
The Role of the Church in Community Development: *Two Case Studies*



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Two Case Studies

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The Role of the Church in Community Development

Table of Contents

LAWNDALE COMMUNITY CHURCH'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMNT INITIATIVES IN NORTH LAWNDALE	1
INTRODUCTION: THE CHURCH AND THE BLACK COMMUNITY.....	2
THE LAWNDALE COMMUNITY CHURCH CASE STUDY.....	5
Methodology	5
The Lawndale College Opportunity Program (LCOP)	6
The Housing Program.....	9
The Administrators of Lawndale Community Church (LCC)	11
The Community of North Lawndale	13
CONCLUSION	18
APPENDIX 1: HOUSING EVALUATION BY RACE.....	20
APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDENTS	21
APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE HOUSING PROGRAM.....	24
APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	28
APPENDIX 5: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LAWNDALE CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.....	32
APPENDIX 6: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PEOPLE OF LAWNDALE COMMUNITY	35
REFERENCES.....	40

LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER: THE ROLE OF CHURCH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS IN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	41
INTRODUCTION.....	42
LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER CASE STUDY	43
Methodology	43
RESULTS	44
The Linwood Shopping Center Management: The CDC-KC and BMU-KC..	44
The Linwood Shopping Center Merchants: The Tenants	45
<i>A Profile of the Tenant/Merchants of Linwood Shopping Center.....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>The Tenant/Merchants' Evaluation of Linwood Shopping Center</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>The Linwood Shopping Shopping Center Shoppers: The Patrons.....</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>A Profile of the Patrons of Linwood Shopping Center</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>Shoppers' Evaluation of Linwood Shopping Center.....</i>	<i>51</i>
PROSPECTS	53
CONCLUSION	54
APPENDIX 1: LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE.....	55
APPENDIX 2: LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER MERCHANT QUESTIONNAIRE.....	57
APPENDIX 3: LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER SHOPPER QUESTIONNAIRE.....	60

Lawndale Community Church's Community Development Initiatives in North Lawndale

A Case Study

#1

INTRODUCTION: THE CHURCH AND THE BLACK COMMUNITY

Almost every free-standing institution has fled neighborhoods like Lawndale except for the (black) church. And many of those, from the big neighborhood edifices to the store front chapels that line Madison Street or Roosevelt Road, have pastors who say their prayers and then leave.

Yet if anyone is to provide the leadership that can help the left-out develop their communities, it is business and labor And if anyone is to provide the moral leadership to coordinate the drive, it is the church.

The role of the church in community development has recently received renewed interest among scholars of American inner cities. There is a growing recognition that inner city churches can play a leading role in motivating the residents of underclass areas to better themselves and their communities.

In general, blacks express a higher degree of religiosity than whites. Churches play a central role in the philanthropic activity of blacks. For example, blacks are more likely to respond to appeals from the clergy than whites (41 percent compared to 26 percent, respectively). Both historical and current evidence suggest that the church has had an impact upon most aspects of black American life. According to R. J. Taylor, et alia, the importance of the church may be primarily due to the fact that it is one of the few community institutions that is built, financed, and controlled by blacks.

Lawndale Community Church (LCC) is an exception to this theory. It was founded and is run by a white pastor in a black neighborhood. Pastor Wayne Gordon has led Lawndale Community Church for 16 years. He believes that the church should attempt to reach and serve the community, and that churches in poverty stricken areas should provide the sense of community that has been lost amid the other abandonments. Unfortunately, this does not always happen.

This is a view that is shared by many poor people. They feel that churches in their neighborhoods are there to be served by the people rather than to serve the people. A North Lawndale survey revealed some of the sources of this distrust. LCC conducted a survey of community residents

Editorial Millstone, 1986, p. 229.
(1987)

The results of the survey agree with the findings reported by the authors of the American Millstone (1986).

about why they did not attend church. Residents cited three major reasons: first, they did not have nice clothes to wear. Clothes appear to be very important in black churches. Most Blacks tend to pay extra attention to their church appearance. Second, they did not have money for the offering plate. Third, they felt churches were ripping off the people of the community, and they were angry at God because of their situation.

Armed with this knowledge, the LCC has attempted to restore trust among the people of North Lawndale and the church by reaching out to community members through various programs. These programs are meant to foster community stability and renewal, and to provide education, job skills, and jobs to the people of North Lawndale. They are part of the foundation of a prosperous future for the community of North Lawndale and for the partnerships LCC has fostered between the church and the people of North Lawndale.

North Lawndale covers an area approximately 5.5 square miles, and its population is declining. In 1980, it had a population of 61,654 people -- one third fewer than in 1970. In 1988, North Lawndale's population was estimated at 54,622. Nothing in the 1980s suggests a reversal in these trends is imminent; rather, population projections estimate that only 49,904 people will remain in North Lawndale by 1993.

Ninety-nine percent of the population is black, and approximately half (47 percent) are under 21. The proportion of young people in North Lawndale is in contrast to national trends that show an increase in middle-aged baby boomers and elderly. The proportion of those under 21 in North Lawndale is also likely to increase, due to a high birth rate among North Lawndale's teenagers.

The comparative youth of many of North Lawndale's residents has economic implications for the community: nearly half of this community's members are in a less-productive stage of life. Those under eighteen are typically still in school, and those over eighteen are just entering the job market or going to college.

North Lawndale's 5.5 square miles include 125 churches, of which 50 are housed in traditional church buildings and nearly 75 of which are storefront congregations. North Lawndale also has 48 state lottery outlets, 99 licensed bars and liquor stores, two grocery stores, and only one bank. These statistics are a source of concern for many North Lawndale community leaders, because they reflect the social pathology of the community.

Historically, the church in the black community has been a source of stability, motivation, and spiritual leadership to many families. The number of churches in North Lawndale suggest that the

Youthworker, 1989: 76.

City of Chicago Planning Department.

1980 Census Data.

Number is from a study by Lawndale Community Church. New churches open every week and some old ones close.

Source of statistics, *American Millstone* (1986).

church may be seeking to play a similar role. At the same time, the many liquor stores, bars, and lottery outlets and the dearth of banks and grocery stores signify a socially and economically distressed community. In addition, many of the underclass here have no connection with the church. They are extremely poor, unemployed, without job skills, and often without even minimal education, and crime and violence are part of the daily routine in their neighborhood.

What can the church do to help the poor? What has this institution achieved, or failed to achieve, for poor neighborhoods in American cities? What role should the inner city church play in community redevelopment?

THE LAWNSDALE COMMUNITY CHURCH CASE STUDY

This case study was conducted by the Fairness and Social Justice Project of the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota as part of a series of forums and inquiries into community/economic development strategies in the Black community. The case study examines the role that Lawndale Community Church (LCC) has played in improving social and economic conditions in its neighborhood, and evaluates the three community economic development programs that LCC developed and administers through the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation (LCDC).

LCC developed a college opportunity program, a housing program, and an economic development project. The Lawndale College Opportunity Program (LCOP) established a higher education trust fund to provide scholarships for neighborhood students, and works with students to develop academic and social skills they will need in order to prepare for college.

Through its Housing Program, the LCC purchases and rehabilitates abandoned apartment buildings in the North Lawndale neighborhood for resale to community residents. Its goals include uniting community members, encouraging ownership and responsibility, and developing job skills among community members.

The LCC's Lawndale Christian Development Corporation (LCDC) administers an economic development program that develops and attracts small businesses into the community, and provides employment and basic skills training for neighborhood residents.

Methodology

The field research for this project was conducted during the month of September, 1989. Formal interviews were conducted with community residents who came to the LCC health clinic for health care, and informal interviews were conducted with LCC administrators.

Five questionnaires (see Appendices 2-6) were also developed to gather information about the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, and their views and attitudes about the church's College Opportunity, Housing, and Economic Development Programs. One

questionnaire was developed for participants in each of the three programs; one was developed for the community at large; and one was developed for LCDC's administrators:

- Students and some parents of students participating in LCOP completed the **Questionnaire for the Students**;
- Individuals involved in the Housing Program, including owners and renters of rehabilitated houses, completed the **Questionnaire for the Participants in the Housing Program**;
- Participants in LCDC's community economic development program completed the **Questionnaire for the Participants in the Community Economic Development Program**; and,
- LCDC administrators completed the **Questionnaire for the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation**.
- North Lawndale residents who used the LCC health clinic or who attended the Sunday worship service completed the **Questionnaire for the People of Lawndale Community**.

This report presents results from these questionnaires. Findings are divided into four sections. The first two sections evaluate responses by participants in the LCOP and Housing Programs, and the last two sections address responses by LCDC administrators and North Lawndale community residents.

Although one of the questionnaires was designed to gather information on the participants in the economic development program, the response rate was insufficient to warrant a separate analysis here. However, this program was also evaluated by North Lawndale's community members, and their evaluation appears in the "Community of Lawndale" section.

The Lawndale College Opportunity Program (LCOP)

The goal of studying participants in the Lawndale College Opportunity Program (LCOP) was to identify participating students' characteristics, to obtain participating students' views about North Lawndale's needs, and to evaluate the program.

