of Latino representation. While the number of Latino candidacies rose dramatically in Mabton, it has stayed fairly stable in Granger, at around thirty-four percent, even while the Latino population has risen greatly from seventy to ninety-percent between 1990 and 2010.

Opposed by a Non-Latino Candidate	17
Won against a Non-Latino Candidate	7
Success Rate against Non-Latino Candidates	41.18%

The success rate of Latinos against non-Latinos is lower than we would expect if race were not an issue, but this rate is still higher than most cities we analyze.

Wapato

Wapato lies about thirteen miles south of the city of Yakima. The town emerged in the early 1900’s after the Dawes Severalty Act allowed tribes to sell land to settlers. Japanese and Pilipino immigrants have made up a large part of the community since its beginning, and established the first Buddhist temple in Washington State (Official Website of Wapato, WA 2011).

According to the 2010 census, Wapato has a population of 4,997, of which 4,208 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, forty-two of the one hundred fifty citizens who have run for local office have been Latino. Sixteen of these candidacies were opposed; four against another Latino and twelve against a non-Latino. There have been twenty-nine elections in which a Latino candidate won, out of a total one hundred ten elections in the last thirty years. The average term has been six years.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
150	42 (28.00%)	26 (61.90%)	4 (9.52%)	12 (28.57%)

Wapato has shown the second highest rate of Latino representation in the last decade. Like in Mabton, proportionate Latino representation has risen dramatically. While no Latinos ran for office between before 1993, fifty-nine percent of candidates were Latino between 2003 and 2011.

Opposed by a Non-Latino Candidate	12
Won against a Non-Latino Candidate	2
Success Rate against Non-Latino Candidates	16.67%

The success rate of Latinos when running against non-Latinos is extremely low in proportion to the size of the Latino community in Wapato. Only two Latino candidacies have been successful in races against non-Latinos. This low rate of success is examined further in our report, with an analysis of Kiely’s interview with Jesse Farias, the current mayor of Wapato.

Toppenish

Toppenish lies about twenty miles south of the city of Yakima, southeast of Wapato, and is also surrounded on all sides by the Yakama Indian Reservation after the passage of the Dawes Severalty Act. Today, the town’s identity surrounds its history as a part of the “old west.” In the last few years, both *American Cowboy Magazine* and *True West Magazine* have commended it for being a truly western town (Official Website of the Toppenish Chamber of Commerce 2011).

According to the 2010 Census, Toppenish has a population of 8949, of which 7388 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, thirty-one of the one hundred forty-three citizens who have run for local office have been Latino. Fifteen of these candidates ran opposed, one against another Latino and fourteen against a non-Latino. The average term has been seven years.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
143	31 (21.68%)	16 (51.61%)	1 (3.23%)	14 (45.16%)

Although the Latino population has grown continuously over the last thirty years, Latino representation has grown less proportionate over the last decade. The population of Toppenish has the fourth largest percentage of Latinos, but only twenty two percent of candidacies in the last ten years were Latino.

Opposed by a Non-Latino Candidate	14
Won against a Non-Latino Candidate	4
Success Rate against Non-Latino Candidates	28.57%

The success rate of Latinos when running against non-Latinos is low in proportion to the size of the Latino community in Toppenish. Only four Latino candidacies have been successful in races against non-Latinos. This low rate of success is also examined further in our report, with an analysis of Kiely’s interview with Clara Jimenez and Ed Pacheco, former candidates for the Toppenish city council who have both noticed clear opposition by non-Latino candidates against Latino candidates.

Grandview

Grandview is on the eastern edge of Yakima County. Originally a stop along the Northern Pacific Railroad in the 1900’s, it was noted for its view of both Mount Adams and Mount Rainier which gave the town its name (Official Website of Grandview, WA 2011). The *Grandview Herald* is the local newspaper.

According to the 2010 Census, Grandview has a population of 10862, of which 8655 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, thirty of the one hundred twenty-eight citizens who have run for local office have been Latino. Ten of these candidates ran opposed, all against non-Latinos. There have been twenty-four elections in which a Latino candidate won, out of a total ninety-six elections in the last thirty years. The average term has been nine years.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
128	30 (23.44%)	20 (66.67%)	0 (0.00%)	10 (33.33%)

Grandview has the fifth largest percentage of Latinos, and the fourth highest rate of Latino representation. While Latino representation has grown from eighteen to thirty-seven percent over the last thirty years, it has not kept pace with the growth in the Latino population, which has grown from making up fifty-two to eighty percent of the total population between 1990 and 2010.

Opposed by a Non-Latino Candidate	10
Won against a Non-Latino Candidate	5
Success Rate against Non-Latino Candidates	50.00%

Like Mabton, Grandview has the expected success rate for Latino candidacies opposed by non-Latinos when race is not a factor.

Tieton

Tieton is in the far Northwest corner of Yakima County. Although water, a post office, and a bank were brought to the area in the early 1990’s the city was not incorporated until 1942. Today, orchards and farms cover much of the area (Official Website of Tieton, WA 2011). A group of Seattle entrepreneurs have entered the city in the last few years with ideas and resources for economic revitalization, supporting the opening of new businesses and housing (Official Website of Tieton, WA 2011). Tieton is a part of the Highland School District.

According to the 2010 Census, Tieton has a population of 1,191, of which 767 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, one of the one hundred sixteen citizens who have run for local office has been Latino. He ran unopposed and served for four years. No Latinos have run for a position on the school board in the Highland School District.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
116	1 (0.86%)	1 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)

Tieton shows the lowest proportion of Latino representation in Yakima County.

Harrah

The Yakama Indian Reservation surrounds Harrah, a town seventeen miles due south of the city of Yakima. The town was incorporated in 1946. Resources in the city include an outpost of the Washington State Migrant Council, the Harrah Community Christian School, and the Harrah Library. Harrah is a part of the Mount Adams School District.

According to the 2010 Census, Harrah has a population of 625, of which 346 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, twenty-two of the one hundred ten citizens who have run for local office have been Latino. Five of these candidates ran opposed against a non-Latino. There have been twenty elections in which a Latino candidate won, out of total eighty-eight elections in the last thirty years. The average term has been nine years.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
110	22 (20.00%)	17 (77.27%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (22.73%)

Latino representation has risen in Harrah over the last thirty years to make it one of the most proportionally Latino city governments. The small size of Harrah is important to keep in mind, when looking at these figures, as the average population for the towns in this study is about 3,000 while the population of Harrah is by far the lowest with 625.

Opposed by a Non-Latino Candidate	5
Won against a Non-Latino Candidate	3
Success Rate against Non-Latino Candidates	60.00%

Harrah boasts the highest success rate of Latinos against non-Latinos, and is the only jurisdiction in which we find this success rate to be skewed in favor of Latinos rather than non-Latinos.

Union Gap

Union Gap lies on the outskirts of the city of Yakima. It was originally the city of Yakima but was renamed after the Northern Pacific Railroad bypassed the city for a location to the north. Many buildings were transferred to be closer to the railroad site, and the location of old Yakima was renamed to be Union Gap (Official Website of Union Gap, WA 2011).

According to the 2010 Census, Union Gap has a population of 6,047, of which 2,853 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, one of the one hundred twenty citizens who have run for local office has been Latino, and ran unopposed. She served four years. No Latinos have served on city council.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
120	1 (0.83%)	1 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)

Union gap also shows almost nonexistent Latino representation, with the first and only Latino candidate running in 2009.

Zillah

Zillah is approximately twenty miles south of the city of Yakima along highway 82. The town began with the Sunnyside canal project of the 1890's. The superintendent of the canal company, Walter Granger, became its first mayor, and the town was incorporated in 1911. Wine and traditional agriculture are dominant presences (Official Website of Zillah, WA 2011).

According to the 2010 census, Zillah has a population of 2,964, of which 1,261 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, six of the one hundred twenty-eight

candidacies have been run by Latinos. Four were opposed by a non-Latino. Latinos have won three elections, out of a total ninety-two elections in Zillah in the last thirty years. No Latinos have run for a position on the school board.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
128	6 (4.69%)	2 (33.33%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (66.67%)

Zillah has shown a small increase in Latino representation in the last decade, but still has the third lowest rate of Latino representation with Latinos winning only five percent of elections in the last decade.

Opposed by a Non-Latino Candidate	4
Won against a Non-Latino Candidate	1
Success Rate against Non-Latino Candidates	25.00%

Latino candidacies in Zillah fall short of the expected 50% rate of success against non-Latinos, suggesting that race may play a role in voter behavior.

Moxee

Moxee is approximately six miles from the city of Yakima. It was incorporated into Yakima County in 1921, and is a part of the East Valley School District.

According to the 2010 Census, Moxee has a population of 3,308, of which 1,291 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, seven of the one hundred fifteen citizens who have run for local office have been Latino. Five of these candidates ran opposed, against non-Latino candidates, and lost in each of those elections. There have been two elections in which a Latino candidate won, out of a total eighty-seven elections in the last thirty years. Both candidates ran unopposed in each case served four years.

Total Number of Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies (% of Total)	Latino Candidacies that were Unopposed (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by another Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)	Latino Candidacies Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (% of Latino Candidacies)
115	7 (6.09%)	2 (28.57%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (71.43%)

Moxee is the only city in this study to have had Latino representation in the past but to have elected no Latinos in the last ten years. One Latino has been elected to the city council and school district, respectively. The only decade to have seen Latino representation in Moxee were the 1990's, despite the fact that the Latino population has risen steadily to currently make up almost forty percent of the population.

Opposed by a Non-Latino Candidate	5
Won against a Non-Latino Candidate	0
Success Rate against Non-Latino Candidates	0.00%

Every Latino candidate who has run against a non-Latino in Moxee has been defeated.

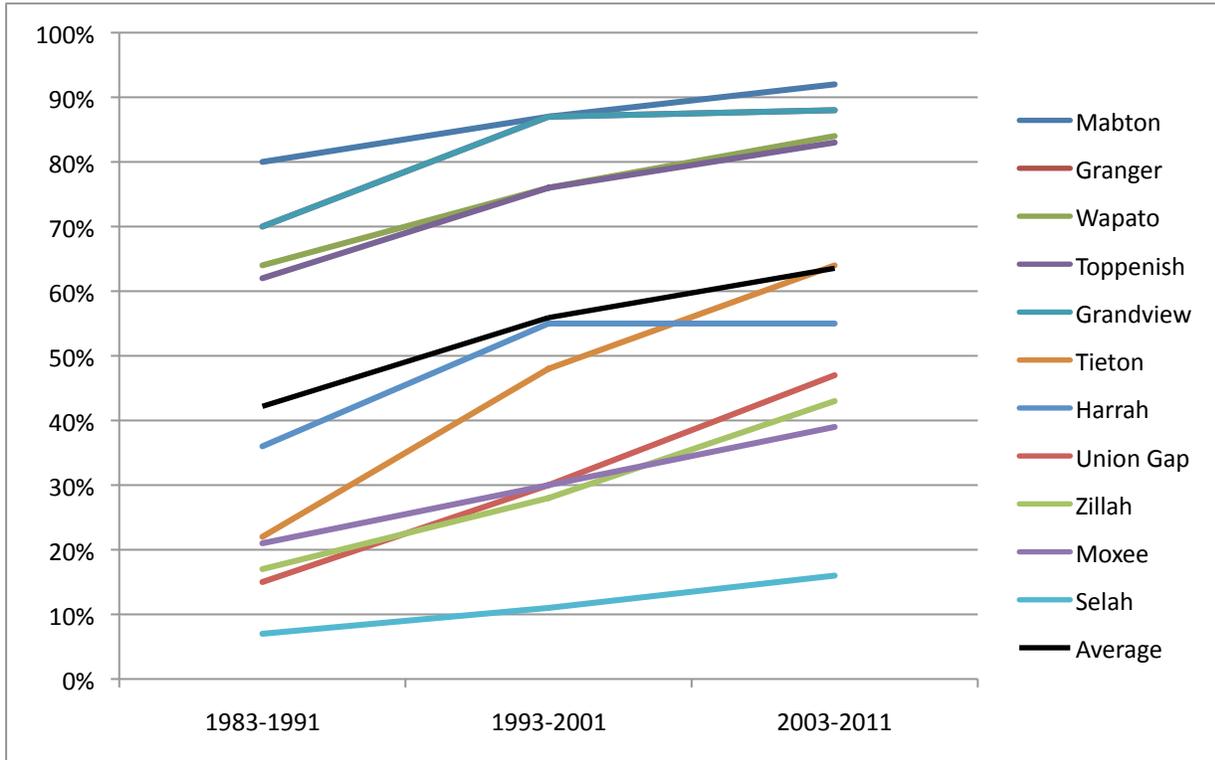
Selah

Selah is located four miles north of the city of Yakima, known as the “Apple Juice Capital of the World” (Official Website of Selah, WA 2011). Both the Tree Top processing co-operative and a juice plant run by the Yakima Tribe reside in Selah. It was incorporated in 1919.

According to the 2010 Census, Selah has a population of 7,147, of which 1,172 identify as Latino (U.S. Census 2010). In the last thirty years, no Latino has run for local office.

Historical Trends in Latino Representation

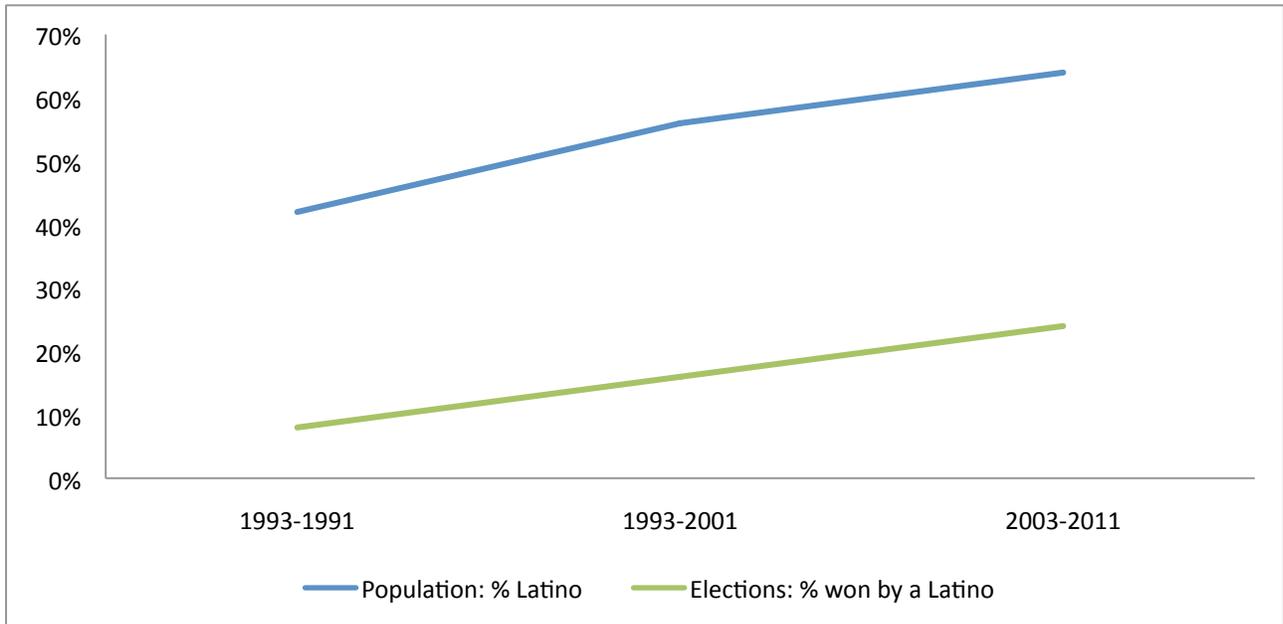
Population: Percent Latino



Although the electoral history of Yakima County shows greater Latino representation than do other counties in Washington State, similar trends and clear underrepresentation is still present. This is especially striking in light of the rapid growth of Latino populations in towns across the county, growing from 41% overall in 1990 to 63% in 2010, in the eleven cities in this study.