LCOP is funded through the Education Assistance Limited, a service organization that acts as a broker between businesses and colleges, facilitating the exchange of goods and services for scholarships to low-income students. Lance Green is the director of LCOP, and is himself a product of the LCC youth ministry.

W. Gordon, 1988: 3.

The LCOP program guarantees a college scholarship (\$3,000 per year, per student), provided students obtain the required grade point average for college entrance. In September 1989, forty students were enrolled in the program. Seventeen of these students (43 percent) completed the case study questionnaire.

Almost none of the student respondents (6 percent) belonged to the Lawndale Community Church. This finding underscores the church's commitment to serving its community rather than just its members. Although the program may provide a source of new church membership, LCC is still a very small church, and after sixteen years its Sunday service averages only about 120 people.

Although the results from the questionnaire revealed most students who participate in LCOP are not members of LCC, 75 percent of respondents said they participate in LCC outreach programs. Nearly half of these students' families (43 percent) are also involved in LCC outreach programs.

It is not clear why participation in LCC programs is so high, while membership in LCC is so low among this group. High student participation may be a result of the youth ministry's outreach efforts in the community. LCC emphasizes the need for a good relationship between the church and the community, based not on church membership, but on love and care. It seeks to reach out to people in the community (especially the young), even if they are not members of LCC. Thus, the LCC gym and other facilities and activities are open to everyone. It is probably through such activities that North Lawndale's youth become part of LCC's outreach programs.

In turn, significant family participation in LCC program activities may be a result of the fact that the children are enrolled in the program; hence students' participation may encourage the participation of the rest of the family.

The LCOP evaluation examined whether, among other things, the student participants thought that membership in the program would assure them a college education. Seventy five percent of participating students answered "yes." These results are encouraging for several reasons.

First, although participants were not surveyed before beginning the LCOP, they live in a community where the high school drop-out rate is very high. The Urban Land Institute (ULI) estimated North Lawndale's high school drop-out to be 62 percent in 1986, compared to the national figure of 27 percent. Second, 75 percent of high school students in North Lawndale read at levels below the national average. Third, the area has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates, a factor that is also associated with high drop-out rates.

The majority of the responses came from the recently enrolled group of students in the program. This could be partly because the researcher had a chance to meet and explain the importance of the study to the group (during their first week in the program). Time did not allow a meeting with the original 25 students in the program.

Urban Land Institute, "North Lawndale," Washington D.C., 1986, p. 35.

LCOP participants were also asked about what they planned to study at college. Sixty-three percent said they were planning to study for professional degrees, 25 percent intended to pursue science degrees, 6 percent planned to study for arts degrees, and the remaining 6 percent were undecided. While these results are not conclusive (many of these early aspirations may change with time), they do reflect motivation to achieve. These students have specific goals to work toward, unlike many of the young people in the North Lawndale neighborhood.

The LCOP survey also found that all respondents thought membership in the program would help keep young people from becoming involved in crime. This suggests that education programs may help the community reduce participation in crime by youths, and at the same time provide them with a valuable asset an education.

These were welcome findings, but there were some unwelcome ones, as well. The majority of respondents (68 percent) had no idea whether they would return to North Lawndale after graduating from college. Only 13 percent said they would return. One of LCOP's goals is to have 50 percent of program participants return to live and work in the community after graduating from college, to ensure that the community does not experience "brain drain." In addition, North Lawndale's revival depends, in part, on the availability of role models for the young, and college graduates who had participated in LCOP would be an important, positive role models for this group.

In addition to evaluating the LCOP, participants were also asked to rank North Lawndale's needs according to level of importance. Table 1 shows the students' responses.

Education was ranked first by most of the respondents (44 percent). Stopping crime was ranked second in importance (28 percent), followed by employment and leadership (11 percent each).

**TABLE 1:
COMMUNITY NEEDS
Rankings by the LCOP Students**

	RANKINGS						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	No Response
Education	44%	28%	17%	6%	6%	0%	0%
Employment	11%	11%	38%	11%	0%	6%	22%
Housing	0%	19%	25%	13%	6%	0%	38%
Leadership	11%	6%	17%	28%	0%	6%	33%
Stop Crime	28%	33%	17%	6%	0%	0%	17%

N = 18

Source: Authors' survey

These results reflect the current trends in the area and the nation, especially with respect to students' concern about drug trafficking and violent crime. Many respondents experience (or have experienced) crimes on a daily basis, and there are many debates in local and national news on how to address the drug and crime problems in blighted neighborhoods.

The crime rate in North Lawndale is among the highest in the city, and the educational achievement is among the lowest. Under existing conditions, the crime rate tends to get more attention than the need for more education among North Lawndale residents. This may explain many of the survey findings, insofar as engaging in criminal activity may arise from a lack of education and job training. In the absence of employment opportunities in the area, and without even a minimal education, some residents can easily turn to selling drugs and other illegal activities. Thus, the high crime rate may be, at least in part, a result of some of North Lawndale's other needs. Among these is the need for affordable housing.

The Housing Program

The Housing Program is funded by World Vision, a Christian humanitarian relief agency that funds similar programs in Detroit and Pittsburgh. The LCC housing ministry buys vacant or abandoned two- or three-flat apartment buildings in the community, rehabilitates the buildings using contract labor, and then resells them to North Lawndale residents at affordable prices. The program prevents developers from purchasing old housing in the area, rehabilitating the buildings, and then increasing rents and prices so that local residents cannot afford to live in them.

Potential owners are selected from a list of applicants, most of whom are LCC members. These prospective owners first lease a unit in the building for a period that might range from two to three years. During this time, LCDC regards the prospective owner's rent as equity toward a down payment for the building. Once enough equity for down payment has been accumulated (10% of the total cost of the building), the renter becomes the owner of the building and collects rent on all the units.

To date there has been one transfer of building ownership. The leaser-holders pay a rent of \$275 per month, plus \$25 for maintenance, and an optional \$50 fee that makes the lease-holder a legal possible buyer of the house. This program is still very new, and small in scale, with only seven participants. As a result, participation has been limited to church membership. All the participants in this program are also active to varying degrees in LCC outreach programs.

The housing questionnaire was administered to all seven participants in the housing program (both renters and owners of rehabilitated buildings). The objective of the questionnaire was to identify participants' characteristics and learn how effective they felt the Housing Program was. The renters

There are financial institutions to provide loans to the families to buy the homes, but they have not been contacted because no transfer of ownership has taken place as yet.

and the owners of rehabilitated housing were asked to evaluate the program on the basis of its contributions in four areas -- housing affordability, job creation, community stability, and community renewal -- and to rate the program overall. Table 2 shows the results of that evaluation.

**TABLE 2:
LCC HOUSING PROGRAMS
Rankings by the Housing Participants**

	RANKINGS				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
General	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%
Affordability	14%	71%	14%	0%	0%
Community Stability	29%	57%	14%	0%	0%
Community Renewal	29%	57%	14%	0%	0%
Provides Local Employment	43%	28%	14%	14%	0%

N = 7

Source: Authors' survey

The majority of program participants were female (71 percent). Most participants were middle aged: 29 percent were 20-30 years old and 71 percent were 31-45 years of age. Most respondents (71 percent) were married, 14 percent were divorced, and 14 percent were single. More than 70 percent of participants were also parents of from one to four children, a finding that is probably related to the general age of this group. The participant population was almost equally divided between black and white respondents, with 57 percent black and 43 percent white. White participation in LCC is relatively high: although the church is located in a predominantly black area, it encourages racial unity rather than segregation.

Overall, 100 percent of participants rated the program as "excellent" (57 percent) or "good" (43 percent). Most rated housing affordability as "good" (71 percent) or "excellent" (14 percent), suggesting that the rents and home prices that LCC are making available through the program are fair and reasonable for the area.

Most respondents (71 percent) thought that the housing program does provide local employment. One of the housing project residents and some LCC members are part of the group that has been contracted to work on rehabilitating buildings. LCC conducts classes on home maintenance for homeowners, thus assisting them in minimizing maintenance expenses.

Eighty-six percent of respondents rated the housing program's contribution to both community stability and renewal as "good" (57 percent) or "excellent" (29 percent), with 14 percent rating the program as "fair" in each of these areas. There is evidence of renewal even among residents on that block who are not participating in the program: they are painting and renovating their houses and planting flower gardens. According to one of the program's new homeowners, "Everybody looks out for each other, and they're more concerned" The residents of this block agree that the once-dreaded drug corner of 22nd and Avers is gone, and the block is showing clear signs of renewal.

The majority of housing questionnaire respondents (85 percent) said they did not know of any public debates about the program. Discussions tended to focus on the merits and success of the program. All participants agreed that the debates were not within the church, but rather between the church and some community leaders.

The housing program evaluation also explored whether any relation existed among respondents' demographic or socioeconomic characteristics and their responses. With the exception of a relation between race and program ratings, none of the demographic or socioeconomic characteristics studied were associated with respondents' answers on the four most important aspects of the housing program (affordability, employment, community stability, and community renewal). The results of cross tabulations of responses to these four primary issues by race are shown in Appendix 1.

The Administrators of Lawndale Community Church (LCC)

The purpose of studying the LCC administrators and the community residents was to determine how well the LCDC's programs (which were started and are run by the LCC administrators) reflect the community's views. One of the important issues was whether the administrators reside in North Lawndale. Do LCC programs reflect community development efforts arising from within or outside of North Lawndale? How well do the administrators of LCC programs understand the real problems and/or needs of North Lawndale, and has this understanding been developed through direct participation in and experience with this community? Are the programs they have started serving these needs? Are there conflicts between the church and the community as a result of the LCDC programs? Are the program administrators aware of these conflicts? The LCC Administrators Questionnaire was designed to provide some answers these questions.

Seven LCC administrators (90 percent) participated in this evaluation. Two of the seven were pastors of the church, and all respondents were residents of the North Lawndale neighborhood. This suggests that the LCC administrators have first-hand experience with the social, political, and economic life of the community. Some of the questionnaire's findings corroborate this view.

This was considered a good indicator of community involvement by the LCC and its administrators. Most of the pastors and administrators of North Lawndale's churches often reside outside the neighborhood and commute to their churches.

A good majority of respondents said there were no conflicts between the church and the community about the LCDC, Housing, and Economic Development programs (see Tables 5 & 6). This may reflect the fact that the LCC programs were intended to meet the actual needs of the community as perceived by the residents themselves (a group to which the LCC administrators belong). Because the LCC administrators live and interact with the people of North Lawndale, it is more likely that they understand the needs of this community (see Table 3 and Figure 1).

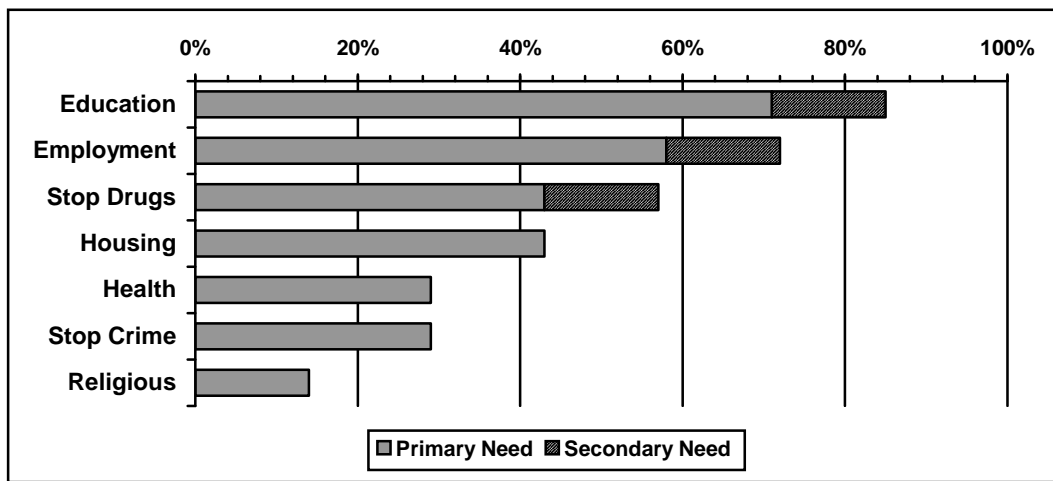
**TABLE 3:
COMMUNITY NEEDS
Rankings by the LCOP Students**

	RANKINGS						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	No Response
Education	71%	14%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%
Housing	43%	0%	14%	14%	14%	0%	15%
Health	29%	0%	14%	14%	14%	0%	29%
Employment	58%	14%	14%	0%	0%	0%	14%
Stop Crime	29%	0%	0%	14%	6%	0%	38%
Leadership	11%	6%	17%	28%	0%	6%	33%
Stop Crime	28%	33%	17%	6%	0%	0%	17%

N = 7

Source: Authors' survey

**FIGURE 1:
RANKINGS BY LCC ADMINISTRATOR**



Most LCC administrators rated education as the most important need in the community (71 percent ranked it first in importance; 14 percent ranked it second), followed by employment (58 percent ranked it first and 14 percent second), stopping drugs (43 percent and 14 percent, respectively), housing (43 percent ranked it first), and health and stopping crime (29 percent ranked each first in importance). Education and housing were the only categories that were ranked by all respondents.

This finding reinforces the importance of education and housing to the LCC administrators. Based on these results, it isn't surprising that three of the four most important needs (education, employment, and housing) also comprise the programs in which the church is involved. In addition, while there is no LCDC program dealing directly with the issue of stopping drugs or crime (listed as among North Lawndale's most important needs by 43 and 29 percent of the respondents, respectively), it can be argued that, by addressing North Lawndale's education, employment, and housing needs, the LCC programs are, in fact dealing with the roots of North Lawndale's drug and crime problems.

The LCC administrator questionnaire also found that most LCC project leaders (71 percent) had worked on other projects before becoming involved with LCC programs. This past experience, coupled with first-hand experience of living in the community and LCC's "go out and meet (the people)" philosophy, has made the success of the LCC programs more likely.

The questionnaire results suggest that the LCC programs are based on the needs of the community (according to the residents, i.e., the LCC administrators), and that the programs have a better chance of success because they deal with issues that matter to the community. It also seems that the LCC administrators have followed the recommendations made by the ULI, which conducted a study of North Lawndale's needs in 1986 by implementing programs to meet some of the needs of the North Lawndale community.

The Community of North Lawndale

In the community's evaluation of LCC's three community development programs, two questions were of primary interest: What does the North Lawndale community think of the LCDC programs? What do they consider to be North Lawndale's most pressing needs?

The analysis here is based on 37 North Lawndale residents who had come to the LCC health clinic, or parents of the students involved in the LCDC college opportunity program. Community respondents were asked to indicate their "view towards" each of the three LCDC programs (LCOP, Economic Development, and Housing) overall. These results are shown in Table 4. At least 70 percent of respondents' views towards each of these programs were either "very positive" or "positive." None of the programs received any "negative" ratings.

Op. cit.

TABLE 4:
ALL LCC PROGRAMS
Rankings by Community Residents

	RANKINGS				
	Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	No Response
Education	65%	24%	3%	0%	8%
Employment	62%	11%	11%	0%	16%
Housing	51%	19%	16%	0%	14%

N = 37

Source: Authors' survey

More than 89 percent of respondents gave the LCOP (education) program a "very positive" or "positive" rating, compared to 73 percent for the employment program and 70 percent for the Housing program.

The high "no response" rate (16 percent for each of these programs) may be due to the fact that most of the survey respondents were not greatly affected by these two programs, although 94 percent of the respondents had heard of them. Except for respondents who were parents of students involved in LCOP, it is likely that members who completed the questionnaire may have had very little to do with the education program. Similarly, most respondents probably had little contact with the economic development program (which is still very small). As for the housing program, while few respondents could have been directly affected, they probably have seen physical evidence of the program on the Avers Avenue block. This may account for the lower "no response" rate and somewhat more positive ratings for the housing program.

Respondents were also asked to evaluate the LCC programs on the specific North Lawndale Community needs that each program sought to address.

Table 5 shows community members' evaluation of the Housing Program. Most respondents thought that the program did very well in providing affordable housing, community stability, and community renewal, with more than 71 percent rating the program "excellent" or "good," and none rating the program as "poor" in these areas. Only 51 percent rated the program as "excellent" or "good" in providing employment, with 24 percent rating it as "fair" and 3 percent rating it as "poor." The "no response" rate was fairly high for all four categories: 19 percent for housing affordability, 21 percent for providing housing, 19 percent for community stability, and 8 percent for community renewal.

The high "no response" rate for these items may be, in part, a result of the small scale of the Housing Program. Only a few individuals directly benefit from the program, in terms of affordable housing or jobs created by it. Hence, while community members may see evidence of increased

renewal and stability (which had lower "no response" rates), evidence of more housing at more affordable prices is likely to be less apparent to the respondents who are not involved in the program.

**TABLE 5:
LCC HOUSING PROGRAM
Rankings by Community Residents**

	RANKINGS				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
Affordable Housing	35%	46%	0%	0%	19%
Employment	27%	25%	24%	3%	20%
Community Stability	49%	34%	0%	0%	17%
Community Renewal	49%	30%	11%	0%	10%

N = 37

Source: Authors' survey

Table 6 shows community members' evaluations of the economic development program. According to Mr. David Doig, the director of LCDC, the economic development program started two businesses in 1989: a welding business, which employs 5 community residents, and a window shade assembly business, which employs 2 individuals. This program could not be evaluated very extensively because of very low valid response rate from the program participants.

**TABLE 6:
LCC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Rankings by Community Residents**

	RANKINGS				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
Employment	27%	35%	19%	5%	14%
Business	30%	30%	5%	0%	35%
Stability	35%	27%	8%	0%	30%
Renewal	38%	22%	19%	3%	19%

N = 37

Source: Authors' survey

While at least 60 percent of community members rated this program as "excellent" or "good" in all four response categories, more than one third did not rate the program's effectiveness in generating business, and 30 percent did not rate the program's contribution to community stability. The questions about community renewal and providing employment were not answered by 19 percent and 14 percent of the respondents, respectively.