The numbers of Latino candidates running for office in these cities has also risen dramatically in the last thirty years, especially in the last decade in which Latino candidates made up a full quarter of all candidacies for city council and school district. There is still a need, however, for a far greater number of Latino candidates if city government is to proportionately represent the demographics of their communities.

Population v. Representation



As the previous section clearly indicates, Latino candidates’ chances of being elected decrease dramatically when a non-Latino candidate enters the race. This largely holds true for Yakima County, in which Latinos defeat non-Latinos in only 35.8% of elections. Though Mabton, Grandview and Harrah meet or exceed the 50% success rate that we expect Latino candidates to achieve against non-Latinos in the absence of racially influenced voting, they are the exception rather than the rule. Overall, Latino representation is marginally better in Yakima County than in the nine counties we analyze in the previous section, but the barriers posed by a lack of Latino candidacies and the candidacy of non-Latinos are evident even in Yakima.

Now we turn to a discussion of the political climate in Yakima County, based on our interviews with leaders in various Latino communities.

B. Political Engagement in Yakima County

To better understand political representation in Washington, we researched Yakima County, asking the following research questions: How frequently Latinos have run for local office in Yakima County in the last thirty years? How frequently they have been elected? How long has each office-holder served in his or her city? Interviews with some of the Latinos who have run for office in this area, illuminate reasons behind the historical and geographical trends that exist with respect to Latino candidacies and electoral success in the region.

Yakima valley electoral records show clear differences between various cities, even when ethnic demographics are relatively similar. Furthermore, as the Latino population grew in many cities, the rates of representation on city council and school board rose in some towns far more than

others, and at different times. The Latino population of Wapato, for example, rose from 64% in 1990 to 76% in 2000. The first Latino to run for city office, after 1983 when our study starts, was not until 1991. On the school board, it wasn't until 2003 that Latino was elected. In Granger, on the other hand, twelve Latinos ran for office between 1983 and 1991, eight of whom were elected to office.

As can be seen, the electoral history of the greater Yakima Valley shows a clear lack of Latino representation in most communities for various stretches of time. This section will explore reasons behind these trends and strategies that have been effective in overcoming barriers to Latino representation in these communities. Foremost in these findings is the importance of an atmosphere of inclusion, translation for city council meetings and dual language election information, the ability of council members to effectively communicate issues to the broader public, and connections and outreach to the youth population.

An Atmosphere of Inclusion

Interviewees stress the importance of community support in the lives of the Latino population. They indicate that support from the greater community helps to foster an environment of inclusion, recognition and understanding, which is essential for the success of Latino candidates and the Latino community as a whole. The mayor of Wapato, Jesse Farias, cites the switch from using the term “citizen” to using the term “resident” as an important move in promoting greater political inclusion. He reasons, “Cause I don't care where you're from, we're here to provide service for you. You know it doesn't sound like it's very important but it is important.”³ The city website also mentions the importance and prevalence of immigrant communities on their homepage, and is one of the only cities in Yakima County to do so.

Ed Pacheco, a former city-council member of Toppenish, asserts of neighboring Wapato, “For one thing they do have a Latino Mayor who supports ideas, other Latinos, and I think it's just easier for Latinos to run when they feel supported.”⁴ This atmosphere stands in contrast to that of Toppenish, the city seven miles southeast of Wapato, where the Latino constituency makes up a similar percentage of the population. Although Pacheco cited certain Anglos in Toppenish who have been allies to the Latino community and have volunteered and supported in what are considered primarily Latino issues, he sees these people as standouts who may even be hurting their relationship with their own Anglo community because of their alliance with Latinos. In speaking of the general inclusion of Latinos in Toppenish, Pacheco explains:

In this community obviously we're just not supported. That's just the reality of it... There's a huge disconnect here between the folks that govern and the community itself. And the community picks up on it, when you go downtown to pay your bill, whether are you greeted with a smile or a smirk, it's not that difficult. A lot of subtle stuff is going on unsaid, to speak to the reality of it.⁵

³ Farias, Jesse. Interview by author in Wapato, Washington. November 9, 2011.

⁴ Pacheco, Ed. Interview by author in Toppenish, Washington. November 9, 2011.

⁵ Pacheco, 2011.

Rogelio Montes, a former candidate for city council in the city of Yakima who has been defeated in two recent elections, recalls one particular experience in a US airport when he was physically pulled out of line and asked for his green card. This stands out as a meaningful memory of racial profiling and discrimination, along with many others during his time in the US, particularly in the southwest. Before showing his passport, Montes asked the officers why they had not pulled anyone else out of line. Eventually, they went through the crowd and ask a smattering of people for their proof of citizenship. He clearly remembers their discomfort and change in attitude with the others in the airport, and that presumption of illegality that he so often encounters. This particular event did not occur in Yakima and he hopes that the city will not take on the same attitudes and practices that he experienced further south. It is these hopes that motivate his work in the immigrant community of Yakima.

This desire to help his community drives Montes to run for office in the city of Yakima. While working as a community organizer for many years, he observed that his efforts and those of his community seemed to perpetually run up against opposition from local government and the greater Anglo community. He explains:

One of the city council members... he doesn't do it in the open but he has a problem with immigrants... I think because I was the first Latino or Latino running that ignited some people that, you know, they're against immigrants or they don't feel comfortable. So they were criticizing me in the paper; that they didn't want to see any council member that didn't speak, uh, pretty good English, saying that I didn't understand the issues.⁶

All interviewees indicate that this is part of a larger general bias by non-Latinos of candidates and citizens with accents or limited English ability. When asked what he felt was the primary barrier during his campaign for city council, Montes cited his ethnicity and his accent. Similarly, in answering a question about what could be done to overcome barriers to political participation in Toppenish, Jimenez explains the need for greater respect and understanding of Spanish-speakers in the community:

Certain people have got to be able to be respectful in understanding that just because they don't understand the English language doesn't mean that they're not intelligent, and doesn't mean that they don't have a valid issue or concern. And I think sometimes people see people who don't speak the language as ignorant. But there might be reasons why they're not learning it. Everyone's different.⁷

This perception of exclusion has far reaching effects on the participation by the Latino community in city organizations and institutions. Jimenez described a study done by the University of Washington, which attempted to uncover why the Latino businesses were not joining the local chamber of commerce. Interviews with local business leaders revealed that Latinos often didn't see the benefit of paying to be a member of the organization because they did not see the positive effects that the chamber had had. Furthermore, Latinos mostly frequented Latino businesses while Anglos were patrons of primarily Anglo-owned businesses.

⁶ Montes, Rogelio. Interview by author in Yakima, Washington. November 20, 2011.

⁷ Jimenez, Clara . Interview by author in Toppenish, Washington. October 27, 2011.

This divide in the business community decreased the relevance and value of the Chamber of Commerce for the Latino community.⁸

In Wapato, Mayor Jesse Farias started a program to help foster communication between the Latino business community and the city government that succeeded in improving local businesses and community members' perception of city institutions and law enforcement. He describes the program as follows:

One of the requirements was that in forty-five days they would see a quiz and the quiz would be, I would give them an address, downtown, and they would tell me to whom [*sic*] is that business and what kind of business do they have. And, so, that was one of the job requirements. And so it's helped, it's changed some of the people's perspective of the police department.⁹

The community's relationship with local law enforcement is an issue noted by most interviewees as being formative to the Latino community's perception of city governance and institutions. Pacheco expressed his difficulty in seeing the positive effects of law enforcement in combating crime in the Latino neighborhoods. He notices their presence on the highway and entrances to town but does not feel that the community benefits greatly from their work. A perception by the Latino community that their needs are being addressed by city institutions, such as the police department, therefore has a marked impact on a general atmosphere of inclusion as does a respect, especially by city institutions and the individuals working within them, of Spanish-speaking members of the community.

Opposition from non-Latinos during campaigns

Latino candidates also perceived opposition from the Anglo community during campaigns for city council. As we note above, Latino candidates' chances for being elected to city office decrease markedly when a non-Latino enters the race. That this opposition of Latino candidates was observed to be deliberate, by Jimenez, Pacheco, and Montes, therefore makes the biases and opposition by Anglo candidates and media to be extremely detrimental to proportional Latino representation.

Clara Jimenez, council member of Toppenish, quickly noticed that Anglo candidates were more likely to run against her than against other (male) Anglos in the town. She ran four times in Toppenish, and has been elected three of those times. The only loss came when she ran as a write-in against two Anglo men. She says that the previous council members welcomed her "with open arms" when she first ran for office and that some had come to her to encourage her to run. She was elected in her first campaign, and became the first Latina woman on the Toppenish city council, but noted that opposition to Latino candidates was and is still apparent:

It's interesting because every time I run I always run opposed... Right now we have four council members running. Three men, and one woman. The only one being opposed is the female. She's the only one, and what gets me is, that the man who is opposing her

⁸ Jimenez, 2011.

⁹ Farias, 2011.

had originally gone and filed for another person's position. Because he'd heard that person wasn't going to run... But then when he realized that, yeah, he's filing and he's running, he went and he jumped ship. So, instead of running against a male, he went to run against her.¹⁰

Although biases by members of the Anglo community prevent the success of some Latino candidates, our interviewees made the value of having Latino candidates in local office, especially bilingual Latinos, extremely clear.

Importance of Bilingual Resources and Candidates

Clara Jimenez discussed some of the advantages she has seen as coming from her identity as a Latina woman on city council; specifically her ability to relate to and understand the Latino community. She asserted: "They're not Hispanic, they don't know what it's like. They're not bilingual; they don't know what it's like, having to learn another language. So, yeah, I think I... I believe that I can relate at least with the Hispanic population a lot more than they can relate. And my idea of things that should go on are different than their ideas."¹¹ While she explained that her time working in the fields as a child was formative to her upbringing- she described waking up in the early morning pick apples in the orchards while her feet and hands went numb from the cold- it is her experience of learning another language, of being bi-lingual, that stands out most clearly as a quality essential to her success as a part of the city council.

All interviewees speak of the importance of being able to communicate in both Spanish and English, as contributing to the success of Latino campaigns, the success of city councils in including the Latino community in meetings and outreach, and the political mobilization of Latinos in other ways across the town. This shows that having bilingual citizens on the city council improves its inclusiveness and efficacy in addition to measures already mandated by the National Voting Rights Act. All interviewees affirm the significance of having bi-lingual resources available, and specifically stressed the need for translators in city council meetings and other public events.

Farias, for example, notes the influence of his language ability on his success in mobilizing and gaining support from Latino voters in Wapato, when he explained, "I just say, 'Hey, my name is Jesse and this is what I'm doing.' It helped a great deal that I was able to do it in both languages. It surprised a lot of folks, that you can actually speak Spanish; most people in your generation don't. And I go, 'No, you know, how to do I talk to my mother?'"¹²

This recognition of the language differences in his community also informs the way Farias operates as mayor. He sees the importance of minority representation across different sectors of the city, not only in elected offices but in hired positions as well. He has worked to make sure that most city departments that work with the public have bilingual members, notably the street

¹⁰ Jimenez, 2011.

¹¹ Jimenez, 2011.

¹² Farias, 2011.

department, fire department, police department, and city hall. In Wapato, city council meetings have had Spanish interpreters since he came into office in 2003.¹³

Jimenez and Pacheco also emphasized that obtaining a translator for all city council meetings was a major step towards generating greater participation of the Latino community in city government – and toward more effective governance by elected officials. Before this, some of the higher-profile issues would warrant a translator, but this role was fulfilled by, “whoever might have been on the street.”¹⁴ When Jimenez came into office in Toppenish, the burden often fell to her to translate during meetings, which effectively made her non-functional as a council member in the meeting itself. She explained the shift in attitude that has come about since she was first elected to city council in 1997:

I still remember with one of the first councils, being told you are not to speak Spanish... That was something that had to change. Because like I said to the city manager at the time, I said, I am not gonna be able to sit up here and have to translate because the way that I translate is word for word...it's like I'm not there. I'm just a mouth piece. So it was really hard for me then, once I'm done translating, to go back and work on the issues if I really don't know what the issues were because I wasn't really listening, just talking... We finally got a certified, state certified state interpreter. And he's there now at every meeting, not just when they think they're going to have a hot topic, I mean he is there every day.¹⁵

Pacheco remembers a similar series of events in Toppenish. Once, before he was in office and prior to bilingual interpreters, Pacheco went to a city council meeting and spoke to the English speaking council in Spanish in an effort to what it feels like to be excluded from the conversation. He described the feeling of discomfort and frustration in the room, but that his actions contributed to the city council's decision to hire a full-time translator in part to his actions at that time.¹⁶

Montes suggests that the atmosphere in the city of Yakima is less accepting of varied language ability. When asked what the major barrier was in his campaign for city council, he cited his accent and ethnicity. Although he understands English well, some people expressed a difficulty in understanding him and he believes this made various organizations and individuals wary of supporting him.¹⁷ The tension and sluggishness of the council to address the needs of the bilingual community in Toppenish and Yakima therefore speaks to the interdependence of societal attitudes and institutional resources for Spanish-speakers in these towns and demonstrates the importance of overcoming these barriers in order that city governments are able to address the needs and voices of the whole of their constituencies.

Choosing to Run for an Elected Office

¹³ Farias, 2011.

¹⁴ Jimenez, 2011.

¹⁵ Jimenez, 2011.

¹⁶ Pacheco, 2011.

¹⁷ Montes, 2011.

The electoral history of in previous sections demonstrates that even if every Latino who has run for office was elected, Latino representation in city government in most cities and counties in this study would still be far less than what is needed to proportionately represent their Latino populations. Identifying factors that motivate certain individuals to run for office is therefore important if we are to bring about a more representative government at the city level. When asked of their personal motivations that lead to their running for office, our sources note a desire to have a platform with which to oppose council members who they believed were doing a poor job, to giving back and providing a service for their country, and to use their experience and education for the betterment of their home communities. While diverging senses of identity brought about differing explanations for running for office, a connection to a “home community” is apparent in each account.

Motivating Jimenez and Pacheco to serve in city governance is a desire to give back to their community after completing degrees of higher education. Jimenez has a master’s in public policy from the University of Washington, which she earned after completing her teaching degree at the same time that a new law required teachers to have, or be in the process of earning, their master’s. She and Pacheco both describe their decisions to first run for office as coming out of a desire to use their education, which they recognize as setting them apart from much of the Latino community in Toppenish, for the greater good.

Farias and Montes show a similar commitment to helping their community. They expressed dissatisfaction with current leadership, a perception of unresponsiveness as shown to them personally at city council meetings- when they had come as citizens to express their views and ideas- and a belief that their background and experience would make them capable of doing a better job than the current elected officials. Farias spent the majority of his career leading large agencies and working with politicians and the public in Olympia, WA, leading lobbying efforts and developing public policy. Montes spent much of his time, after immigrating to the US, on community organizing and involvement. Both men saw their work on the city council as a continuation of their previous work and experiences, both in the sense of employing their practical abilities and in the sense of fulfilling an obligation to their country.

Both Jimenez and Farias cite their bilingual ability as important to their success as council members, and Jimenez attributes her experience as a woman and as a Latina in helping her to understand the problems in her community, but neither described perceptions of local government as being discriminatory or exclusive. Furthermore, they do not see the Latino community as being their principal base of constituents, but rather view their constituency as the community at large, which happens to include a large percentage of Latinos.