Table 7 shows community members' evaluations of the LCOP education program. At least 78 percent of respondents rated the LCOP program as "excellent" or "good" in keeping kids from crime (70 percent and 14 percent, respectively), motivating students (51 percent and 27 percent, respectively), and helping high school students graduate (52 percent and 27 percent, respectively).

**TABLE 7:
LCC EDUCATION PROGRAM
Rankings by Community Residents**

	RANKINGS				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
Graduate	51%	27%	8%	0%	14%
Motivate	51%	27%	16%	0%	5%
No Crime	70%	14%	8%	0%	8%

N = 37

Source: Authors' survey

After evaluating the Housing, Economic Development, and Education programs, community members were asked to rank the importance of North Lawndale's needs. This was done, in part, to determine whether community members' responses were consistent with their earlier evaluations (reported in Tables 4, 5, and 6). Even more important, this item will help determine whether residents' concerns are being addressed by the programs that have been implemented by LCC. These results are shown in Table 8 and Figure 2.

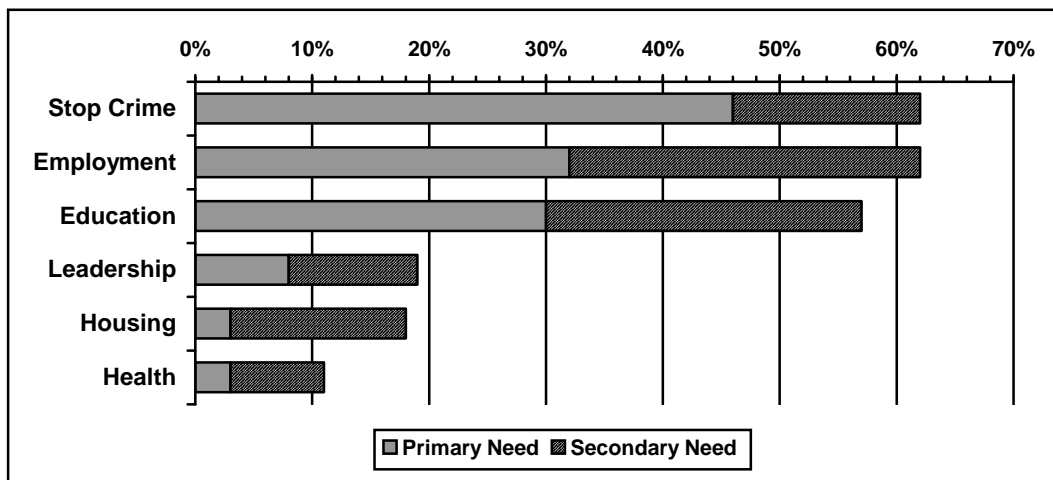
**TABLE 8:
COMMUNITY NEEDS
Rankings by Community Residents**

	RANKINGS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Education	30	27	16	16	5	5
Employment	32	30	19	19	0	0
Housing	3	14	27	27	16	14
Stopping Crime	46	16	24	3	5	5
Health	3	8	14	19	27	30
Leadership	8	11	19	5	14	43

N = 37

Source: Authors' survey

**FIGURE 2:
COMMUNITY NEEDS:
Rankings by Community Residents**



Stopping crime and/or drugs was considered the most pressing need in North Lawndale (46 percent), followed by employment (32 percent) and education (30 percent). Leadership was ranked fourth (8 percent). Although the housing program received positive evaluations (also see Table 5), housing was only ranked fifth in importance by community members. Ironically, although 45

percent of the respondents who participated in the evaluation were individuals who were attending the LCC health clinic, health was ranked last in importance.

These program evaluations are promising, but conclusive statements about the success or failure of these programs cannot be made at this time. A follow-up study is being planned for some time in the future, when it will be possible to examine the longer-term impact of the LCC programs on the North Lawndale community.

CONCLUSION

Overall, three issues were consistently named as being the most important needs of the North Lawndale community by students, LCC administrators, and community residents (see Tables 1, 3, and 8): education, stopping crime, and employment, in that order.

The community needs that students, LCC administrators, and community members identified support some of the conclusions from earlier assessments of North Lawndale's needs. The 1986 ULI report on North Lawndale outlined several long-term issues for the area. Education topped the list, welfare was second, and safety and security was third. The last two issues (welfare, and safety and security) are areas with which this study does not deal directly, so this discussion will focus on the education and housing recommendations made in the ULI report.

The ULI report held that the lack of adequate education was probably the most significant hardship for most unemployed residents of North Lawndale. The ULI recommended decentralization of the school system in order to give greater responsibility to the local school district authorities, provide greater incentives for parents' participation, and to facilitate the shaping of school curricula that meets the needs of the students. The ULI report also recommended a link between high school graduation and job opportunities, arguing that the lack of employment opportunities represented a disincentive to completing high school.

How well does the LCOP program address these recommendations? While LCOP does not address the school system decentralization issue, it does encourage parent participation in students' education. Furthermore, through one-on-one education counseling provided by volunteers from local colleges, students are encouraged to develop academic and social skills that can enhance their motivation to graduate from high school, their success in college and, in turn, their employment opportunities.

Op. cit.
Op. cit., p. 35.
ULI, 1986:36.

While the ULI report did not list housing as one of North Lawndale's top three needs, it did recommend that programs in the area preserve North Lawndale's current housing stock, encourage home ownership, and provide housing for a mix of income levels.

The LCDC housing program not only encourages, but also facilitates home ownership. The data obtained in the Housing Program evaluation survey suggest that the LCDC program encourages a co-existence of races and classes in the community.

These results suggest that the LCDC programs do, indeed, address North Lawndale's needs as they were reported in the ULI report and as they are perceived by program participants, LCC administrators, and community members. These findings also suggest that these relatively young programs have a good chance of success.

The evaluations of the LCC programs are encouraging, but conclusive statements regarding the success or failure of these programs cannot be made at this time. An annual follow-up review of these LCC program initiatives for the next 3-5 years will provide us with valuable data regarding the impact of these programs on the community.

APPENDIX 1: HOUSING EVALUATION BY RACE

	BLACK			WHITE		
	Excellent	Good	Poor	Excellent	Good	Poor
General	14.3	42.9	0.0	42.9	28.6	0.0
Affordability	0.0	42.9	14.3	14.3	28.6	0.0
Provide Employment	28.6	14.3	14.3	42.9	0.0	0.0
Community Stability	14.3	28.6	14.3	14.3	28.6	0.0
Community Renewal	14.3	28.6	14.3	14.3	28.6	0.0

*All numbers are percentages.

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDENTS

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on the demographic, socioeconomic characteristics of the students enrolled in the Lawndale Christian Student College Opportunity Program, and on their future goals. This information used in part to evaluate the program and the results are to be shared with churches in the Twin Cities that are planning to start similar programs.

1. Are you a member of the Lawndale Community Church?

Yes

No

2. Do you participate in the church outreach programs?

Yes

No

3. Does your family belong to this church?

Yes

No

4. Is your family active in the church affairs?

Yes

No

5. How many people are in your household? _____ (number)

6. Who is the head of the household? _____

7. Do you come from a one-parent household?

- Yes
 No

8. How were you selected to participate in this program?

9. What are your opinions about the program?

- Very positive
 Positive
 Neutral
 Negative

10. Do you think that being involved in this program assures you a college education?

- Yes
 No
 No comment

11. Does being a member of this group motivate you to succeed?

- Yes
 No
 I do not know

12. Do you agree that being a member of such a program helps to keep young people from crime?

- Yes
 No

13. How many people to you know have gone through this program?

_____ (number)

14. What do you plan to study at college?

15. After graduating from college, do you plan on coming back to live in the community?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

16. What is the greatest need in your neighborhood? (Please check all that apply and rank, e.g., 1,2,3)

- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Health
- Leadership
- To stop crime
- Other (Please list) _____

17. Sex

- Male
- Female

18. Age _____

19. Place of birth _____ city, _____ state, _____ country

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE HOUSING PROGRAM

This questionnaire has been designed to gather information on the views and the demographic and socio-economic characteristics the participants in the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation housing program. This information will be used in the evaluation of the program, and the results will be shared with churches in the Twin Cities area that are undertaking similar projects.

Questionnaire (To be answered by the head of the household.)

1. Are you a member of the Lawndale Community Church?

Yes
 No

2. Do you participate in church outreach programs?

Yes
 No

3. How would rate your participation?

25%
 50%
 75%

4. How were you selected to participate in the housing program?

5. What are your views towards the housing program?

- Very positive
 Positive
 Neutral
 Negative

6. How would you rank the project on these categories?

(Please circle appropriate number in the row.)

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>
Providing Affordable Housing	1	2	3	4	5
Providing Employment	1	2	3	4	5
Contributing to Community Stability and Positive Identity	1	2	3	4	5
Community Renewal	1	2	3	4	5

7. Are you aware of any public debates (in newspapers, community halls, bars or churches) concerning this particular housing program?

- Yes
 No

8. If yes, are these debates between church leadership and the Lawndale community?

- Yes
 No
 (If yes, go to 10)

9. Or are the debates within church membership?

- Yes
 No

10. What is the nature of the debates?

11. Who are the leaders of the community? (Please give names or office)

The information in the following section is being gathered for statistical purposes and will not be used to identify any particular person.

12. Sex

- Male
 Female

13. Date of birth 19__

14. Race

- Black
 White
 Hispanic
 Other (please specify) _____

15. Marital status

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widowed

16. Number of children _____

17. Age(s) _____

18. Size of the household _____

19. Household income

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,001 to 15,000
- \$15,001 to 20,000
- \$20,001 to 30,000
- over \$30,001

20. Occupation _____

This interview may have left out something important.

21. Do you have anything else to tell me?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

This questionnaire has been designed to gather information on the views and the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the participants in the economic development program. The information will be used in the evaluation of the program and the results will be shared with churches in the Twin Cities.

1. Are you a member of the Lawndale Community Church?

- Yes
- No

2. How were you selected to participate in this program?

3. How would you describe the program?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

4. How would you rank the project on these categories? (Please circle appropriate number in the row.)

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>
Providing Employment	1	2	3	4	5
Contributing to Community Stability	1	2	3	4	5
Helps Community Renewal	1	2	3	4	5
Helps to Generate Other Businesses	1	2	3	4	5

5. Are you aware of any public debates (in newspapers, community halls, bars or churches) concerning this particular housing program?

- Yes
 No

6. If yes, are these debates between church leadership and the Lawndale community?

- Yes (If yes, go to 8)
 No

7. Or are the debates within church membership?

- Yes
 No

8. Who are the leaders of the community? (Please give names or office)

The information in the following section is being gathered for statistical purposes and will not be used to identify any particular person.

9. Sex

- Male
- Female

10. Date of birth 19__

11. Race

- Black
- White
- Hispanic
- Other (please specify) _____

12. Marital status

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widowed

13. Number of children _____

14. Age(s) _____

15. Size of the household _____

16. Household income

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,001 to 15,000
- \$15,001 to 20,000
- \$20,001 to 30,000
- over \$30,001

17. Occupation _____

This interview may have left out something important.

18. Do you have anything else to tell me?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

APPENDIX 5: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LAWNSDALE CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

This questionnaire has been designed to gather information of the LCDC administrators' (directors of the Programs) views on their programs and their demographic, and socioeconomic characteristics. This information will be used in evaluating the success of the projects.

1. Are you a church pastor?

Yes
 No

2. Do you live in the Lawnsdale Community?

Yes
 No

3. Are there other leaders for these project?

Names _____

4. Is this your first project?

Yes
 No

5. Have there been or are there any internal conflicts within the church's membership regarding these project?

- Yes
- No

6. Have there been or are there any conflicts between the church and the community regarding these projects?

- Yes
- No

7. What impacts have the projects had on the community?

8. What is (are) the greatest(s) need(s) of the community?

- Education
- Housing
- Health
- Employment
- To stop crime
- Drugs

9. Sex

- Male
- Female

10. Date of birth 19_____

11. Race

- Black
- White
- Hispanic
- Other (please specify) _____

12. Marital status

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Widowed

13. Number of children _____

14. Ages of the children: _____

15. Household income

- \$10,000 or less
- \$10,001 to \$20,000
- \$20,001 to \$30,000
- \$30,001 and over

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

APPENDIX 6: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PEOPLE OF LAWNSDALE COMMUNITY

The objective of this questionnaire is to gather information on neighborhood perspectives about church community development projects in Black/African American areas, and demographic, socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents. This information will be used to evaluate the projects and the results will be shared with other churches in the Twin Cities (St. Paul and Minneapolis) that are undertaking similar projects. Your cooperation in answering the questions as fully and accurately as possible will be greatly appreciated.

The responses from the questionnaire will be reported in aggregate form and will not identify by name any of the respondents.

1. Are you aware of any community development projects in which the Lawnsdale Christian Development Corporation is involved?

Yes
 No (If no, terminate the interview)

2. If yes, which projects do you know?

Housing
 Student College Program
 Economic Development
 All three (above)

3. Do you approve of these projects?

Yes *No*

 Housing
 Student College Program
 Economic Development

4. What is your view towards each individual project? (please circle appropriate number in each row.)

	<i>Very Positive</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Negative</i>
Housing	1	2	3	4
Student College Program	1	2	3	4
Economic Development	1	2	3	4

5. How would you rank the housing project on these categories? (Please circle appropriate number in each row.)

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>
Providing Affordable Housing	1	2	3	4	5
Providing Employment	1	2	3	4	5
Contributing to Community Stability	1	2	3	4	5
Community Renewal	1	2	3	4	5

6. How would you rank the economic development project on these categories? (Please circle appropriate number in each row.)

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>
Providing Employment	1	2	3	4	5
Generating Businesses	1	2	3	4	5
Contributing to Community Stability	1	2	3	4	5
Community Renewal	1	2	3	4	5

7. How would you rank the student college program on these categories? (Please circle appropriate number in each row.)

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>
Helps students graduate from H.S.	1	2	3	4	5
Helps to keep kids from crime	1	2	3	4	5
Motivation for students	1	2	3	4	5

8. Are you aware of any public debates (in newspapers, community hall or church) on these projects?

____ Yes
 ____ No

9. If yes, what are the debates on:

Conflicts within the church membership
regarding the projects ____ project (specify) _____

Conflicts between the community and church leadership
regarding the projects ____ project (specify) _____

10. How have these conflicts been resolved?

11. How many people do you know are participating in this (these) project(s)?

_____ (number)

12. What is (are) the greatest need(s) in you community? (Please rank your answer if more than one)

- ____ Education
- ____ Employment
- ____ Housing
- ____ Health
- ____ Leadership
- ____ Stop crime/drugs

The information in the following section is being collected for statistical purposes and will not be used to identify any specific person.

13. Sex

- ____ Male
- ____ Female

14. Date of birth 19____

15. Marital status

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Widowed

16. Number of children _____

Ages of the children: _____

17. Size of household _____

18. Race

- Black
- White
- Hispanic
- Other (please specify) _____

19. Household income

- \$10,000 or less
- \$10,001 to \$20,000
- \$20,001 to \$30,000
- \$30,001 and over

This interview has been about church initiated community development, I may have left out something important.

20. Do you have anything else to tell me?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

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Linwood Shopping Center: The Role of Church and Community Development Corporations in Community Economic Development

A Case Study

#2

INTRODUCTION

"The strength of the Black Community has always been in our churches."

— member of the Baptist Ministers Union

The Linwood Shopping Center in Kansas City, Missouri is a community economic development project that is the result of collaboration between the Black Baptist Ministers' Union of Kansas City (BMU-KC), and the Community Development Corporation of Kansas City (CDC-KC). The BMU-KC is an organization that has been involved in community development since it was founded in the 1920s. It has a membership ranging from 30 to 50 congregations.

Linwood Shopping Center is located on a two-block area at the southwest corner of Linwood and Prospect. This was the site of the Old St. Joseph Hospital, which was closed in 1975.

Closing the hospital caused a loss of jobs and tax revenues, decline of commercial property values, and housing blight. The hospital buildings were bought by a developer who removed all worthy materials from the buildings and then left them to decay. At the time, the neighborhood was so deteriorated the film-makers used it to depict the site of a nuclear holocaust for a made-for-television movie (CDC-KC, 1987).

After Kansas City acquired ownership of the property through the courts, it was proposed that the site be used for a halfway house for convicted felons preparing to return to the community on parole. The halfway house proposal was withdrawn by the governor after BMU-KC members asked him to allow them to use the site for an alternative development project. Through a co-development partnership between the BMU-KC and the CDC-KC, the property was bought for one dollar, and a shopping center development plan was initiated. The Linwood Shopping Center has a Primary Market Area (PMA) that covers eleven Kansas City neighborhoods: Center City, Beacon Hills, Washington-Wheatley, Key Coalition, Mt. Hope, Santa Fe, Linwood Homeowners, Ivanhoe, Oak Park, Palestine, and Vineyard. This area extends from 23rd Street North to 39th Street South, and from Troost Avenue in the west to Jackson Avenue in the east.

BMU-KC contributed \$20,000 toward the original cost of construction of the Shopping Center. The money came from the congregations that make up the BMU-KC organization.

"Market area" is the area within which the majority of the demand for goods and services originates. See Linwood-Prospect Development Strategy and Program, 1987.

This is an area with a median household income of just \$10,000, and the highest unemployment in Kansas City, ranging from 12 to 25 percent. On average, Linwood's unemployment rate is twice that of the Kansas City Metro Area as a whole (19 percent versus 9 percent, respectively). Linwood's population declined 37 percent between 1970 and 1980, from 52,428 to 32,953; in 1986 it was estimated at 26,993. This trend is expected to continue: the projected population for 1991 is 23,054 less than half the area's population just two decades ago.

The main objective of the Linwood Shopping Center project was to revitalize central city neighborhoods, increase community self-sufficiency by creating new jobs, and provide additional tax revenues for the area. At the same time, inner city neighborhoods were in need of a place where residents could shop without having to travel 5 or 10 miles, that could offer lower prices than the small neighborhood stores.