When asked whether racial or ethnic background is a determinant of a councilmember’s efficacy once in office, Farias avers that ethnicity has less to do an individual’s success than is sometimes assumed. He asserts:

It really doesn’t make a difference what your last name is as councilman, it’s how you perform in the role. If you’re going to be a councilman, you need to be out there talking to your constituents. You can’t just say, I’m a councilman, I know what’s best and what’s good. You need to be out there. You need to be visiting with folks. So if you’re

last name's Sanchez and you stay home all the time, that's not going to make you a good councilman.¹⁸

Jimenez and Farias, however, both identified themselves being different from the majority of the Latino community because of their education levels and political aspirations. They were both some of the first Latinos to serve on city council in their respective towns, and identify their political careers as making them unusual within their family. Jimenez describes the reaction of her family: "Oh, they always think I'm nuts. They're like, oh god what is she doing now."¹⁹ Farias says that his children now read the news and debate political changes among themselves, but do not plan to run for office or have a career in politics. His parents, he says, have never been involved in politics.

Both Pacheco and Montes, on the other hand, identify strongly with a 'Latino' community and with a particular lineage of political activity pertaining to Latino issues. Identification with this lineage has been formative for Pacheco's political work, as has his hopes that his actions will inspire action by other Latinos in his community. He explains:

I think more than anything, I like to believe that in my short period there, that other folks have become inspired to run, I know that that's what happened with me...seeing that the Latinos were running for office at different levels, that inspired me so, I hope that I have inspired somebody else. You know one of the gals that ran in Toppenish for the county was inspired because...I had run.²⁰

Pacheco identifies his family's political involvements, as far back as his grandparents' generation in Mexico, as extremely active and progressive. His father's community involvement as a pastor and engagement with César Chávez while a migrant worker in California, he says, are direct inspirations for his work in Toppenish as a social worker and politician.

Complexities of a "Latino" Community

Even while some of interviewees placed themselves within a lineage of Latino political activity, as Pacheco did, they all highlighted the importance of recognizing any Latino population as made up of a myriad of groups with different histories, places of origin, and political persuasions. Each interviewee emphasized the problematic nature of addressing "Latino" issues or "Latino" voices, and described different variations of views and identifications. Farias elaborates:

People try to mix it all up. Puerto Ricans are different and Mexicans are different. Cubans are different... I noticed a lot of people like to avoid this, but there is a big difference between those that were from my generation and the recently arrived too. It's

¹⁸ Farias, 2011.

¹⁹ Jimenez, 2011.

²⁰ Pacheco, 2011.

big, and sometimes there's stress between those two groups, and we have to recognize it. So what may mobilize one segment may not mobilize another segment.²¹

Pacheco also described the Latino community as having various divisions and backgrounds that make talking about one, identifiable group harder than is usually recognized.

When we talk about immigrant rights, illegal and legal, and workforce, and this, that and the other, there will be a disconnect between [people of] Latino descent or Mexican and *tejano*, a Texan descent. A Texan will align themselves with a more right wing, Caucasian, than to liberal thinking. A Texas will align more with the right than with the liberal.²²

This difference in place of origin is, as Pacheco continues, a major influence on the value that particular groups see in voting.

When you are looking at the Latino voter immigrant, that population, you have to consider then, where they come from. So you're asking the Mexican voter, you know Mexicans who are completely mistrustful of their government, and they have reason to be because it's completely corrupt government, and so they really believe that their vote doesn't count, because of voter fraud. So there's that huge distrust, including that their vote don't count, and if it does, somehow they're going to get shafted in the end. That even if they voted, trying to make an informed decision, ultimately the candidate is going to turn into a bad person and which historically it's happened that way. So you have to overcome that obstacle.²³

These divisions in the Latino community augments the struggle of candidates and council members to successfully address and communicate with their constituency in a way that affirms the relevance and benefits of broad political participation of the public. All interviewees clearly express the steep and continuous learning curve that was necessary from the beginning of their first campaign through each day of service in their elected positions. Constituents' varying English abilities, cultural-geographic backgrounds, and political viewpoints make it difficult for politicians to address the community at large. The difficulty of explaining multi-faceted governmental issues compounds this problem, making a translation of issues from the city council to the public, and back again, one of the greatest challenges identified by each interviewee.

The Acquisition of Institutional Knowledge

The acquisition of Institutional knowledge by candidates, in a way that makes council members still able to communicate effectively with the public, is therefore a key transition for council members in their efficacy and chances of re-election. Farias and Jimenez highlighted the difficulty of understanding political processes and issues upon taking office. Both council members told the story of running for office, serving on city council and being successfully re-

²¹ Farias, 2011.

²² Pacheco, 2011.

²³ Pacheco, 2011.

elected as being contingent on this key transition into council and the necessary acquisition of knowledge that it requires. They emphasized the difficulty of learning how to be a productive and relevant councilman and the lack of consideration that is given to this transition in the mainstream conversation concerning representative government. Jimenez elaborates:

It was a steep learning curve, for me, 'cause it wasn't what I expected. And you've got to learn the ins and the outs. And you've got to learn things that you've got no idea. I mean, waste water treatment, sewer plants, paving... all this lingo. It was like a foreign language that you had to learn, and you had to educate yourself on that. You're constantly having to educate yourself on issues that maybe the person who's not involved in politics, never has to.²⁴

The ability to learn the language of the council is clearly key in both interviewees' interpretation of the challenges of being an elected representative, a language that requires a sort of second translation from council members to the English-speaking public, as well as to the Spanish-speaking. This challenge adds to the already complicated job of serving on city council and of generating public support for council members' decisions and programs. Farias describes:

It's one thing to be elected, ok, but you've got to demonstrate that you know how to govern. You know, just being elected, there are a whole plethora of things you have to learn. I think that's one of the things people don't look at before they're in office. What is going to be the time commitment, because it's not coming to a meeting twice a month and voting on something. That's only a small part of it. I mean, there's a million things... law books that thick. And how do you, how can you learn things you need to learn without being a walking encyclopedia? How do I translate that into, so Joe six-pack understands me without sounding like a bureaucrat?...²⁵

These interviews demonstrate how the ability to understand institutional, social, and economic knowledge that is not in the public consciousness, and also to translate this knowledge for the general public, is a major determinant of the success of city council members. When asked what sort of resources could help minorities be successful in running for and serving on city council, Farias expressed a long-held hope for a sort of leadership training program that would recruit potential leaders and train people who are interested in working in government, both in elected positions and in civil service appointments. He explains, "Many positions that help create policy, they touch everybody's lives. And if they don't understand it, you got to teach them."²⁶

Farias is also working towards the inclusion and advancement of youth in the public sphere. The Wapato city council recently started a program, known as the youth advisory group, which will bridge communication between the city council and a group of young people. He explained:

I think every young person ought to spend some time in city council and see how that operates. I also believe every young person should go at least one day when the state

²⁴ Jimenez, 2011.

²⁵ Farias, 2011.

²⁶ Farias, 2011.

legislature's in session. So not only they can see how it works but so they can feel the excitement in the air. And the environment, you know it's totally different.²⁷

Simply providing exposure to the workings of government, at any level, combats perceptions of exclusion, reinforces and illuminates the value of voting and political participation, and works to transcend the difficulty of translating policy issues to a broader community. This is especially important for immigrant communities and ethnic groups whose historical background may not encourage faith in a democratic electoral system. Pacheco expounds upon the importance of this kind of education and inclusion that fosters a sense of optimism about the political system:

With the Latino population in Yakima County you have to kind of reinforce, in education and reeducation... a more "American" experience perspective. That your vote does count, that the majority of the people that we elect are true to their nature; I think that that's true. Although we talk about the negatives, and so forth, ultimately [the American government] is a much better government than most other governments across the world. I still believe in America. I do believe in America.²⁸

According to Farias and Pacheco, education and outreach by the city government, especially for the youth in the community, works to improve perceptions of government, affirm the worth of voting, and make residents aware of ways in which they can directly affect the governance of their own community. Although lack of knowledge about the political system was identified as being a major barrier to participation at all levels of city government, programs such as the 'youth advisory group' in Wapato generate citizens who have the skills to better overcome these barriers.

Reform of the Electoral Structure

A change in electoral structure is another viable option with which to motivate Latino candidacies and increase support for those already running. Sunnyside, a city in Yakima County that has recently altered its electoral structure, will be discussed in the next section to illuminate the benefits and complexities of this potential avenue for more proportional Latino representation. First, however, are included attitudes and opinions of a change to the electoral structure by citizens and city council members in other areas of Yakima County.

When asked about the potential benefit of implementing ward-based elections, instead of an at-large system, interviewees in Toppenish and Wapato do not express a desire for structural, electoral reform. As Farias expresses throughout, "You still have to give them candidates that they want to vote for. That's number one."²⁹

Farias, Pacheco, and Jimenez also share the belief that underrepresentation of Latinos needs to be addressed by their communities, rather than through legal enforcement. Pacheco expresses:

²⁷ Farias, 2011.

²⁸ Pacheco, 2011.

²⁹ Farias, 2011.

I'm not sure if it's really the government's role, but it has to go back to the community roots, to the people themselves. I'm not sure if it's the role of government to find the people or to encourage people. That's what we need to do, that needs to grow from within ourselves.³⁰

Jimenez adds that Latinos have the opportunity to run now and that there is a greater need for Latino candidates than there is for electoral reform: "It's open and if anyone wants to run. I mean you look at it right now, you had four positions and only one with an opposition, so if you really wanted to, you could have, it's pretty much open."³¹ Scholarly studies show that Latino candidacies could increase with a change in the structure of the electoral system, but our interviews suggest that in these towns local leaders should also work to improve political inclusion at a grass-roots level (Davidson and Korbel 1981; Leal et al. 2004; Meier et al. 2005; Polinard et al. 1994).

Both interviewees in Toppenish and Wapato, however, recognized the need for Latino representation in the city of Yakima and noted a marked difference in atmosphere between the city and their smaller towns. Although Jimenez and Pacheco have experienced discrimination in Toppenish, when asked about racial discrimination and barriers to minority representation, interviewees suggest that Yakima has broader problems which need to be addressed. Farias, who was most clear that racial discrimination was not a problem in his own city government, says of Yakima, "Now that's what needs a rude awakening, it's very obvious. You don't have to be a political science genius to see that. Anybody that's a different shade, it's like let's figure out how to get 'em out of there."³²

Jimenez and Montes both speak of the failed election of Sonia Rodriguez, after she had served two years on the Yakima city council after a previous member had left partway through his term:

You had what I considered to be an excellent council member, with Sonia Rodriguez. She was excellent. And then you don't elect her and you get some guy who's just on the radio. It's like, come on people. To me that was blatant racism, because he had no experience. I mean here she's an attorney. And she's proven herself because she's been on council for how long now? And now just because she's Hispanic... I don't think they've had Hispanics hardly at all in Yakima.³³

Montes, who is one of the only Latinos to have run for city council in Yakima supports the idea of a ward-based election system. He ran and lost in the primaries in Yakima, a few years ago- in which one candidate is chosen from each precinct- and hopes to run again. A shift to a fully ward-based election system would therefore not have affected his success previously, but he believes that it would indicate a shift towards greater acceptance and support for Latino candidates by the city. He explains:

³⁰ Pacheco, 2011.

³¹ Jimenez, 2011.

³² Farias, 2011.

³³ Jimenez, 2011.

I think that if we don't do anything in Yakima, we're going to be facing those same issues [As I faced in Texas]. I don't want that to happen, and that's why I started getting involved... It seems to me that the previous council members are not listening to our issues. I don't think they want to have any council members of any other ethnicity to be on council.³⁴

There are notable differences in social climate, political inclusion, and overall Latino representation in city government throughout Yakima Valley but there are also clear and consistent barriers and strategies with which to move forward. Generally, Latino political leaders do not see electoral reform as a potential solution to barriers to political representation and participation in the small towns of the Yakima Valley, but do see it as a useful tool in the city of Yakima. To explore the possible benefits and complexities of this kind of change, we will now look to the city of Sunnyside.

Concluding Remarks

These interviews highlight the importance of a perception of inclusion by members of the Anglo community and especially by those within city institutions and local media. A greater respect for Spanish-speaking residents is therefore crucial for a social and political climate that fosters political involvement by the Latino community. A frustration with Anglo candidates who seem to deliberately choose Latino opponents furthers the impression that greater respect is needed for Latinos in these communities.

Having Latino council members is explained as being extremely beneficial, especially in shifting the social climate and political inclusion in these cities. The three council members interviewed demonstrated their effects on the community; such as convincing the council to hire a full-time translator, broadening outreach to the greater community, especially the youth population, and inspiring other Latinos to run for local office. It is also important to recognize the extent to which their bi-lingual ability strengthen campaigns, create a more inclusive city council, and improve the outreach of the city government.

As was discussed earlier in this report, the electoral history of Yakima County, and of Washington State as a whole, indicate that more Latinos need to run if city governments are to proportionately represent their constituencies. These interviews show that previous experience in governmental affairs and community organizing motivates some candidates, along with the achievement of higher education, a commitment to community, and a desire to give back. Two excellent steps forward can be seen in Wapato, where there is a clear commitment to providing opportunities for youth in city government and to hiring bi-lingual and Latino staff for city positions.

Barriers to successful candidacies and terms in city council include the difficulty of learning the institutional knowledge necessary for the position, and the ability to translate these complex issues to a public with great differences in languages spoken and understood, education levels, and political leanings. Having greater resources for voter education, in Spanish and English, is essential to overcoming these barriers, as is citizen education that helps to inform the public

³⁴Montes, 2011.

about the ways in which they can participate in city government. Leadership training programs, voter education, and links between youth and city governance are all therefore concrete steps towards creating a more inclusive social climate that builds valuable connections between city government and its constituencies.

Political Representation and Engagement in Sunnyside, Washington

In this section we narrow our analysis from state and county level and focus on the recent electoral reform from at-large to mixed at-large and single-member district elections in the city of Sunnyside. We gathered data to answer the following research question: Given that the election reform has occurred too recently in Sunnyside for it to be possible to measure its effects in quantitative terms, how might the process of electoral reform and political community inhibit, or contribute to, the efficacy of the electoral system and broader Latino electoral success? We extend analysis of Latino representation in city council and school district races from the previous two sections to Sunnyside, to further explore Latino political representation and barriers to proportional representation.

Using historical data and election information, the first section below provides a synopsis of recent demographic changes in Sunnyside and an electoral profile on the city council and school district elections over a twenty year span. In this section, we also discuss the quantitative results of the 2009 election which followed the electoral system reform. The second section employs qualitative interview data to explore perceptions of the community and reform, in order to better understand barriers which prevent increased Latino political representation in Sunnyside. In particular, we focus on the numerous interpretations of identity in this majority Latino community to create a conceptual framework for understanding the social and political context in which the reform took place. We conclude by discussing options for bolstering Latino representation and participation within Sunnyside.

A. A brief overview of Sunnyside

Social demographic and economic information

Sunnyside, nestled in the primarily agricultural Yakima Valley, was founded by Christian settlers and farmers in 1902 (Sheller 1952). While during its early years most residents were of Scandinavian heritage, in recent years, Sunnyside has undergone rapid demographic shifts; in particular, there has been a rapid increase of Latino/Hispanic residents (Honeyford 2010). A change in the U.S. Census data demonstrates this shift. According to 2000 Census data, Sunnyside had a population of 13,905 with 10,158 Latino residents, Latinos comprising 73.1% of the city population (U.S. Census 2000). By 2010, Latinos comprised 82.2% of Sunnyside's overall population of 15,858 residents (U.S. Census 2010).

Sunnyside is also economically underdeveloped compared to other cities in Washington State. The median household income in Sunnyside is \$34,327 – over \$20,000 lower than the Washington State median income. Over 28% of residents live below poverty level, and the entire Sunnyside school district is on a free and reduced lunch plan (U.S. Census 2010). While

Sunnyside has received government development grants to boost the economy, the city is still largely economically underdeveloped, and interviewees recognize that this is a central problem which relates to city politics.

Underrepresentation in Sunnyside

As indicated in sections above, Latino underrepresentation is a significant issue throughout Washington State, and Sunnyside is no exception. Currently, there are no Latino representatives on the city council. To better understand the extent of Latino underrepresentation, we examine elections data to discuss patterns of Latino candidates running and being elected to office.

Discussion of City Council Elections

Table 1

Number of City Council Elections	Number of Elections Won by a Latino	Percent of Elections Won by a Latino
39	8	20.51%

Table 2

Total Number of City Council Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies	Percentage of Candidacies that were Latino
66	17	25.76%

Table 3

Number of Latinos Elected to City Council	Latinos Elected Unopposed (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by another Latino Candidate (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (%)
8	4 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (50.00%)

Tables 1, 2 and 3 display the data from past city council elections (for full results, see the Appendix). As displayed, over the last 20 years from 1991 – 2011, there have been a total of 39 open city council positions. Of these positions, 66 candidates ran for election, 17 of whom were Latino surname candidates. Of these 17 races involving a Latino surname candidate, in eight races, the Latino candidate lost to a non-Latino candidate. While 12% of available positions have gone to Latinos, which is greater than normatively shown in analysis from our first section, Sunnyside is also approximately 82% Latino, showing that Latino underrepresentation is still a serious issue. Of the eight races when a Latino candidacy was successful, four won by default as uncontested races and four were relatively close elections against a non-Latino candidate. While Latinos running for city council positions have been elected to office at a higher overall rate than the state of Washington, successful Latino candidates in Sunnyside tend to be elected either

be default as unopposed candidates or by a narrow margin over a non-Latino candidate. An overview of the city council elections also shows that over a twenty year span between 1991 and 2011, there have been no Latino candidates who ran against other Latino candidates. These trends are all consistent with the findings presented in our broad analysis of electoral histories.

Over the span of the election profile, anywhere between zero (in 1995) and three at most (in 2001) Latino candidates have vied for a position. In that time, no more than one Latino candidate has even been elected in one cycle. Looking at 2009 alone, the hybrid system had no discernible effect in the quantity of potential Latino candidates or on the quantity of elected Latino officials. However, as the hybrid system has only been active in during one cycle, we contend that it is too early to conclude decisively whether it has yet had the intended, or any, effect, on city council elections.

Discussion of School Board Elections

Table 4

Number of School Board Elections	Number of Elections Won by a Latino	Percent of Elections Won by a Latino
33	10	30.30%

Table 5

Total Number of School Board Candidacies	Number of Latino Candidacies	Percentage of Candidacies that were Latino
45	14	31.11 %

Table 6

Number of Latinos Elected to School Board	Latinos Elected Unopposed (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by another Latino Candidate (%)	Latinos Elected when Opposed by a non-Latino Candidate (%)
10	8 (80.00%)	2 (20.00%)	0 (0.00%)

While the districting reform specifically impacts city council elections, our community partner, Professor Avila, asked us to compile an election profile for school board positions as well. This information is additionally relevant because for our research because we are considering political representation in both city council and school district races. As Tables 4, 5 and 6 demonstrate, trends regarding candidates running for school board positions differ from the trends in city council elections. (See Appendix C for full results).

Of the 33 available positions between 1991 and 2011, there have been a total of 45 candidacies for school district office. Of these candidates, 14 have been Latino surname candidates. Of the 12 races involving Latino candidates, 10 positions have gone to 3 Latino officials. Eight positions have been victories by default (there were no opposing candidates). Of the two races

where there were opponents, in both instances a male Latino candidate won against a female Latina candidate.

These election results are more consistent with our previous suggestion that the majority of elected Latino officials have won races when running unopposed, especially in school board elections. Further, the two Latino versus Latina races suggest that in addition to a history of underrepresentation, there is a trend of voting along gendered lines in school board elections. Previous scholarly research suggests that while single-member district election systems tend to help address underrepresentation exacerbated by at-large systems, Latina women are underrepresented in both election systems (Trounstine and Valdini, 2005). Therefore, findings in Sunnyside which demonstrate that Latina females are less likely to be elected to office than Latino males are consistent with other research.

As Tables 1 through 6 indicate, there is a demonstrated history of political underrepresentation of Latinos in Sunnyside. This finding is consistent with the findings in other counties across Washington State.

Warner's Report on Minority Underrepresentation

Given the history of Latino political underrepresentation in Sunnyside, it is necessary to mention previous research on the representation gap in Sunnyside. In a 2006 "State of the State for Washington Latinos" report, Whitman student Ian Warner published a study which focuses on the local election systems in Sunnyside (Warner 2006). His original aim had been to explore the following question: "What are the main causes of the discrepancy between Washington's growing Latino population and the low level of Latino representatives on city councils in key areas of the state?" (8). However, he focused specifically on Sunnyside after noting the sharp discrepancy between the size of the Latino population and the number of Latino representatives in local government positions (8). Warner found that while in 2000, 73.1% of Sunnyside's population was Latino, in 2005, there was only one Latino representative out of seven city council positions (8). After analyzing voting records and three cycles of election data, Warner found evidence of racially polarized voting in Sunnyside. Given these findings, Warner then investigated whether the at-large election system, combined with racially polarized voting, was contributing to low levels of Latino political representation. He found statistically significant quantitative evidence which supported these findings, which he then further confirmed by interviewing voters and a Latina city council member. In other words, he demonstrated that patterns of racially polarized voting in the context of the at-large election system were inhibiting minority political representation. Given the persistent underrepresentation, also demonstrated by the tables above, Warner suggested that Sunnyside's elections were violating Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. This research led him to conclude that, likely due to the at-large system of voting, "Latinos register to vote and turn out to vote at much lower levels than non-Latinos and that racially polarized voting in Sunnyside's general elections hinders the ability of Latinos to gain political representation" (22). Warner further suggested that changing the current at-large election cycle should be a city priority. While he called this a "loftier" goal, in 2008, after numerous open forums, the Sunnyside city council voted to adopt a hybrid at-large, district election system (Muir 2008).

Electoral Reform in Sunnyside

As a noncharter code city, Sunnyside is able to “exercise its option to create and implement electoral wards and districts and open positions” (See Appendix). Zach Duffy’s 2009 “State of the State for Washington Latinos” report outlines the details of such cities and towns and explains that “The Optional Municipal Code in Washington State allows cities and towns to govern themselves as they see fit, as long as their policies do not conflict with the state constitution or laws. . . Noncharter code cities and towns can divide themselves into an unlimited number of city council wards” (Duffy 2009, 23). Sunnyside followed guidelines from the Revised Code of Washington 29A.76.010 and created four districts for city council elections.

Specifically the change that was enacted is as follows: of the seven council positions, seats 1, 2, 3, and 4 are determined by districts, while seats 5, 6, and 7 are determined by at-large elections. There are city council elections every two years, so district-seat voting for seats 1, 2, 3, and 4 occurs every 4 years, and at-large voting for seats 5, 6, and 7 occurs every four years. While mixed systems, like Sunnyside’s hybrid at-large and district system, have shown to be more effective than at-large systems at producing proportional representation in politics, existing research (Engstrom and McDonald 1981) suggests that mixed systems are also less effective than entirely district-based systems for minority political representation.

The reform was enacted for the 2009 election, meaning that the district system has only been in effect for one election cycle. However, the research noted above (Engstrom and McDonald 1981) indicates that there may have been different results had Sunnyside moved to an entirely districted system.

In the 2009 election for city council, only one Latino surname candidate, a first time contender, ran for election, and lost to a non-Latino candidate with 42% of the vote. While it would have been helpful to interview this candidate to better understand the election dynamics, we were unable to contact the individual. In the 20 years prior to the reform, one Latino candidate or more ran during each cycle. In the 2009 election, the reform did not affect numbers of Latino candidates running for office or winning elections. Still, it should be noted once more a full quantitative analysis of its effects must be done after further election cycles.

As consistent with the 2009 Ordinance which created districts, the 2011 election was for three seats through the at-large format. During this election, the sole Latino incumbent on city council, Paul Garcia, was ousted by non-Latino candidate, Jason Raines. The loss of this position occurred through an at-large election, aligning with the plentitude of research which suggests that at-large election systems are barriers to minority political representation (Leal, Martinez-Ebers and Meier 2004). As a result of this race, minority representation in Sunnyside is currently worse than it was when Warner wrote his report. Sunnyside is over 80% Latino, but there are no Latino representatives on city council (*The Daily Sun News* 2011).

While Sunnyside should be commended for undertaking election system reform, the at-large election component in the hybrid system appears still to be acting as a barrier to Latino representation. Further, other scholars suggest that structural reform alone is inadequate for addressing problems of minority underrepresentation. Numerous studies (Brischetto 1994,

Davidson and Korbel 1981) indicate that an at-large election system exacerbates minority underrepresentation. Additionally, other studies (Rigby and Springer 2011, Trounstein and Valdini 2005, Welch 1990) suggest that if an election reform is enacted without changes to the political climate or the existing social and political attitudes, the reform will be ineffective, or even counterproductive, at addressing disproportional minority political representation. Warner's original report suggested that electoral reform and increased voter education and outreach were necessary to improve Latino representation in Sunnyside. That is why, in sum, it was important for us to study the social and political climate in Sunnyside in detail, as well as attitudes toward the reform and the particular experiences of Latino candidates and other local leaders.

B. Race and Generation: Social Dynamics in Sunnyside

The following section contains the bulk of our qualitative research in Sunnyside and focuses heavily on social and cultural dynamics within Sunnyside's political community. We have divided this section into three parts, which we will briefly outline before analysis.

We first analyze interviews to create a multifaceted depiction of the social and political dynamics within Sunnyside. Second, we examine our interviewees' perceptions regarding Latino underrepresentation in politics. While we have already discussed the policy change and hybrid system, in the third subsection, we explore the process of implementing reform in Sunnyside, as it was perceived by community leaders in Sunnyside. We conclude by discussing these leaders' perceptions of the problems in Sunnyside that are not addressed by the reform.

We explore these areas in an attempt to understand the social and political context within which the reform was enacted, as well as how attitudes and perceptions toward Latino political engagement and the reform ultimately may impact the effectiveness of the reform. These attitudes and perceptions also reveal junctures where there are problems and potential for Latino representation.

Sunnyside: A Divided City

To better understand the context in which the reform took place, we asked interviewees to describe the community of Sunnyside. Interviewees use different language and terms, but largely depict Sunnyside as a racially divided and stratified community. We met with community leader Suzi Carpino, from Sunnyside's Promise, a local organization which seeks to offer safe, gang-free spaces and opportunities for youth. She suggests that the extreme demographic shifts over recent years have impacted the political and social dynamics in Sunnyside. While discussing the social dynamics in the city, she says, "The diversity in this community used to be one spectrum and it's now completely opposite and I think that's a struggle for a lot of individuals. I think that's really hard... I don't have a problem with it.... But I don't have a problem with the people who are here that can't speak English and yet want to do something good for the community."³⁵ Carpino has lived in Sunnyside for 52 years, and so has seen the effects of the demographic shifts firsthand. She also alludes to racial and language

³⁵ Carpino, Suzi. Interview by author in Sunnyside, Washington. November 23, 2011.

barriers, which are related to the demographic changes. We also interviewed Pastor Cameron Garcia of the Oasis Community Church who, as a newcomer, was able to provide a broad and more detached perspective on the Sunnyside community.

I think there are two Sunnysides. There's Old Sunnyside and New Sunnyside. Old Sunnyside tends to reflect the ideas and values of the agrarian, primarily middle - class city.... So then in New Sunnyside, it reflects the fact that Sunnyside is about 85% Hispanic.... So I think that the two Sunnysides, from what I see, they conflict. And it's always kind of a silent battle because no one talks about it.³⁶

As Pastor Garcia indicates, the community is bifurcated between the older, more established, and typically white middle class, and the newer, poorer, Latino community. He mentions that 85% of the community in Sunnyside is Hispanic. Similarly, Sister Mary-Rita Rhode of community organization Nuestra Casa, a nonprofit which offers services for Latina women, feels that the community is divided. However, as a long term community member who is deeply engaged with the immigrant population, she also explains inter-racial dynamics within Sunnyside.

Of course there's the Anglo population, many of whom are Dutch, because they came from the Netherlands or wherever to start their dairies.... Then the Hispanic community, actually, there are two distinctions for me. One is the first generation, who are the immigrants and their children. And then the second, third and fourth generations, most of who, the adults in that, you know the third and fourth generation, many of the adults have lost the Spanish language. They no longer speak Spanish and can't identify that well with immigrants nor speak the language to communicate with them. So in that group of Hispanics, that aren't immigrants, my experience is that there are coconuts and then there are the real thing."³⁷

By speaking more explicitly about intergenerational divisions within racial groups, Sister Mary-Rita's analysis extends beyond the idea of a conflict between the New Sunnyside and the Old Sunnyside. She believes that Sunnyside is stratified, but also that it is possible for a later generation, more assimilated Hispanic resident to be a member of "Old Sunnyside." In her discussion of identification and language, she also indicates that assimilated Hispanics might not understand the social or cultural barriers immigrants face.

Sister Mary-Rita's interpretation is largely consistent with the remainder of our interview data. Every interviewee, with the exception of former city council member Paul Garcia, mention that Sunnyside is divided. Garcia explains:

"I don't really think we have any racial tensions in the community. I think that's a thing of the past, if it ever present.... I just think that we haven't become a unified community because we haven't figured out what's what we want Sunnyside to be in regards to how we want to present the community to the rest of the county and state.... Well you know we have a great Dutch community, and actually, also a great Hispanic community....

³⁶ Garcia, Cameron. Interview by author in Sunnyside, Washington. November 8, 2011.

³⁷ Sister Mary Rita-Rhode, interview by author in Sunnyside, Washington. October 14, 2011.

We're 80% Hispanic, should it be a more Hispanic centered? But you know, that may disengage the Dutch and others.... It has to be inclusive, because if it's not, you're not going to be able to get the buy in from everybody."³⁸

Pastor Garcia and Sister Mary-Rita both suggest that having a cohesive community is important, but still indicate that race and generational divides are an important social issue in Sunnyside. Garcia suggests that neither racial nor generational tensions exist, instead focusing on unification. However, as a later generation Hispanic, it is possible that Garcia may be less exposed to division and adversity against immigrant Latinos in Sunnyside. Synthesizing the interpretations of Sunnyside predominantly held by interviewees, Sunnyside is a community which is divided, both along Anglo and Hispanic divides, and further, between the later generation Hispanics and the immigrant community.

Differing Perceptions of Latino Underrepresentation in Sunnyside

Interviewees indicate that prior to the electoral reform, they had mixed perceptions regarding whether disproportional representation in Sunnyside was genuinely a problem. Former city council member, Paul Garcia, who was on city council before, during, and after the process of reform, states that prior to Warner's report and the reform, racially disproportionate representation was "never seen as a big issue".³⁹ He attributes this to the fact that people have the same interests and stakes in Sunnyside:

It doesn't matter what race you are, but it's important that if we compose 80-85% of the population, we should at least have a representative on the council. Not so much because you're looking out for their interests, because their interests are all the same. We all pay taxes. We all, you know, pay for the services the city provides. And that is not based on race or ethnicity, it's based on whether you're a resident of the city of Sunnyside.... just from the fact that you live in the community, you should be interested in what happens.⁴⁰

This statement is fairly contradictory; low minority representation is both a non-issue and an issue. Garcia believes there is a value of having racially proportional representation, but is not able to precisely articulate why proportional representation important. He suggests that racially proportionate representation is a good in itself, but also that it has no practical purpose because all residents in Sunnyside have the same interests. We suggest that previous scholarly research helps to illuminate this belief. Past research (Garcia 2005) suggests that Latino elected officials tend to be second and third generation residents, as well as monolingual English speakers that have higher levels of income and education than their constituents. Accordingly, this scholarly research indicates that Latino elected officials are sometimes distant from the needs and interests of the broader Latino community.