The Linwood Shopping Center is a \$5.5 million project that opened in February 1986. It has 67,000 square feet of retail space, 8,000 square feet of office space, and 5,000 square feet of fast food restaurant space. The CDC-KC is responsible for managing the Shopping Center.

THE LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER CASE STUDY

This case study evaluated the effectiveness of the Linwood Shopping Center development in meeting project goals. Has the Linwood Shopping Center provided the self-reliance through job creation that was sought? Has it provided an additional tax base? How is it rated as a shopping facility? Is it close enough to the population it was intended to serve?

In order to answer these questions, four groups of people were surveyed: the Linwood Management (CDC-KC), Baptist Ministers' Union (BMU-KC), the tenants/merchants of Linwood, and the shoppers at Linwood. This report presents findings from these surveys.

Methodology

Separate questionnaires were designed for three of the four target groups. The questionnaires were administered in February, 1990.

The Management Questionnaire was administered in the form of an interview with the President of the CDC-KC. In addition, three BMU-KC pastors were asked to give their views about the shopping center and BMU-KC's involvement through open-ended interviews. All three pastors had held offices in BMU-KC during the development and building of Linwood Shopping Center. Current officers were not interviewed because BMU-KC was more involved during the building of the shopping center than in its day-to-day management. Questions about day-to-day management were directed to the CDC-KC president.

The Merchant Questionnaire was administered to the managers ("tenant/merchants") of ten of the twelve (83 percent) Linwood Shopping Center retail shops. One tenant did not respond to the survey, and one was just moving into the Center at the time the case study was conducted. Before being asked to complete a survey, the tenant/merchants received a letter from Linwood management introducing the survey project and its purpose.

The Shopper Questionnaire was administered to 41 Linwood patrons in the supermarket during a regular business day. Shoppers were approached and invited to participate in the survey. Some of those who agreed to participate preferred to answer the questionnaire on the spot; others preferred to complete the survey at home and mail it back. Those who took the Shopper Questionnaire home with them were provided with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Time and budget constraints prevented more extensive sampling, and for ethical reasons participation in the survey was voluntary. For these reasons, it is unclear how well the sample represents all Linwood Shopping Center patrons. The sample does, however, provide some insight into who the Shopping Center's patrons are, where they live, and why they shop at Linwood.

RESULTS

The Linwood Shopping Center Management: The CDC-KC and BMU-KC

According to Mr. Donald Maxwell, the president of CDC-KC, Linwood Shopping Center is "a dream that became a reality." The first phase of Linwood Center was opened four years ago. The Center has 80,000 square feet, making it the largest inner city economic development project initiated by minorities in Kansas City. Linwood Shopping Center has rental business space for 12 tenants. However, there is enough land and flexibility in the current Shopping Center design to allow for future expansion.

CDC-KC manages Linwood Shopping Center and employs 375 people. Nearly all of CDC-KC's employees (90 percent) work at the Shopping Center, and 80 percent live in the community. An increase in workforce is one indicator of economic growth. In addition, because these jobs are held by members of the community, the wealth created by the economic activity at the Shopping Center goes home with them, and is likely to result in increased business for other community enterprises.

Development of the Linwood Shopping Center would not have been possible without the Black Baptist Ministers' Union of Kansas City. The BMU-KC was formed fifty years ago to create change in the Black Community -- politically, economically, and spiritually. It has since been a significant community force in Kansas City. One of its members summarized its contribution to the Black Community in the following words:

The strength of the Black Community has always been in our churches. That's why, when the state of Missouri proposed to place a minimum security prison in the inner city, religious leaders and their congregations pulled together to stop such action.

The first project proposed for the Linwood site was a nonprofit halfway house. Although a halfway house may have met an important social need, it would have added little to the economic vitality of the community. It is unlikely that a halfway house would have created as many jobs as the Shopping Center. Furthermore, the Shopping Center is able to retain and generate employment and revenue, and some of the income employees earn is spent at the Shopping Center, thus retaining the community's wealth. The halfway house, on the other hand, was not a revenue-generating project. It is also unlikely that a halfway house would have provided the civic pride that the Shopping Center has generated.

The community was interested in a project that could help revitalize the area. They wanted to stop out-migration from the area, and at the same time attract new residents. The community leaders were convinced that a halfway house on the site would work against their objectives. It would provide few, if any jobs to people living in the Linwood community. All BMU-KC members agree that developing the Linwood Shopping Center was one of their best efforts in meeting the original goals of the union. In the words of one of the BMU-KC, members Linwood Shopping Center is "a gift from above."

To argue their case against the halfway house, representatives from the BMU-KC traveled to the state capital at Jefferson City to meet with the governor. They were able to convince the governor that a halfway house was not the best development for the site. Later the BMU-KC bought the property for one dollar and, together with the CDC-KC, built the Linwood Shopping Center.

The Linwood Shopping Center Merchants: The Tenants

Who are the tenant/merchants of the Linwood Shopping Center? What are their views about Linwood? How do they rate the services at Linwood? How do they evaluate the location of the Linwood shopping center? A survey of Linwood tenant/merchants was conducted to gather information about merchants' views on these issues, and to develop a profile of the typical Linwood tenant/merchant.

Who are the tenant/merchants at Linwood? This question was considered fundamental to the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Shopping Center as an economic development project. The original objective of the CDC-KC and BMU-KC was to benefit the majority race group in the Linwood Shopping Center's market area.

Case study interview with a BMU-KC member, 1990.

A Profile of the Tenant/Merchants of Linwood Shopping Center

Fifty percent of the tenant/merchants who responded to the questionnaire were male and 50 percent were female. Half (50 percent) were between 31 and 45 years old, 20 percent were between 18 and 30 years of age, and 10 percent were over 55 years old. Most (70 percent) were Black, 20 percent were White, and 10 percent were Asian.

Although the majority of tenant/merchants at Linwood were Black, it is important to note that not all their businesses were black-owned. Ninety percent of the businesses at the Shopping Center were chain or franchise stores. There are few Black-owned chain stores anywhere in the country. Some franchises, however, do make provisions for ownership. In essence, the Linwood Shopping Center project has provided jobs for the majority race in the community (including those at the managerial level), but it has not significantly increased Black business ownership.

At the time of this case study, Linwood Shopping Center had a 92 percent occupancy rate, and the only vacant space was in the process of being occupied. Sixty percent of the Shopping Center's tenants who participated in the case study relocated from other sites; the remaining 40 percent were new or expanding businesses. Tenants have a ten-year lease, and the turnover rate is low: most of Linwood's merchants (70 percent) had been tenants there for at least three of the four years the Shopping Center had been open, and another 10 percent had been there for between one and two years. CDC-KC reports a 3 percent turnover rate.

Eighty percent of the Linwood tenant/merchants started their businesses elsewhere. Sixty percent relocated to Linwood; 20 percent expanded their businesses to Linwood as an additional location; and 20 percent opened new businesses at Linwood. Most of the tenant/merchants (70 percent) who relocated to Linwood believed that their businesses had grown since relocating. This finding suggests that Linwood Shopping Center has been economically beneficial to the tenant/merchants and possibility to the community at large.

It is important to note that 60 percent of the businesses that moved into Linwood Shopping Center moved from other communities. It is not known whether the loss of these businesses had a significant impact on those communities.

Eighty percent of the Linwood tenant/merchants employ six or more people, although most of these are part-time jobs. This arrangement is beneficial for the tenant/merchants because they do not have to pay benefits to their part-time employees, and the jobs created provide important work opportunities in a community with very high unemployment. At the same time, the Linwood tenant/merchants acknowledge that the jobs created at the Linwood Shopping Center are not, by themselves, enough to fully address the community's employment needs.

The Tenant/Merchants' Evaluation of Linwood Shopping Center

The Linwood Shopping Center tenant/merchants gave the Shopping Center more than passing grades on three of four categories. Table 1 and Figure 1 show the results of the Linwood tenant/merchants' evaluation.

Ninety percent of tenant/merchants who responded to the questionnaire ranked Linwood Shopping Center's location as "good" or "excellent" (50 percent and 40 percent, respectively). The Shopping Center's level of business was ranked as "good" or "excellent" by 70 percent of respondents (60 percent and 10 percent, respectively), while 30 percent rated it as "fair." These rankings suggest that tenant/merchants are satisfied with their businesses' health since they relocated to Linwood, because location and level of business are key determinants of business vitality.