A conversation with Rosalinda Martinez, a woman who moved from Mexico to Sunnyside in 1990, helps to illuminate further discuss this issue. She eventually hopes to run for office, because as a Mexican immigrant, she believes that cultural representation, in addition to racial

³⁸ Garcia, 2011.

³⁹ Garcia, 2011.

⁴⁰ Garcia, 2011.

representation, is highly important. Martinez illuminates a specific problem with Latino representation. While both believe that Latino representation is essential, Garcia suggests that peoples' interests in Sunnyside, regardless of race, are the same. Martinez, on the other hand, believes that to "be able to understand a community", city council representatives must have "similar backgrounds of what Sunnyside's made of".⁴¹ By pointing out that Sunnyside has a large Latino and immigrant population, Rosalinda Martinez implicitly challenges the notion that race is a non-issue, and suggests that there is a real problem with representation. She also suggests that given the cultural backgrounds of the immigrant population in Sunnyside, race alone does not always determine adequate representation.

Former Latina city council member Bengie Aguilar suggests that general perceptions of underrepresentation in Sunnyside prior to the reform were neither as minimal as Garcia indicates, nor as universal as Martinez indicates. Aguilar suggests that groups within Sunnyside perceive the issue of representation differently. As a leader within the Latino community who is both in a position of power but also aware of the immigrant community's needs, she presents a more nuanced outline of how underrepresentation in Sunnyside is perceived by various groups of people. When asked about how different populations within Sunnyside see the issue of underrepresentation prior to the reform, she says,

The Anglo community probably likes it that the Latino vote doesn't come out.... It's gonna happen eventually.... Where the Latino community's gonna wake up...they're gonna be like, "Ok, we have the power, we have the power to make change and to put the right leaders in place."... That's what we want! We want the diversity. That's why we're out there trying to do door-to-door stuff. And so as an educated Latina coming in with experience with government and coming into a community that doesn't care if they vote or don't vote. We're all working. . . . they don't have time⁴²

While talking about her work doing outreach in the Latino community, Aguilar suggests that portions of the Latino community do not believe that Latino underrepresentation is a problem, because the immigrant population is too busy working to be engaged in politics. However, she also indicates that with the right guidance and outreach, the Latino population will also come to recognize that underrepresentation is a problem. Also interestingly, Aguilar suggests that some Anglo community members in positions of power are reluctant to relinquish social power in the community.

C. Electoral Reform in Sunnyside

Leading to Reform

We also spoke with a couple community members that were involved with the districting process in Sunnyside after Warner's report was released. According to Aguilar, representatives from the Department of Justice from Washington D.C. had come to Yakima County in years prior to ensure that the county auditor had been preparing adequate bilingual materials. Yakima County has a large and highly concentrated Latino population, which under Section 203 of the

⁴¹ Martinez, Rosalinda . Interview with author in Sunnyside, Washington. November 8, 2011.

⁴² Aguilar, Bengie . Interview with author in Sunnyside, Washington. October 14, 2011.

Voting Rights Act, warrants the availability of bilingual materials (Carrion 2008). When Warner's report came out, Aguilar suggests that the process of reform which followed was executed in a coercive, rather than voluntary manner. Referring to the Department of Justice, Aguilar says:

“So when Ian's report came out, it was kind of like the big red thumb, you know that said, “Hey! Now we have it on paper. This is what's happening.” And so then they came back in again and said . . . they forced, they forced the city to do the right thing. Right. I mean 'cause if they wouldn't have done it, they were gonna sue 'em. So it went back to the education of the big guys that had the power to push the button with the city manager. And the city manager said, “City council, we don't have a choice here, we're gonna do this 'cause we don't wanna get sued.” . . . At least for the four years that I was there, they came down once every year and talked to me. So they had been keeping an eye on it – all the way in D.C.”⁴³

Paul Garcia had a similar recollection of how the reform was enacted. According to Garcia, after the city council read the findings of the report, the city manager contacted the Department of Justice about its contents. The Department of Justice's reaction influenced the Sunnyside City Council's decision to district:

“I think at the time, if I recall, the city manager at the time contacted, wrote a letter, because you know there was these threats that the Department of Justice, that were, and I'm not sure where these, they weren't really threats they were just indications They didn't indicate that there's an ongoing investigation or nothing. They just said, we take this seriously, obviously there's some good points in the report that should be taken into consideration. . . . What we did was look at the letter and said, “. . . Do we want to ignore them, or do we want to go out and do something that's going to stem this? . . . Or wait. . . and have them come in and say you're gonna do this” We said, “We're going to be proactive” .⁴⁴

Neither Aguilar nor Garcia was able to articulate the role of the Department of Justice, but both felt that it impacted the city council's decision to create districts. Council members perceive that there serious consequences would follow inaction. Other council members, including councilman Bruce Epps, indicated that there was no choice: Sunnyside had to create districts (Muir 2008). However, for clarification, it should be noted that the Department of Justice could not have simply forced Sunnyside to create districts. Only a successful federal lawsuit, following Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, could have enabled such a change. Still significant, however, is the fact that interviewees were unable to precisely explain the relationship between the Department of Justice and the city of Sunnyside. This indicates that there is a general lack of awareness regarding the processes of electoral politics and reform.

While Aguilar suggests that disproportional representation was a problem and an issue of long term dialogue and Garcia, that it had never been an issue, they both agree that the city adopted districts to avoid external intervention, but that it was not regarded as a real priority.

⁶⁷ Aguilar, 2011.

⁴⁴ Garcia, 2011.

Once the decision was made to pass the reform, redistricting didn't start for over a year later.⁴⁵ According to the *Yakima Herald*, the election reform and process of redistricting was delayed because Sunnyside was dealing with a youth gang problem (Muir 2008). When McCullough asked a former city council member what his thoughts were about the focus on gangs delaying the electoral reform, he suggests, "Maybe it was. Or was it an excuse? Yeah, probably."⁴⁶ In other words, interviewees portray the city government as largely reluctant to make the change.

Redistricting Begins

When the districting began, interviewees suggest that there were no people or community groups working for the reform. Rather, according to their impressions, the city clerk initiated the process and created the districts with help from groups outside of Sunnyside. Both Garcia and Aguilar express that there was lack of support within the Latino community for the process of election system reform. Aguilar also notes that she, and other community leaders, just did not have enough time to engage in door to door outreach around the redistricting. Additionally, the city council put on various town hall events to publicize the election system change, but low attendance was still an issue. Garcia adds:

Even when we were going through creating the districts, holding the public meetings, you know we didn't get a lot of support from the Hispanics that we were trying to from the Hispanic population, that supposedly these districts were going to benefit.... So you ask yourself "okay, so why are we doing this"? If it's truly seen as an issue, and we had all the publications in Spanish and in English, but we got very low turnout..... This paper identified a potential gap in how we elect our city officials, we discussed it, we talked about it, and we came up with the four district plan. We implemented it, and here we are today."⁴⁷

Garcia's frustration with the process of reform and lack of community support is a commonly held feeling. Interviewees felt that the Department of Justice twisted the city's arm to start reform, but there was little support from within the city during the redistricting process. While attempting to understand why there was little support for the electoral reform, we asked interviewees if they had even heard of the process. Of the ten interviewees, only six had heard of the 2009 election reform. As already discussed in the methods section, each of the community members are highly involved as community leaders and are literate in English, the language of the dominant newspapers in town. Further, multiple interviewees suggest that the election reform was neither broadly published in Sunnyside nor considered a topic in conversations.

Preliminary and Likely Future Effects of Reform

Community members in Sunnyside largely believe that reform has been ineffective at bolstering Latino representation. However, interviewees did acknowledge that the districts created by the reform have fostered increased geographic, though not racial, diversity in city council representation. According to community members, prior to the reform, most of the city council

⁴⁵ Aguilar, 2011.

⁴⁶ Gehlen, Tom . Interview with author in Sunnyside, Washington. October 14, 2011.

⁴⁷ Garcia, 2011.

representatives were coming from the “Hill” – the wealthiest region in Sunnyside. Because of this, spatial problems like badly lit streets in specific areas had been long unaddressed. Given that the districts forced geographic diversity, Aguilar suggests that more seats would likely help increase representation, but that it was unlikely to happen soon. Other research indicates that district systems are more successful than hybrid systems (Engstrom and McDonald 1981). We suggest that a stronger, all district voting system would address some issues of representation in Sunnyside.

Interviewees indicate that better outreach and knowledge regarding the reform would impact the Latino community and voters. For example, Rosalinda Martinez suggests that spreading awareness of districts would also help Latinos be more aware of how the electoral system works. When we asked Martinez whether she thought Latinos would be receptive to education efforts, she decisively answered, “Yes. Because number one as Latinos and everybody, we need to know how the system works. Once we know how the system works and we get educated about the candidates and all that good stuff that they have to offer, then we’re gonna be able to make a good decision, not necessarily Latino voting for Latinos, but Latino working for Anglos that offer good things for everybody, not only Anglos, but Latinos.”⁴⁸

Interviewees also suggested that lack of outreach may have negatively impacted the effectiveness of the reform. Inadequate outreach was a problem but not the sole problem. Interviewees also suggest that the reform did not address other relevant issues related to underrepresentation. These issues include Latino political disengagement, and lack of leadership development programs and civic education opportunities (which we discuss further in the next section).

Latino school board member Lorenzo Garza suggests that the lack of awareness in the Latino community regarding the reform contributed to the low rates of Latino political representation, but also that the general political disengagement of the Latino community negatively impacts representation. When we asked if the Warner report impacted the social or political climate in Sunnyside, Garza suggests:

Honestly, no... We were able to identify the weaknesses. But at the grassroots level, the community, the community with the exception of the little that are tied into it, are not aware. ... So I personally don’t think that that it had had that impact that climate, the change in how people perceive now politics. That this has given us an avenue by way of getting ourselves heard in the political arena.⁴⁹

Interviewees agree that districts do not address the lack of Latino voter participation and a culture of civic disengagement. These two factors are highly connected to Latino political representation. For example, Paul Garcia suggests that Latino disengagement causes underrepresentation, which is why the reform has been ineffective thus far:

I’m a realist that I didn’t think it was going to result in any increased representation. Because I don’t think that creating districts, is, uh, leads to increased participation.

⁴⁸ Martinez, Rosalinda. Interview with author in Sunnyside, Washington. November 8, 2011.

⁴⁹ Garza, Lorenzo . Interview with author in Sunnyside, Washington. November 23, 2011.

Because the Hispanic population is not engaged for some reason. I haven't figured out that reason yet, because we can't seem to get them involved. We can't seem to get them to step up and become part of the process. And we're still trying to find that magic method to entice them and show them the benefits of becoming involved... as I stated back then, creating districts back then is not going to increase Hispanic representation.⁵⁰

While discussing the issue, multiple interviewees suggest that Sunnyside is in a double bind of sorts: there is low Latino representation in office, which negatively affects Latino voter turnout, and at the same time, low Latino voter turnout prevents Latinos from becoming elected to office. Garza articulated this dilemma nicely: "I think you have both [referring to low Latino representation and voter participation] and it feeds off of the other. What I mean by that of course, if you don't vote for the candidate, be it Hispanic, non-Hispanic, what have you ... you're kind of defeating that purpose from the get go.... Then you have a ripple effect that people are not even voting, because 'Why vote?' Well it kind of feeds off."⁵¹

Similarly, speaking from his experience working with the Latino community as an ally, former council member Tom Gehlen suggests a similar predicament in Sunnyside: "Chicken and egg. Which comes first? Do you get the representation first? And then you figure out the positive part? Or do you have to have that vote to get that representation?"⁵² Gehlen's articulation of the issue is similar to earlier analysis, suggesting that an absolute barrier to Latino representation in Washington State is the lack of Latino candidates.

Solving the "Chicken and Egg" Problem: Strategies to Complement Structural Reform

Considering the dual, self-reinforcing, problem of low Latino voter turnout and low Latino representation, interviewees propose different responses to break this cycle, apart from the strategy of electoral rules reforms about which many informants were skeptical. Interview data supports a dual pronged approach as a way to address the cycle of underrepresentation and low Latino participation in local politics in Sunnyside. We asked each interviewee what other suggestions they had for addressing low representation and participation, and we synthesize these suggestions into three subcategories below.

Building Latino Leadership

Many interviewees suggest that Sunnyside has a lack of business and political leadership development for Latinos, and subsequently, a lack of Latino leaders in general in Sunnyside. For example, Garcia mentions that he only ran for re-election because if he had not, there would not have been any other Latino candidate during the 2011 election. Similarly, a local business leader, Aaron Guerra, suggests that even though he does not consider himself Latino, community members attempted to convince him to run for office during the 2009 election because there were so few Latinos serving in public office. Guerra also notes that this lack of leaders is related to economic problems:

⁵⁰ Garcia, 2011.

⁵¹ Garza, 2011.

⁵² Gehlen, 2011.

You need people that have the know-how on how to run city government on how to run a business or run an organization. That way that can translate that knowledge to city council or government and can represent the city in the right way.... So they need to put in like manufacturing... and maybe we can attract engineers, we can attract architects, we can attract project managers that will live in the community, that will take leadership roles, that will take some civic community to make the community better. That's what's needed. It's a two way – you need economic development to get the political people in here.”⁵³

Guerra's response is particularly notable because he links the lack of leadership to economic instability and that people who run for government need to have the “know-how”. This also emerges from our study of other Yakima Valley towns – interviewees suggest that candidates for council positions must have a certain corpus of political knowledge. Guerra suggests that Sunnyside could boost Latino leadership by offering leadership classes on how to run for city government. While there are programs which offer this service, for example through Heritage University, but can cost over \$10,000 a year. Given the low median household income in Sunnyside, it is unlikely that residents can afford this program.

While city council members currently receive a \$600 per month stipend, raised from \$400 when the city council realized the stipend was too low, Garcia mentions that the time it takes to campaign, as well as to work on the council, would create a financial hardship for poorer leaders who might aspire to take council positions.

Mobilizing Voter Participation

Interviewees suggest that voter disengagement contributes to low levels of Latino political representation. During interviews, we discussed related barriers to political engagement, and community members suggested potential responses.

Interviewees point to language literacy and education as a contributing factor to the Latino community's lack of political engagement. Not all city documents are bilingual, which limits the ability of Spanish-literate individuals to engage. A Latina community member, involved as a member of local law enforcement, Melissa Rodriguez suggests that many Sunnyside Latinos, especially immigrants, struggle with language. She says, “It's harder because they don't have access to the stuff we have access to. And I think sometimes it's because of the language. Even if it is in Spanish sometimes they're not able to read it.”⁵⁴ In other words, many Spanish speakers cannot read Spanish. Guerra mentions this as well, and Sister-Mary-Rita confirms, mentioning that the average education level of immigrants in Sunnyside is at the third grade competency level. This suggests that while bilingual materials are important for increasing Latino access to city affairs, there are still segments of the Latino population which cannot benefit from this service.

Given literacy and income levels, Spanish language radio might be a more accessible way of reaching voters. Aguilar confirms this, mentioning “Cause one thing that people can afford is a

⁵³ Guerra, Aaron . Interview with author in Sunnyside, Washington. November 13, 2011.

⁵⁴ Rodriguez, Melissa. Interview with author in Sunnyside, Washington, November 23, 2011.

radio. So a lot of times they will wake up with the radio and go to bed with the radio. So, to having those on the radio station is a huge benefit to the Hispanic community.”⁵⁵ Interviewees say that the local Spanish language radio station, Radio Cadena, works on national affairs, but rarely local issues. Only one interviewee remembers hearing about the 2009 reform over radio. As research indicates that Spanish language media has been highly effective at impacting voters (Panagopoulos and Green, 2011), we suggest that contact over Radio Cadena would be a helpful way to reach the immigrant and first and second generations of Latino residents.

Beyond language literacy, others suggest that the hard-working Latino population does not know how to engage in electoral activities. For example, Aguilar mentions that when canvassing for Obama in the 2008 election, she spoke with many Latino individuals who did not know how to fill out a ballot. Garza has had a similar experiences working with the Latino population:

We still have a lot of individuals that get their ballots via mail and it’s hard, for you and I, maybe very simple, but... I remember my first one, I forgot to sign one of those envelopes and then it wasn’t counted because I didn’t what have you. So that’s me, that can read the language... There’s still a lot of fear of that. It’s hard to fill this out. Individuals understanding it, you know, what they may be voting for or against.⁵⁶

Like Aguilar, Garza suggests that Latinos may not understand electoral activities, and further, that this lack of understanding also leads to fear. He believes that a civics course in Sunnyside would help engage the Latino population in politics. No consistent, free civics course is currently offered in Sunnyside, but interviewees believe it could help increase voter participation.

The generational divide within the Latino community also emerges as an issue related to underrepresentation of Latinos population. Research indicates that elected Latinos have different social, economic and cultural backgrounds than immigrant and first and second generation Latinos (Garcia 2005). Research also indicates that immigrants and first and second generation Latinos are also more likely to engage in community politics (Santoro and Segura 2011). Given these findings, Latino elected officials are less likely to represent the interests of their most engaged constituents, making it especially important for Latino officials to communicate with the broad Latino community, including immigrants and earlier generations of Latino residents.

Multiple interviewees suggest that the Latino community has interests which Hispanic leaders must be willing to serve in order to gain votes. As a school board member, Garza mentions that he had seen this while in office: “I want to say they encourage it, they’re highly encouraging of Latinos who run, but it has to be a Latino who is willing to see the needs of the community, the population, and be willing to say, ‘I want to support your needs.’... There’s a thought around of ‘What are you gonna do for the community?’”⁵⁷

Former city council member Tom Gehlen agrees, suggesting that Latinos become disengaged when elected officials don’t address Latino community interests: “...there’s been disinterest

⁵⁵ Aguilar, 2011.

⁵⁶ Garza, 2011.

⁵⁷ Garza, 2011.

because we don't bring interest to them."⁵⁸ Both Garza and Gehlen believe that elected officials, Latino and Anglo alike, must appeal to the interests of the immigrant and first and second generation Latinos to counter disengagement. Despite this, little has been done to consistently appeal to this segment of the Latino community. We suggest that it is necessary to perform outreach which resonates with the early generation and immigrant community to foster voter turnout and participation.

Carpino's statements also reflect the need to have voter outreach which connects with the immigrant population. She suggests that activities like voter registration and education would be helpful to involve more Latinos in Sunnyside politics:

I think we would have probably a lot more voter registration... To someone who works in the field 10, 12, 13 hours a day, get home and have children that need to be fed, and then laundry that . . . it's probably not a priority. And it could be based on the fact that they've never been a part of that kind of system, never have been asked their opinion. Maybe they've never voted and don't get it. Again, education, awareness, training....⁵⁹

While there have been previous voter registration and outreach attempts in the past, through a few community members and at one time a small ad hoc Voter Registration Committee, there has yet to be a multi-year campaign performing consistent outreach. Interviewees suggest that this is the case because when community members attempt to outreach within the nonvoting Latino community, Latinos still rarely turnout to vote. Programs aimed at the Latino population have come and gone. Referring to his experience at school board meetings, Garza explained a pattern of outreach attempts:

"And there was a big movement back there in getting the city council interpreters. 'How do you invite me to come to city council, to school, but if I don't understand the language?' 'So let's get interpreters.' So at one point years back there was a big push of getting interpreters, you know, and it happened maybe two three meetings, and then people stopped coming. . . . But then that issue went away and people stopped coming.... To continue fighting that battle, how do you expect our families to come, but well, we tried that, and it cost us so much, and you know, they stopped coming. There's not a regular flow."⁶⁰

The cycle Garza describes looks like this: the Latino community becomes interested in an issue, so the city hires interpreters. Then attendance drops off, so the city stops hiring interpreters. While discussing the same cycle, Melissa Rodriguez, a Latina police officer, describes the same series of events on the school board. She also suggests that once there were no translators, the immigrants did not feel comfortable attending events: "they're not from here, they're not naturalized here, they don't speak the language, they don't know anything. I wonder sometimes if they're just afraid to sound ignorant. And just because they don't know some of the stuff and they're afraid to ask questions."⁶¹ Paul Garcia explains a similar phenomenon at the city council,

⁵⁸ Gehlen, 2011.

⁵⁹ Carpino, 2011.

⁶⁰ Garza, 2011.

⁶¹ Rodriguez, 2011.

and other interviewees see similar patterns of voter outreach with the primarily disengaged Latino population.

As exemplified by Garza's example of sporadic attendance at school board meetings and Aguilar's descriptions of voter outreach, specific issues including education and immigration might be able to mobilize the Latino community. These findings are also consistent with secondary research, which indicate that while later generation Latinos are more likely to vote, more recent generations are more likely to engage in political activities which concern ethnic and cultural interests, like education (Santoro and Segura 2011). Interviewee comments regarding different generational interests and the ability of Latino elected officials to resonate with these interests help to explain why these different patterns of civic engagement emerge.

Considering research and findings on generational political engagement (Santoro and Segura 2011) and studies which showcase the effectiveness of radio media (Panagopoulos and Green, 2011) and face-to-face voter outreach (Ramirez, 2005), a comprehensive voter outreach plan should be enacted in Sunnyside. Interviewees reference the need for increased Latino leadership and engagement, both of which require widespread political education and outreach in the Latino community as a whole. While there have been past civic engagement efforts, namely through an ad hoc voter registration committee and various campaigns, there has been no long-term, coordinated effort focusing on Latino participation in Sunnyside. Civic education must focus on more than electoral reform; it ought to speak to political engagement more generally. Further, research also suggests that voters must be socialized into practices of voting, which indicates that continuous voter outreach is important (Simon 1998). This research indicates that sporadic attempts at civic engagement will not significantly address the issue of Latino disengagement.

Exploring Non-Traditional Avenues: Soccer

Another suggestion for bolstering Latino representation and participation emerged from interviews unexpectedly. While our research primarily focuses on electoral systems and community groups during interviews, we asked interviewees if there are any alternative methods for engaging the Latino community. Almost every time, soccer came up as a hot topic in the Latino community. Community leaders suggest that soccer is a popular sport in Sunnyside, yet very few opportunities and spaces exist for adult and youth programs. Guerra notes, "There's about 700 kids in the soccer league in town, there's no youth programs."⁶² Similarly, during an interview, both Sister Mary-Rita and Tom Gehlen brought discussed the central role of soccer within the Latino community:

Sister Mary Rita: That doesn't mean that they don't get engaged when some of us prod them to or there's a self interest too. For example, there's a self interest in getting the property to do the soccer fields, and self interest in having Sunnyside's Promise function because it provides activities for the youth.

Tom Gehlen: I've, yeah. They can identify with folks. They have soccer, that's if you want to see Hispanic culture in this town, go to a soccer game. I was there last night, two

⁶² Guerra, 2011.

nights ago. And they were having a big turnout in this community, but do they have, can they carry that into the official, what-we do at city council? They don't do that very often.⁶³

Gehlen recognizes that soccer is not only beneficial for youth and adults, but that it is also a potential mechanism for involving city council. In Sunnyside, soccer has already proven to be a catalyst for mobilizing the Latino community: a couple years ago, a group of immigrants constructed a soccer field for adults to use. Interviewees suggest that this showed that the Latino community is interested in the community, but only choose to engage with particular issues. Guerra suggests, "If anything, I think soccer is the way to connect with the community." Recent scholarly research also demonstrates that soccer has the potential ability to strengthen networks and ties in Latino communities (Messeri 2008).

Carpino's interview also supports this scholarly research. She explains that the monolingual Spanish speaking Latino community organized to gain access to, and create, soccer fields. She further discusses how the immigrant community led the process, fostering greater feelings of ownership, inclusivity and understanding:

So this land was donated, they tilled the soil, they planted the grass, they got the irrigation in – they're owning a part of this community... And, you know, the language doesn't become a barrier anymore because the actions speak much louder than words. And so this culture of soccer is now more accepted, and the people feel like "Hey, we're more a part of this community because look at what we've done."⁶⁴

Interviews and scholarly research suggest that soccer might be an entry point for addressing the dual problems of underrepresentation and lack of electoral participation.

D. Summary of findings in Sunnyside

Following up on the 2006 "State of the State" report by Ian Warner, which found that Latinos in Sunnyside are underrepresented on city council, likely due to the at-large election system, we studied the results of the reform, process of reform, and the context in which the reform took place.

In regards to the numerical effects of the reform on Latino electoral success, we firstly find that the districted voting system has not been in place long enough for there to be any decisive conclusion about whether it has been an effective change. However, we do find evidence from secondary materials which suggests that the hybrid system of at-large and district seats are likely to be less effective than an entirely districted system. Our research also led us to examine how the social and political climate in which election reform takes places impacts the outcomes of reform. Interviewees suggest that racial and intergenerational divisions prevent Anglo community members and later generation Hispanic residents from understanding the barriers which face monolingual Latino immigrants or first generation Latinos – a large portion of the Sunnyside population. This indicates that there is a representational gap which is greater than

⁶³ Sister Mary-Rita Rhode and Tom Gehlen. Interview with author in Sunnyside, Washington, October 14, 2011.

⁶⁴ Carpino, 2011.

race alone, also calling into question the ability of Latino elected officials to necessarily address the needs of all Latino residents.

Other community members suggest that the reform is ineffective because there was little community support. This is reflected in the way interviewees feel that the reform was made due to external pressure from the Department of Justice. As already discussed, four of the ten interviewees were unaware of the reform, which suggests that the outreach was ineffective or too limited, negatively impacting community support. Given literature which speaks to the importance of outreach, especially through Spanish language media, we find that limited outreach is likely linked to the lack of community support for the reform. Community members also suggest that driving the issue of political underrepresentation is an issue that the reform did not address: Latino voter disengagement. Because interviewees indicated that the two problems are causal, we suggest that a dual approach is needed. Secondary research and interview data suggests that a sustained face-to-face and radio voter outreach and registration plan, paired with free civics courses, are necessary to break the cycle. Lastly, we find that issue based political engagement strategies – using education or soccer – are potential catalysts for increasing political participation.

Overall our research on Latino political participation in Sunnyside is consistent with broader findings in both Washington State and Yakima County: Latino underrepresentation, especially in city council positions and to a lesser extent with school board elections, has been consistent and ongoing.

V. CONCLUSION

Little was known about the history of Latino representation in Washington State before we began this project. Previous reports in the State of the State for Washington Latinos program have provided detailed analyses of particular years and elections, but none had used historical records and election data to trace these patterns of Latino representation (Warner 2006; Dollar 2008; Shadix 2008; Duffy 2009). Our findings confirm that Latino underrepresentation is not random phenomenon found in only a few elections, but that it has permeated nearly every local election in Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Okanogan, Skagit, Walla Walla and Yakima Counties for the past several decades.

A substantial amount of existing scholarly research conducted which finds that at-large election structures adversely impact proportional minority political representation. Through our qualitative work, we also hoped to better understand the social and cultural dynamics influencing low representation in Yakima Valley. In particular, in Sunnyside, interviewees reported a lack of sustained voter and candidate outreach before, during and after the process of reform. This finding, in tandem with our broader work in Washington State, suggests that electoral reforms should occur in conjunction with outreach and education efforts aimed bolstering Latino political participation and representation.

In order to encourage increased Latino political engagement, previous State of the State studies have suggested that more jurisdictions provide bilingual voting materials (Minor and Serrurier 2009); that local advocacy organizations reach out to Latino communities and assist them with voter registration (Miller 2008); that community groups encourage the participation of Latino youth in school, church and sports programs (Maffucci 2008); and that the Revised Code of Washington be amended to allow all local jurisdictions to move toward single-member district elections. We would like to echo all of these recommendations and add a few of our own.

First, cities ought to provide translators at all city council and school board meetings so that every member of the community is able to participate in the public political process. It is important that translators are at every meeting, because our findings support the need for continuous, rather than sporadic, bilingual language offerings. Second, Washington State should bolster minority candidacies and voter turnout by prioritizing the funding of community organizations which conduct sustained, nonpartisan voter outreach and leadership development programs within local communities. Finally, in order to ensure that every citizen's vote is counted equally, the Washington State Legislature ought to create a legal avenue through which citizens can challenge the structure of their local elections when those elections are shown to produce minority underrepresentation as a result of racially polarized voting.

As we discuss above, local representation is an essential component of the American political system. Though state and national elections tend to receive far more attention, local government impacts citizens' everyday lives. As a result, local offices are ideal avenues through which minorities can shape their communities and establish themselves as leaders. Moreover, winning a local election can provide opportunities for further political and community engagement. If we

are to have more proportional representation of minorities in national and state government, it is essential that minority candidates be able to attain local office.

While this report is a significant step toward understanding the political challenges faced by Latino communities in Washington State, there are still many questions that need to be answered. What has been the history of Latino representation in the other counties of Washington State? What challenges do Latino candidates face in jurisdictions where the Latino population is not a large minority? How does the availability of bilingual voting materials affect Latino voter turnout? Are Latino incumbents more likely to be challenged for reelection than their non-Latino peers? How does the geographical concentration of the Latino population affect political participation in different jurisdictions? Is there a gendered factor in racially polarized voting in Washington State? How will Sunnyside's hybrid electoral system have impacted candidates in years to come?

These and other questions will surely be the focus of future reports produced by the State of the State for Washington Latinos.