**TABLE 1:
MERCHANT'S EVALUATION OF LINWOOD**

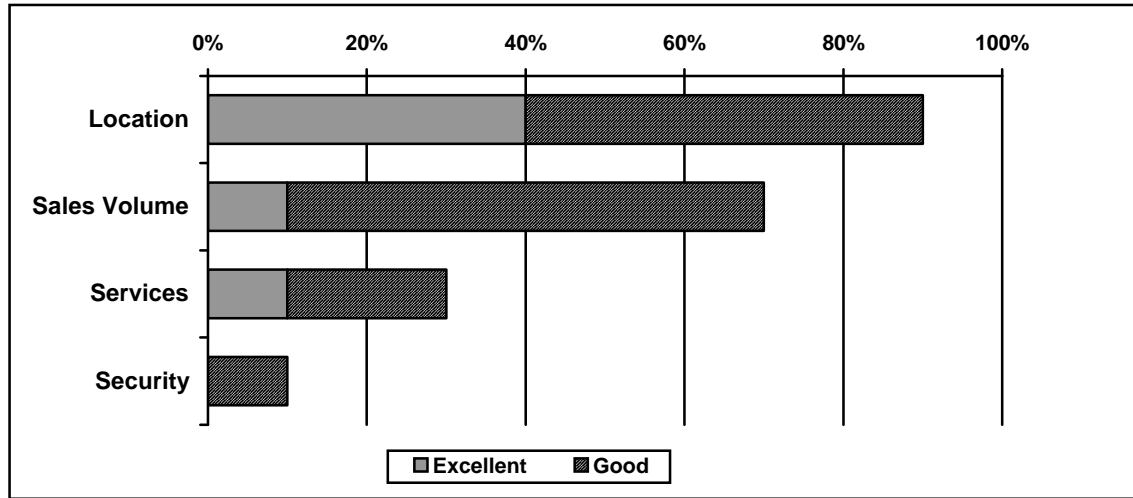
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Location of Linwood Shopping Center	40	50	10	0
Volume of Sales	10	60	30	0
Services at Linwood	10	20	60	10
Security at Linwood	0	10	90	0

All numbers are percentages

N=10

source: Authors' survey

**FIGURE 1:
MERCHANT'S EVALUATION OF LINWOOD**



Tenant/merchants felt that Linwood Shopping Center needed to improve its services and its security, however. Only 30 percent of tenant/merchants rated Linwood Shopping Center services as "excellent" or "good," 60 percent rated services as "fair," and 10 percent as "poor." Ninety percent of the merchants judged security at Linwood as "fair."

The Linwood tenant/merchants were also asked to rank the Shopping Center's contribution to other physical and economic development issues in the market area. These results are shown in Table 2 and Figure 2.

Ninety percent of Linwood tenant/merchants ranked creation of local employment opportunities as the most important contribution Linwood Shopping Center had made to the community (60 percent ranked it first in importance; 30 percent ranked it second).

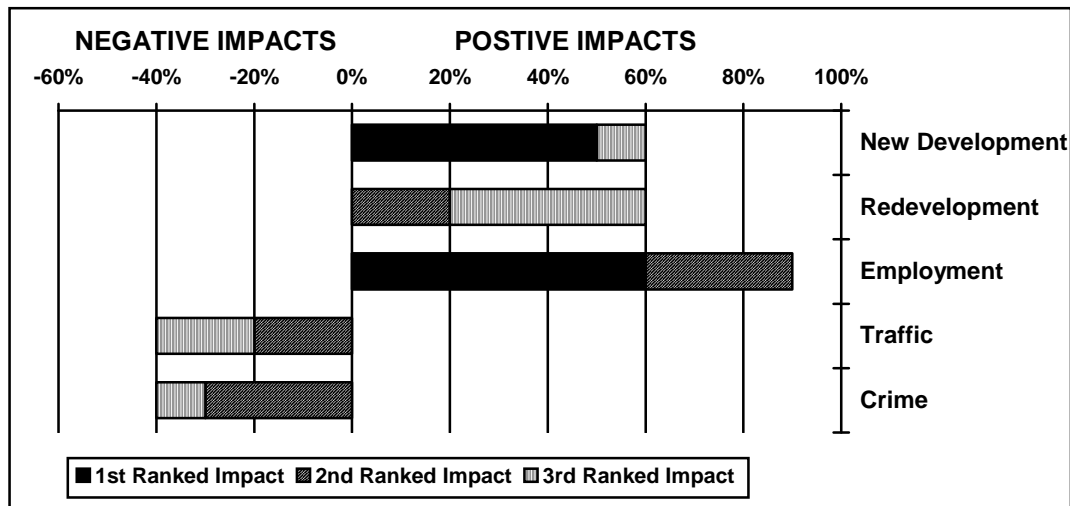
"Services" refer to amenities such as restaurants and parking facilities.

**TABLE 2:
IMPACT OF LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER ON AREA**

	RANKING					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	No Rank
New Development	50	0	10	20	10	10
Redevelopment of Surroundings	0	20	40	10	10	20
Employment	60	30	0	0	0	10
Traffic Problems	0	20	20	40	10	10
Increase in Crime	0	30	10	0	30	30

All numbers are percentages
N=10
Source: authors' survey

**FIGURE 2:
IMPACT OF LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER ON AREA**



Fifty percent of the tenant/merchants responding to the questionnaire see recent developments in the area as being associated with the Linwood Shopping Center. The Public Library at the corner of Prospect Avenue and 31st, Palestine Senior Housing, and townhouses on 31st were given as examples of recent development directly connected to Linwood Shopping Center. All these developments are within two blocks of the Shopping Center.

Respondents also attributed some of the problems in the area to the development of Linwood Shopping Center. Linwood Shopping Center has increased the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in and out of the area, and the tenant/merchants also indicated that an increase in crime is a problem: 40 percent rated these problems among the top three "contributions" of the Shopping Center.

Some tenant/merchants were dissatisfied with the amount of retail space available for small businesses. Forty percent of the tenant/merchants believed that the area needs another shopping center that meets the needs of small businesses.

Advocates of small business enterprise contend that development of small businesses may lead to an increase in community involvement. This can be possible through acquisition of small businesses by community residents. Business ownership is possible through programs geared to help small business enterprises, and these start with provision of business space that facilitate such ventures.

There is a general agreement among community leaders that small businesses owned by people who live in the community can foster a sense of community pride. CDC-KC seems to agree. It is starting a second phase of Linwood, which will cater to minority-owned businesses by providing space to small minority businesses.

Overall, the development of Linwood Shopping Center is viewed as the basis for the community's renewal by 90 percent of the tenant/merchant respondents. This finding suggests that some of the main objectives of the Linwood project, i.e., revitalizing area neighborhoods and increasing community self-sufficiency through new employment opportunities, are being met. In addition, Linwood Shopping Center appears to be one part of the CDC-KC's development activities, and other new development projects around the Shopping Center are seen as part of this new development strategy.

The Linwood Shopping Center Shoppers: The Patrons

Who are the patrons of Linwood Shopping Center? How often do they shop there? Where do they live? Why do they shop at Linwood? What are their views about the Shopping Center? These were some of the questions asked in the Shopper Questionnaire to gain insights into shoppers' attitudes and expectations, and to develop a profile of the Shopping Center's patrons. These questions were considered important in the evaluation of the Shopping Center because they help answer another important aspect of the question of who benefits from the Shopping Center – who does it serve?

The surveys were completed by Linwood Shopping Center shoppers. The analysis here is based on the responses of 41 patrons. Time and budget constraints prevented more extensive survey of Linwood patrons. The small sample does, however, provide some insight into understanding the shoppers (where they live, why they shop at Linwood), and their views about Linwood.

A Profile of the Patrons of Linwood Shopping Center

An area's ability to support a development project such as a shopping center is, in part, a function of the area's demographic trends: population growth, household size, age of the population, and socioeconomic characteristics like employment and household incomes. Hence, it was important to examine these characteristics of the shoppers responding to the questionnaire.

Two-thirds of respondents were female (68 percent), supporting the belief that women do most of the daily shopping. Fifty-six percent of patrons were married, 24 percent were single, 15 percent were widowed, and 5 percent were separated. Sixty-six percent of Linwood shoppers who responded to the survey had between 1 and 3 children.

Forty-one percent of patrons were between 30 and 45 years old. Overall, 71 percent of shoppers were between the ages of 18 and 55.

Most respondents (76 percent) had annual household incomes of less than \$20,000: 46 percent earned between \$10,000 and \$20,000 annually, and 29 percent earned less than \$10,000 per year. Approximately 15 percent had an annual income between \$20,000 and \$30,000. Linwood patrons' median level of education – 9 years – may explain these low income figures.

Although census data from 1970 and 1980 show a decline in population for the area, our respondents exhibited some residential stability. Fifty-one percent of those who responded to the questionnaire had resided at their current address for six or more years. Sixty-six percent have resided in the city for more than ten years, and 22 percent had resided in the city for one to five years.

Nearly all of the shoppers at Linwood (98 percent) are Black. This was consistent with the fact that the Shopping Center is located in a predominantly Black area of Kansas City, Missouri.

Shoppers' Evaluation of Linwood Shopping Center

Identifying where Linwood shoppers reside provides us with some insight on the Shopping Center's market area. Shoppers were asked how long it took them to get to the Shopping Center and what transportation they used to get there.

Sixty-three percent of respondents live within five minutes of Linwood Shopping Center, whether they traveled by car or on foot. If the average speed limit along the roads that connect Linwood Shopping Center to nearby communities is 25-35 miles per hour, then these respondents live within a 2-mile radius of the shopping center. Fifteen percent live 5 to 10 minutes away, and 20 percent live 10 to 20 minutes away from the Shopping Center. Private cars were the most common mode of transportation, used by 76 percent of shoppers. Twelve percent of respondents travel to the Shopping Center by buses, and 12 percent travel on foot.