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VII. APPENDICES

A. ELECTORAL HISTORY

a. ADAMS COUNTY

City Councils

Adams	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983	0	11	8	0	0	0
1985	0	6	6	0	0	0
1987	0	12	11	0	0	0
1989	0	11	11	0	0	0
1991	0	11	8	0	0	0
1993	0	13	9	0	0	0
1995	1	7	7	1	0	0
1997	1	8	5	0	0	1
1999	0	4	4	0	0	0
2001	0	15	13	0	0	0
2003	3	6	4	1	1	0
2005	0	23	20	0	0	0
2007	0	17	13	0	0	0
2009	0	23	20	0	0	0
2011	1	22	17	1	0	0
Totals	6	189	156	3	1	1

School Districts

Adams	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983	0	6	5	0	0	0
1985	0	16	16	0	0	0
1987	0	13	8	0	0	0
1989	0	19	16	0	0	0
1991	0	12	8	0	0	0
1993	1	8	5	0	0	0
1995	0	7	6	0	0	0
1997	1	10	6	1	0	0
1999	0	4	2	0	0	0
2001	1	17	14	1	0	0
2003	0	4	4	0	0	0
2005	1	39	29	1	0	0
2007	0	33	26	0	0	0
2009	1	27	26	1	0	0
2011	1	37	33	1	0	0

Totals 6 252 204 5 0 0

b. BENTON COUNTY

City Councils

Benton	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983	0	32	20	0	0	0
1985	1	36	19	0	0	1
1987	0	41	22	0	0	0
1989	0	31	19	0	0	0
1991	0	29	18	0	0	0
1993	0	31	17	0	0	0
1995	0	32	19	0	0	0
1997	0	26	18	0	0	0
1999	0	27	19	0	0	0
2001	0	26	18	0	0	0
2003	0	29	19	0	0	0
2005	0	23	19	0	0	0
2007	1	32	18	0	0	1
2009	0	29	19	0	0	0
2011	1	34	17	0	0	1
Totals	3	458	281	0	0	3

School Districts

Benton	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983	1	35	23	1	0	0
1985	0	25	16	0	0	0
1987	0	24	17	0	0	0
1989	1	24	17	0	0	0
1991	0	39	24	0	0	0
1993	0	22	16	0	0	0
1995	1	38	25	1	0	0
1997	2	24	16	0	1	0
1999	2	26	22	2	0	0
2001	0	25	17	0	0	0
2003	2	26	24	2	0	0
2005	1	25	19	1	0	0
2007	2	24	19	2	0	0
2009	1	25	19	1	0	0
2011	2	32	21	2	0	0
Totals	15	414	295	12	1	0

c. CHELAN COUNTY

City Councils

Chelan	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
2003	0	29	17	0	0	0
2005	1	22	17	0	0	0
2007	0	28	19	0	0	0
2009	1	20	18	0	0	0
2011	1	28	19	0	0	0
Totals	3	127	90	0	0	0

School Districts

Chelan	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
2003	2	30	25	2	0	0
2005	0	21	18	0	0	0
2007	2	31	25	1	0	1
2009	2	23	17	1	0	0
2011	5	29	25	3	0	1
Totals	11	134	110	7	0	2

d. DOUGLAS COUNTY

City Councils

Douglas	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983						
1985	0	35	22	0	0	0
1987	0	27	22	0	0	0
1989	0	23	17	0	0	0
1991	0	22	15	0	0	0
1993	1	19	17	1	0	0
1995	0	23	19	0	0	0
1997	1	31	20	1	0	0
1999	1	25	17	1	0	0
2001	0	22	19	0	0	0
2003	0	19	16	0	0	0
2005	0	30	20	0	0	0
2007	0	19	17	0	0	0
2009	0	24	17	0	0	0
2011	0	24	19	0	0	0
Totals	3	343	257	3	0	0

School Districts

Douglas	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983						
1985	0	31	25	0	0	0
1987	0	48	37	0	0	0
1989	0	33	30	0	0	0
1991	0	43	36	0	0	0
1993	2	48	36	2	0	0
1995	0	40	23	0	0	0
1997	0	31	28	0	0	0
1999	0	36	30	0	0	0
2001	0	31	29	0	0	0
2003	1	43	34	0	0	0
2005	0	35	30	0	0	0
2007	1	43	34	1	0	0
2009	0	29	24	0	0	0
2011	5	32	29	4	0	0
Totals	9	523	425	7	0	0

e. FRANKLIN COUNTY

City Councils

Franklin	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1991	1	26	18	0	0	0
1993	1	18	13	0	0	0
1995	0	16	12	0	0	0
1997	1	17	15	0	0	0
1999	1	17	12	0	0	0
2001	3	20	16	1	0	0
2003	0	15	11	0	0	0
2005	3	20	14	0	0	0
2007	1	15	11	0	0	0
2009	2	20	15	1	0	0
2011	1	19	14	1	0	0
Totals	14	203	151	3	0	0

School Districts

Franklin	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1991	0	21	16	0	0	0
1993	1	27	18	0	0	0
1995	0	19	16	0	0	0
1997	1	19	18	1	0	0
1999	1	19	17	1	0	0
2001	2	18	15	2	0	0
2003	3	24	20	1	1	0
2005	3	16	13	3	0	0
2007	0	18	15	0	0	0
2009	2	14	14	2	0	0
2011	2	21	18	2	0	0
Totals	15	216	180	12	1	0

f. GRANT COUNTY

City Councils

Grant	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983	1	86	54	0	0	0
1985	1	81	54	0	0	0
1987	0	58	45	0	0	0
1989	2	88	53	0	0	0
1991	0	51	41	0	0	0
1993	2	54	42	0	1	0
1995	1	62	50	1	0	0
1997	3	46	39	3	0	0
1999	3	70	46	1	0	0
2001	6	59	44	3	1	0
2003	6	56	46	4	0	1
2005	1	42	32	1	0	0
2007	5	56	46	4	0	1
2009	2	53	38	1	0	1
2011	9	53	44	7	0	1
Totals	42	915	674	25	2	4

School Districts

Grant	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983	2	106	44	0	0	0
1985	0	52	33	0	0	0
1987	0	51	38	0	0	0
1989	0	43	21	0	0	0
1991	1	47	38	0	0	0
1993	0	4	2	0	0	0
1995	1	45	34	0	0	0
1997	0	32	26	0	0	0
1999	0	40	30	0	0	0
2001	1	32	28	1	0	0
2003	1	45	37	0	0	0
2005	2	30	23	0	1	0
2007	0	42	35	0	0	0
2009	1	26	23	1	0	0
2011	3	46	39	3	0	0
Totals	12	641	451	5	1	0

g. OKANOGAN COUNTY

City Councils

Okanogan	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983	0	51	45	0	0	0
1985	3	48	39	3	0	0
1987	0	43	31	0	0	0
1989	1	39	30	1	0	0
1991	0	39	33	0	0	0
1993	0	43	39	0	0	0
1995	1	49	43	0	0	0
1997	0	47	38	0	0	0
1999	1	48	41	1	0	0
2001	0	43	38	0	0	0
2003	1	55	47	1	0	0
2005	1	51	39	1	0	0
2007	0	2	2	0	0	0
2009	1	41	38	0	0	0
2011	0	44	40	0	0	0
Totals	9	643	543	7	0	0

School Districts

Okanogan	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
1983	0	49	37	0	0	0
1985	0	39	27	0	0	0
1987	0	50	36	0	0	0
1989	0	31	25	0	0	0
1991	0	50	43	0	0	0
1993	2	39	31	0	0	0
1995	0	49	43	0	0	0
1997	1	45	36	1	0	0
1999	0	52	40	0	0	0
2001	1	41	32	0	0	0
2003	0	43	38	0	0	0
2005	0	69	48	0	0	0
2007	1	27	22	1	0	0
2009	1	38	28	1	0	0
2011	2	50	44	1	0	1
Totals	8	672	530	4	0	1

h. SKAGIT COUNTY

City Councils

Skagit	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
2003	1	44	29	1	0	0
2005	1	44	30	0	0	0
2007	1	36	25	0	0	0
2009	0	37	27	0	0	0
2011	0	24	19	0	0	0
Totals	3	185	130	1	0	0

School Districts

Skagit	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
2003	1	31	26	1	0	0
2005	1	22	18	0	0	0
2007	1	24	23	1	0	0
2009	0	26	19	0	0	0
2011	0	27	25	0	0	0
Totals	3	130	111	2	0	0

i. WALLA WALLA COUNTY

City Councils

Walla Walla	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
2001	1	12	8	1	0	0
2003	0	13	9	0	0	0
2005	0	13	9	0	0	0
2007	0	21	14	0	0	0
2009	1	8	7	1	0	0
2011	1	18	12	1	0	0
Totals	3	85	59	3	0	0

School Districts

Walla Walla	Latinos Running	Total Running	Number of Seats	Latinos Elected Unopposed	Latinos Elected Opposed by Latinos	Latinos Elected Opposed by Non-Latinos
2001	1	21	18	0	0	1
2003	0	24	21	0	0	0
2005	1	17	14	1	0	0
2007	3	23	17	2	0	0
2009	0	14	13	0	0	0
2011	3	28	23	1	0	1
Totals	8	127	106	4	0	2

B. YAKIMA COUNTY INTERVIEWS

Interview Questions:

* Please note that the sub-questions are a series of potential follow up questions, depending on the answers of the interviewee.

- 1) **Did anything in particular spur you to become involved in local politics?**
 - a) Have these experiences and/or beliefs continued to motivate you?
 - b) What was your opinion of public institutions when you first became involved in politics?
 - c) How did this opinion change as you participated more?
 - d) How has your family responded to your political action?
 - e) How has your community responded to your political action?

- 2) **What motivated you to run for office?**
 - a) Were there any events in particular that led to your decision to run?
 - b) What was the role of the Latino population in your decision?
 - c) How do you think your knowledge of local problems prepared you for running for office in [specific town]?
 - d) What kind of problems did you expect to run up against?

- 3) **What kind of support have you had from local party organizations?**
 - a) From Latino organizations?
 - b) From local Democratic or Republican party organizations?
 - c) In what ways did your personal network of friends and family support the campaign?
 - d) Is there any kind of support or affiliation that you didn't have but that would have been particularly useful?
 - e) How do you think the political climate has changed for Latinos in the last few decades?

- 4) **What were the major barriers during your campaign?**
 - a) Why do you think [these barriers] exist?
 - b) What do you think of the current electoral system (tailor this to location)?
 - c) What do you think of the vote-by-mail system (if this is present in their town)?
 - d) How were language differences an asset or problem during your campaign?

- 5) **What was your experience like once in office?**
 - a) How did established elected officials relate to newcomers?
 - b) What were interactions with local leaders like?
 - c) What was the coverage by the local papers like while you were in office?
...favourable, helpful, accusatory?
 - d) Why do you think this was (for a, b, and c)?
 - e) How has your knowledge of local issues helped the conversations and decision-making of your office?

6) What has your experience been like in pushing minority issues?

- a) Can you tell me about a time when fellow office-holders helped in improving minority issues?
- b) Can you tell me about a time when fellow office-holders prevented the improvement or discussion of minority issues?
- c) How effective were you able to be in changing public policy for the benefit of the Latino community?
- d) And for the general public interest?
- e) Why do you think you ran into the problems you did?

7) What lead to your leaving office?

8) What do you think are some reasons behind historical trends that exist with respect to Latino representation in your town? (I plan to make this more specific and well-written after recording and researching more of the history of the specific towns in Yakima)

- a) If there has been a recent upsurge in Latino representation, why do you think this is?
- b) How is grass-roots political outreach been effective in your town?
- c) What do you think could be improved?
- d) How do you think the electoral system should be changed?
- e) What do you think are the major hurdles for Latino representation in [your town]?

C. SUNNYSIDE ELECTORAL HISTORY, ELECTION LAW, AND INTERVIEWS

I. Sunnyside election profiles

ii. Table 1: City Council results

Sunnyside City Council					
Election Profile - 1991 - 2011 - Source: Election Records					
Election Date	Number of Seats	Total No. of Candidates	Position #	Name of Candidates/No. of Votes - Winner*	Successful Spanish Surname Candidates
11/5/1991	3	4	1	Roy Anciso - 1259 votes - 76.8%*	Roy Anciso
			2	Errol Brown - 1314 - 80.1%*	
				Joe Morales - 227 - 13.8%	
			3	Ed Priluick - 1295 - 79.0%*	
11/2/1993	4	7	1	Don Hughes - 1197 - 73.8%*	
				Juan J. Aguilar - 378 - 23.3%	
			2	Irene M. Berk - 965 - 59.5%*	
				Michael Agierre - 618 - 38.1%	
			3	Elaine O. Snow - 925 - 57.0%	
				Wade Drysdale - 630 - 38.8%	
			4	David Meyers - 1211 - 74.6%*	
11/7/1995	3	3	5	Roy Anciso - 797 - 73.2%*	Roy Anciso
			6	Errol R. Brown - 787 - 72.3%*	
			7	Ed Priluick - 821 - 75.4%*	
11/4/1997	4	8	1	Don Vlieger - 1223 - 66.3%*	
				Donald Hughes - 575 - 31.1%	
			2	Mike Farmer - 1321 - 71.6%*	
				Irene M. Berk - 483 - 26.2%	
			3	G. Steffen-Buchmiller - 865 - 46.9%	
				Mike Aguirre - 942 - 51.0%*	Mike Aguirre
			4	Chad E. Werkhoven - 913 - 49.5%*	
				Nate Bridges - 862 - 46.7%	
11/2/1999	3	5	5	De Ann Hochhalter - 832 - 46.3%	
				Roy Anciso - 893 - 49.7%*	Roy Anciso
			6	Bruce Ricks - 852 - 47.4%	
				Errol R. Brown - 860 - 47.9%*	
			7	Ed Prilucik - 1451 - 80.8%*	
11/6/2001	4	8	1	Donavon "Don" Vlieger - 821 - 49.6%*	

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					Bruce Epps - 789 - 47.6%	
				2	Jose Luis Zasati - 499 - 30.1%	
					Mike Farmer - 1110 - 67%*	
				3	Mike Aguirre - 736 - 44.4%	
					Bruce Ricks - 868 - 52.4%*	
				4	Bengie Aguilar - 839 - 50.7%*	Bengie Aguilar
					Chad E. Werkhoven - 790 - 47.7%	
11/4/200						
3	3	6	1		Magali Sital Betker - 422 - 35.4%	
					Alex de la Cruz - 616 - 51.6%*	Alex de la Cruz
				2	Roy Anciso - 505 - 42.3%	
					James A. Restucci - 627 - 52.6%*	
				3	Ed Prilucik - 1017 - 85.2%*	
11/8/200						
5	5	8	1		Theresa Hancock - 1553 - 79.12%*	
				2	Mike Farmer - 872 - 49.27%	
					Bruce Epps - 893 - 50.45%*	
				3	Carol Stone - 1016 - 57.47%*	
					Bruce Ricks - 741 - 41.91%	
				4	Bill Grant - 1181 - 65.68%*	
					Bengie Aguilar - 616 - 34.26%	
				5	Paul Garcia - 1469 - 98.06%*	Paul Garcia
11/6/200						
7	3	4	5		Paul Garcia - 1091 - 85.20%*	Paul Garcia
				6	James A. Restucci - 1080 - 95.17*	
				7	Thomas Gehlen - 721 - 53.09%*	
					Ed Prilucik - 619 - 45.58%	
11/3/200						
9	4	7	1		Jason R. Raines - 625 - 47.28%	
					Theresa Hancock - 689 - 52.12%*	
				2	Mike Farmer - 772 - 57.14%*	
					Jesse Hernandez, Jr. - 573 - 42.41%	
				3	Carol Stone - 655 - 49.10%	
					Donavon (Don) Vlieger - 682 - 49.63%*	
				4	Nick Paulakis - 1205 - 98.13%*	
11/5/201						
1	3	6	5		Pablo (Paul) Garcia - 624 - 45.6%	
					Jason R. Raines - 735 - 53.7%*	
				6	James A. Restucci - 797 - 60.9%*	
					Robert Van Billard - 487 - 29.8%	
				7	Craig Hicks - 747 - 56.2%	
					Tom Gehlen - 566 - 42.6*	
Total	39	66				8 positions (5

					candidates)
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ii. Table 2: School District results

Sunnyside School Board					
Election Profile - 1991 - 2011 - Source: Election Records					
Election Date	Number of Seats	Total No. of Candidates	Position #	Name of Candidates/No. of Votes - Winner*	Successful Spanish Surname Candidates
11/5/1991	3	5	1	Mike Diaz - 2035 - 65.8%*	Mike Diaz
				Rosita Castillo - 640 - 20.7%	
			4	Fredrick Kilian - 2558 - 82.8%*	
			5	Keith McDonald - 1581 - 51.1%*	
				Gerry Lamberte - 1281 - 41.4%	
11/2/1993	3	4	1	Joanne Kilian - 2375 - 80.7%*	
			2	Joe Herber - 1623 - 55.1%*	
				Bruce Ricks - 1121 - 38.1%	
			3	Gerry Lamberte, Jr. - 2355 - 80.0%*	
11/7/1995	3	3	1	Mike Diaz - 1586 - 73.5%*	Mike Diaz
			4	Fredrick Killian - 1711 - 79.2%*	
			5	Gerry Lamberte, Jr. - 1629 - 75.5%*	
11/4/1997	2	3	2	Joanne Kilian - 2819 - 81.7%*	
			3	Trevert L. Shelley - 2200 - 63.7%*	
				Lorenzo Garza Jr. - 901 - 26.1%	
11/2/1999	4	4	1	Mike Diaz - 2441 - 71.6%*	Mike Diaz
			3	Lorenzo Garza , Jr. - 2327 - 68.2%*	Lorenzo Garza, Jr.
			4	Fredrick Kilian - 2706 - 79.3%*	
			5	Bill Smith - 2548 - 74.7%*	
11/6/2001	2	2	1	Joanne Kilian - 2452 - 82.2%*	
			2	Lorenzo Garza Jr. - 2152 - 72.0%*	Lorenzo Garza, Jr.
11/4/2003	3	6	1	Andi Bieber - 1182 - 49.3%*	
				Larry Pangle - 1091 - 45.5%	
			4	Daria M. Miller - 637 - 28.1%	
				Fredrick Kilian - 1613 - 67.3%*	
			5	Miguel Puente - 641 - 26.7%	
				Bill Smith - 1612 - 67.3%*	
11/8/2005	5	8	1	Larry L. Pangle - 1524 - 48.08%	
				Rocky J. Simmons - 1634 - 51.55%*	
			2	Joanna Kilian - 1796 - 53.69%*	
				Mary Rita-Rohde - 1543 - 46.13	
			3	Lorenzo Garzo, Jr. - 1602 - 51.86%*	Lorenzo Garza, Jr.
				Susanna Zamarron - 1467 -	

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				47.49%	
			4	Stephen B. Carpenter - 2934 - 98.52%*	
			5	Miguel Puente - 2733 - 97.75%*	Miguel Puente
11/6/2007	3	3	1	Rocky Simmons - 2271 - 97.64%*	
			4	Stephen B. Carpenter - 2303 - 98%*	
			5	Miguel Puente - 2095 - 96.15%*	Miguel Puente
11/3/2009	2	3	1	Michelle Emery Perry - 1653 - 67.03%*	
				Robert Lemos - 789 - 32.0%	
			3	Lorenzo Garza, Jr. - 1989 - 96.88%*	Lorenzo Garza, Jr.
11/8/2011	3	4	1	Rocky Simmons - 2230 - 98.2%	
			4	Sandra Linde - 1360 - 50.2%	
				LeRoy Werkhoven - 1327 - 48.9%	
			5	Miguel Puente - 2064 - 95.9%	Miguel Puente
Total	33	45			10 positions (3 candidates)

II. Districting Ordinance

ORDINANCE 2009 - 3

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF SUNNYSIDE, WASHINGTON, DIVIDING
CITY OF SUNNYSIDE INTO ELECTORAL DISTRICTS,
IMPLEMENTING ELECTORAL DISTRICTING PLAN,
AND AMENDING TITLE 1 OF THE SUNNYSIDE
MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADD NEW CHAPTER 1.10
PERTAINING TO ELECTORAL DISTRICTS**

ORIGINAL

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Sunnyside has previously held public hearings and discussions regarding creation of electoral districts, dividing the City of Sunnyside into electoral districts, implementing an electoral districting plan to include four electoral districts with three open electoral positions; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has held a public hearing on March 23, 2009 to receive additional public comment and testimony regarding the electoral districting plan, and has held the following meetings and public discussions, to wit:

- February 12, 2007 – Regular Council Meeting
- April 10, 2007 – Electoral Districting Committee
- April 19, 2007 – Electoral Districting Committee
- May 31, 2007 – Electoral Districting Committee
- June 21, 2007 – Electoral Districting Committee
- July 12, 2007 – Electoral Districting Committee
- July 16, 2007 - Special City Council Meeting
- April 23, 2008 – Special City Council Meeting
- October 2, 2008 – Special City Council Meeting
- January 2009 – “Voting In Sunnyside” webpage created on City website

- January 2009 – Open House flyer published in English and Spanish on City website
- February 2009 Utility Bill Mailing – Open House Flyer
- February 2009 Chamber Newsletter – Open House Flyer
- February 2009 Sunnyside School District Newsletter – Open House Flyer
- February 2009 – Mayor interview on Radio KDNA
- February 2009 though present – “Your Guide to Understanding City Council Electoral Districts” published on City website in English and Spanish
- February 23, 2009 – Regular Council Meeting
Set public hearing for March 23, 2009.
- March 5, 2009 – Open House

and,

WHEREAS, adoption of the proposed electoral districting plan had been presented in conjunction with the meeting and discussions above; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, having heard and considered all public comment and testimony presented at such public hearing, together with testimony and evidence presented at previous hearings and public discussions, hereby finds and concludes as follows:

1. The City of Sunnyside is a Noncharter Code City established and existing pursuant to Chapter 35A of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), with a Council-Manager form of government authorized pursuant to Chapter 35A.13 RCW.
2. Pursuant to RCW 35A.13.220 and RCW 35A.12.180, the City may exercise its option to create and implement electoral wards or districts, and may under RCW 35.18.020 structure such electoral districting plan to include both electoral districts and open positions.
3. The City Council finds and determines that, pursuant to RCW

29A.76.010, the electoral districting plan shall be consistent with the following criteria:

- (a) Each internal electoral district shall be as nearly equal in population as possible to each and every other such electoral district comprising the City of Sunnyside.
 - (b) Each electoral district shall be as compact as possible.
 - (c) Each electoral district shall consist of geographically contiguous area.
 - (d) Population data may not be used for purposes of favoring or disfavoring any racial group or political party.
 - (e) To the extent feasible and if not inconsistent with the basic enabling legislation for the City of Sunnyside, the electoral district boundaries shall coincide with existing recognized natural boundaries and shall, to the extent possible, preserve existing communities of related and mutual interest.
4. The City Council finds and determines that the four electoral districts identified and delineated in this Ordinance and the Electoral Districting Map attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference as Exhibit "B" are compliant and consistent with the criteria stated in finding 3 above.
5. The City Council finds and determines that the following council positions should be assigned to the following designated electoral districts and open positions:
- Council position 1: Electoral District No. 1
 - Council position 2: Electoral District No. 2
 - Council position 3: Electoral District No. 3
 - Council position 4: Electoral District No. 4
 - Council position 5: Open position
 - Council position 6: Open position
 - Council position 7: Open position
6. The City Council finds and determines that the electoral districting plan adopted herein shall be subject to review and revision no later than eight months after receipt of federal decennial census data to achieve compliance with the plan criteria stated in finding 3 above and the provisions of applicable law.

districts and districting plan is in the best interest of residents of the City of Sunnyside, will promote the purposes of the Voting Rights Act, and will promote the general health, safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds and determines that Title 1 of the Sunnyside Municipal Code should be amended to add new Chapter 1.10 establishing and implementing such electoral districting plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SUNNYSIDE, WASHINGTON, as follows:

Section 1. Title 1 of the Sunnyside Municipal Code is hereby amended to add new Chapter 1.10, which reads as set forth in Exhibit "A" attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.

Section 2. The electoral districts described and delineated in Chapter 1.10 of the Sunnyside Municipal Code shall be as set forth in the Electoral Districting Map attached hereto as Exhibit "B" and incorporated herein by this reference, which shall be the official Electoral Districting Map of the City of Sunnyside. Such Electoral Districting Map shall be amended from time to time to conform with any action of the City Council amending the electoral districts established herein.

Section 3. Except as amended herein, Title 1 of the Sunnyside Municipal Code shall remain unchanged.

Section 4. The City Manager is hereby authorized to deliver and publish this Ordinance to all agencies with jurisdiction.

Section 5. This Ordinance is subject to the following procedures set forth in RCW 29A.76.010(6) which provides as follows:

- (a) Any registered voter residing in an area affected by the redistricting plan may request review of the adopted local plan by the superior court of the county in which he or she resides, within forty-five days of the plan's adoption. Any request for review must specify the reason or reasons alleged why the local plan is not consistent with the applicable redistricting criteria. The municipal corporation, county, or district may be joined as respondent. The superior court shall thereupon review the challenged plan for compliance with the applicable redistricting criteria set out in subsection (4) of this section.

- (b) If the superior court finds the plan to be consistent with the requirements of this section, the plan shall take effect immediately.
- (c) If the superior court determines the plan does not meet the requirements of this section, in whole or in part, it shall remand the plan for further or corrective action within a specified and reasonable time period.
- (d) If the superior court finds that any request for review is frivolous or has been filed solely for purposes of harassment or delay, it may impose appropriate sanctions on the party requesting review, including payment of attorneys' fees and costs to the respondent municipal corporation, county, or district.

Section 6. This ordinance shall be effective five days after passage, approval and publication as required by law.

PASSED this 23rd day of March, 2009.



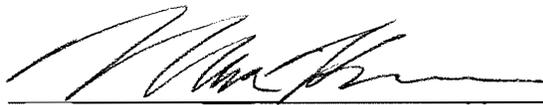
PABLO GARCIA, MAYOR

ATTEST:



DEBORAH A. ESTRADA, CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



MARK A. KUNKLER, CITY ATTORNEY

III. Interview materials

i. Consent form

Interview Consent Form

Student researchers from Whitman College in partnership with the National Voting Rights Advocacy Initiative are conducting a study on voting rights here in Sunnyside. We are focusing in particular on the problems of minority political representation and participation.

There is no foreseeable risk if you participate in this interview, nor should you experience any discomfort. If you agree to be interviewed, your participation will help us to study these problems and to analyze how they can be addressed in Sunnyside.

You should also know that your participation in this interview is voluntary and that you may end the interview at any time.

If you have any questions about this interview or this research project please contact Professor Paul [Apostolidis](#) at (509) 522-4426 at Whitman College, or email him at apostopc@whitman.edu.

Thank you for your participation in this study.

SIGNATURE: _____

[IF UNDER 18 PARENTS SIGNATURE:

Date: _____

ii. Sunnyside Interview question set.

* Please note that the sub-questions are a series of potential follow up questions, depending on the answers of the interviewee.

Sample set of questions for local officials and community leaders:

1. **So my first question – and I hope it isn't too intrusive, and if it is, we can skip it – is about how you identify within the Sunnyside community.**
 - a) Do you think other people within Sunnyside share your identity?
 - b) What other identity groups within Sunnyside exist, and how do you think they interact with each other?
 - c) What interests do these specific identity communities have? How are they similar? How are they dissimilar?
2. **Can you give me a broad overview of what Sunnyside looked like, demographically and socially, before the 2009 election reform?**
 - a) Have you seen any specific populations or groups change or grow over the last 20 years?
 - b) How are these communities situated geographically?
 - c) Do these groups seem relatively distinct or blurred?
3. **Do you have a sense for what Sunnyside looked like for Latinos running for office in Sunnyside, before the 2009 reform.**
 - a) Can you tell me about the frequency in which Latino candidates ran for office, and how often they were elected?
 - b) Do you think Latino candidates feel confident while running for city positions?
 - c) Do you think once elected, Latino candidates feel effective at making policy changes to positively impact the Latino community?
 - d) Can you describe for me what the general perceptions toward Latino candidates were like in Sunnyside?
 - Perceptions in the Latino community?
 - Perceptions in the white community?
 - e) Can you describe for me what the general perception was around low Latino representation in office and city positions?
 - How did the Latino community perceive low representation?
 - How did the white community perceive low representation?
 - Was low representation perceived as a problem?
 - Was low representation perceived as a problem that could be solved?
4. **Can you also talk to me about what Sunnyside looked like for Latino community members and voters, politically before the election reform?**
 - a) How was political participation perceived in the Latino community?

- Did members of the Latino community find it important to register to vote?
 - Did members of the Latino community think it was important to vote in elections?
 - Why do you think Latino voter participation is low?
- b) Can you describe for me what the general perception was around low Latino voter turnout?
- How did the Latino community perceive low turnout?
 - How did the white community perceive low turnout?
 - Was low turnout perceived as a problem?
 - Was low turnout perceived as a problem that could be solved?
- c) Can you tell me about Nuestra Casa's role with engaging Latino voters?
- 5. In 2006 Whitman student named Ian Warner found that and the Latino population was markedly under-represented in local government. His analysis concluded that given patterns of racially polarized voting, the at-large election format of city council elections likely contributed to this problem. In what ways did the release of this report contribute to change in the local social and political atmosphere?**
- a) Do you think that residents of Sunnyside knew about the report, or of the findings of the report?
- b) What do you think Latino residents thought of these findings and recommendations? Why did they think those things?
- c) What do you think white residents thought of these findings and recommendations? Why did they think those things?
- d) What did you think of the report?
- e) When the report came out, was there any public dialogue about it?
- Who were the players in this dialogue?
 - How would you describe the tone of the discussion?
 - What were the main issues in the public debate about it?
- d) Did public perception around low turnout or representation change?
- Did community members think there were different reasons for the issues in the report than were concluded by Ian?
 - Did people discuss these issues more? Did public dialogue around the reasons for racially disproportional representation change?
- 6. I'd like to hear your story about how the electoral reform eventually came about, and why things happened the way they did. Can you talk to me about the process of reform?**
- a) What is your understanding of how the US Department of Justice became involved? Do you think this was a positive or negative development, and why?
- b) Who were the people or groups in the local community who worked hardest to bring about this electoral reform? Can you please tell me about the things they did, and why you think they wanted to do them.
- c) How did the Sunnyside government respond to the pressure to change the election rules, from both local people and from the DOJ? Why do you think they responded in those ways?

d) As a leader in this community, did you think the change in election structure was a good thing at the time all this happened? Why, or why not? Has your mind changed since then?

e) In what ways, if any, did the reform process change people's common perceptions of the Latino population increase? Or of the problems of low Latino voter turnout and representation in local offices? Or of the reasons behind these problems?

7. Can you please tell me about local print, radio, and television media, particularly Spanish language media, had on the process of election reform?

a) How were the findings of the Warner report portrayed in larger publications, like the Yakima Herald? In Latino printed media? In radio broadcasting? In Latino radio broadcasting?

b) How was the involvement of the DOJ represented in these different forms of media?

c) How did the media portray the local leaders and groups who worked hard to promote the idea of electoral reform? And what kinds of coverage did they give to the individuals and groups that opposed the reform?

d) Why do you think the media portrayed the controversy in these ways?

e) What kinds of coverage did the media give to the underlying problems the electoral reform was meant to solve? How well, or how poorly, do you think the media gave people a sense of these problems? What explains this pattern of media coverage, in your view?

8. What are your thoughts these days about the hybrid system of at-large and district voting for city council in Sunnyside?

a) What do you think it has been successful at doing?

b) What do you think is has been unsuccessful at doing?

c) What factors do you think explain these successes and failures?

d) If insufficient, what kinds of changes do you think would be sufficient? Do you think it is a big enough change?

e) Would an all district-seat system be a positive change in Sunnyside? Why, or why not?

f) What would an all district-seat system accomplish, or fail to accomplish?

9. How would you say the reform has impacted Latino candidates?

a) What effects do you think it has had on the ability and willingness of more Latinos to run for public office?

b) Have more Latino candidates run for office, to the best of your knowledge? Why, or why not?

c) How might this reform affect the confidence of Latino candidates running for positions?

10. How would you say this reform has impacted the Latino community?

a) Do you think members of the Latino community are more inclined to be involved politically?

- b) Have perceptions regarding voting changed? If not, why?
- c) Do you think voter turnout has been affected? Why?

11. What other things could or should be done, besides changing electoral rules, to increase Latino representation in local government and Latino participation in local politics?

- a) What factors do you think prevent Latinos from running for office that aren't addressed by the election reform?
- b) What factors do you think prevent Latino candidates from winning, that aren't addressed by the election reform?
- c) What factors do you think prevent Latinos from voting that aren't addressed by the election reform?
- d) Can you think of any solutions, besides redistricting and election system reform, to increase participation and representation?
- e) Can you think of any steps that need to be taken toward these solutions?
- f) Can you tell me about any actions that have been taken by local leaders, groups, or community members to promote any of these other kinds of changes?
- g) Do you think the church has a role mobilizing the Latino community? What role does Sunnyside's promise have?