Most respondents (88 percent) are regular patrons of Linwood Shopping Center: 68 percent shop at Linwood once or twice a week, and 20 percent shop there once every two weeks. Twelve percent shop at Linwood Shopping Center once a month or less.

Shoppers were asked how much they spend each time they shop at Linwood Shopping Center, on average. Eighty-five percent of respondents spend less than \$50 per shopping trip; 51 percent spend from \$26 to \$50, and 34 percent spent \$5 to \$25. Seventy-one percent of shoppers report that most of the money they spend is used to buy groceries.

Why do shoppers choose to shop at Linwood? About half of the respondents (56 percent) said they shop at the Center because it is close to home. This finding is supported by most respondents' reports that it takes 10 minutes or less for them to reach the Shopping Center. Seventeen percent said they patronized the Shopping Center because of its "good choices," and 5 percent said they shopped at Linwood because of its low prices. Seven percent of Linwood's patrons said that both proximity to home and "good choices" led them to choose it, and another 7 percent reported that proximity, good choices, and low prices all attracted them to Linwood Shopping Center. Table 3 shows the results from the question, "Why do you shop at Linwood?"

Most respondents (90 percent) indicated that they enjoy shopping at Linwood Shopping Center. In order to understand how the shoppers perceive Linwood, patrons were asked why they enjoy their shopping experiences at there.

Linwood Shopping Center was enjoyed for its pleasant stores by 59 percent of the respondents. Fifty-four percent enjoyed it for its wide selection of goods, and 46 percent for the convenient parking. Twenty-nine percent said they enjoyed shopping at Linwood for recreational or social reasons, and 20 percent said helpful sales clerks were an important reason. Results are shown in Table 4.

In summary, the results of the survey suggest that the average Linwood Shopping Center patron is a Black female, between the ages of 30 to 45, married with children, with nine years of schooling, earning between \$10,000 and \$20,000 annually. Linwood Shopping Center patrons live within 2 miles of the Shopping Center, and proximity to home is the primary reason why they shop at Linwood.

**TABLE 3:
REASONS FOR SHOPPING AT
LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER**

Close to home	56%
Good choices	17%
Low prices	5%
Close to home and good choices	7%
All three	7%
Other	5%

N=41

Source: Authors' survey

**TABLE 4:
WHAT SHOPPERS ENJOY ABOUT
LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER**

Pleasant store atmosphere	59%
Wide selection of merchandise	54%
Convenient parking	46%
Recreational or social reasons	29%
Helpful sales clerks	20%

PROSPECTS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

Residents' income is one measure of an area's wealth and ability to support new economic development. There has been growth in annual household income in Kansas City, as shown in Table 5. Our income data is incomplete and inconclusive, however. For example, we don't know how the local income growth compares with the national rate, nor do we know how Linwood compares with the rest of Kansas City. Projections were that 1991 income would increase by 17 percent.

**TABLE 5:
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOMES**

	LOCAL INCOMES		NATIONAL INCOMES	
	Average Household Income _a	Average Annual Percentage Change	Average Household Income _b	Average Annual Percentage Change
1969	\$6,113	---		
1979	\$12,907	11.1		
1986	\$18,813	6.5	\$30,759	
1991 (projected)	\$22,094	3.5		

Sources: (a) RPPW Inc. (1987) from Table 6, page 9

(b) Current Population Reports, P23, various years Mean Household Income Before Taxes

The results from the Merchant Questionnaire (see Table 2) suggest that the tenant/merchants see an association between new development in the area and the Linwood Shopping Center. The profile of the shoppers also suggests that there is potential for generation of new business: they are middle-aged with children, and their incomes have been on the increase.

The area has other factors that suggest it can support additional redevelopment activities. Linwood Shopping Center is located at a point linked by several major transportation routes, and is well-served by public mass transportation along Prospect Avenue, Linwood Boulevard, and 31st and 27th streets, the major transport routes.

The area does exhibit evidence of renewed interest by property owners and developers in the form of new development projects. Currently, the CDC-KC is in the process of acquiring additional parcels of land for new development sites. Neighborhood stability and civic pride is on the rise. This is due, in part, to the investments in housing, public improvements, and services, such as the new Public Library.

CONCLUSION

Is the Linwood Shopping Center a pivotal point for all recent developments in the area? Does it serve the community? Has it provided the community stability and pride that is necessary for community economic development? Or would a minimum security prison project have served the community better than the Linwood Center?

Most of the new development in the area is associated with Linwood Shopping Center. Indeed, the Linwood area residents, the CDC-KC, and the BMU-KC all regard the project as the backbone for development in the community. It is a project that has encouraged investors to invest in other projects in the area. The community at large is proud of the Linwood Shopping Center. They believe that a project like the halfway house would not have provided the economic benefits created by Linwood Shopping Center.

APPENDIX 1: LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How many tenants do you have in Linwood Center?

_____ (number)

2. What is the average tenancy period at Linwood?

3. What is the current occupancy rate?

_____ percent

4. What is the average occupancy rate?

_____ percent

5. What is turn over rate?

_____ percent

6. How many of the current tenants relocated at Linwood from another location?

_____ (number)

7. How many are new starters?

_____ (number)

8. How many employees do you have?

_____ (number)

9. How many of your employees live in the community? Or what percentage of your employees live in the community?

_____ (number or percent)

10. Have your number of employees increased since you opened?

____ Yes

____ No

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

APPENDIX 2: LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER MERCHANT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How long have you been a tenant at Linwood Shopping Center?

_____ (years, months, weeks — circle appropriate answer)

2. Did you start your business at Linwood Center?

___ Yes (IF YES, go to 5)

___ No

3. Did you relocate here?

___ Yes

___ No

4. Has your business expanded since you moved to Linwood?

___ Yes

___ No

5. How many people do you employ? _____ (number)

6. In your opinion, has the Linwood Shopping Center created jobs in the community?

___ Yes

___ No

7. How would you rank the Linwood Shopping Center on these categories?
(Please circle appropriate number in each row.)

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>
Location	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Business	1	2	3	4	5
Services at Location	1	2	3	4	5
Security	1	2	3	4	5

8. Has Linwood Center revitalized the neighborhood?

___ Yes

___ No

9. What developments or problems are associated with the Linwood Shopping Center?
(Please rank your answers; e.g., 1 2 3 etc.)

___ Caused new developments

___ Total redevelopment of surrounding community

___ Traffic problems associated with shopping center

___ Provides employment in the community

___ Increase in crime in the area

The information in the following sections is being collected for statistical purposes and will not be used to identify any specific person.

10. Sex

- Male
 Female

11. Age

- 18 to 30 years
 31 to 45 years
 46 to 55 years
 Over 55 years

12. Race

- Black
 White
 Hispanic
 Other (please specify) _____

This interview has been about church initiated community development, I may have left out something important.

13. Do you have anything else to tell me?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

APPENDIX 3: LINWOOD SHOPPING CENTER SHOPPER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How often do you shop at Linwood Shopping Center?

- Once a week
- Twice a week
- Once a month
- Twice a month
- Other

2. How far do you live from Linwood?

- Hours, Minutes (circle one that applies)

3. How do you get to Linwood?

- Car
- Bus
- Taxi
- Walk
- Bike
- Other (please specify) _____

4. Do you make a single shopping trip to Linwood?

- Yes (IF YES, go to 6)
- No

5. Do you make multiple shopping trips?

___ Yes

___ No

6. How much do you spend during a shopping trip at Linwood?

___ \$5 to \$25

___ \$26 to \$50

___ \$51 to \$100

___ \$101 to \$200

___ Over \$200

7. What do you buy (at Linwood)? (Check all that apply.)

___ Groceries

___ Clothing

___ Household furnishing

___ Other

8. Why do you shop at Linwood?

___ Low prices

___ Good choices

___ Close to home

___ Other (please specify) _____

9. Do you enjoy shopping at Linwood?

Yes

No (IF NO, go to 11)

10. Which of the following reasons explain your answer in question 9? (Check all that apply.)

Shopping at Linwood is recreational and you meet people

Pleasant store atmosphere, displays

Helpful sales clerks

Wide selection of merchandise

Convenient parking

Other (please specify) _____

11. Which of the following reasons explain your answer in number 9? (Check all that apply.)

Poor or confusing array of merchandise at Linwood

High prices

Discourteous or inefficient sales clerks

Lack of parking space

Crowds

Other (please specify) _____

12. Sex Female Male

13. Race

- Black
- White
- Hispanic
- Other (please specify) _____

14. Marital Status

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widow/widower

15. Number of children

- 1 to 3
- 4 to 6
- Over 6

16. Time of residence in the city

_____ Years, Months (please circle one)

17. Time of residence at present address

_____ Years, Months (please circle one)

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Improve your understanding of key program elements that contribute to program effectiveness.

Improve program impact through integrating principles of program effectiveness into day-to-day operations.

Improve management of resources to achieve program purposes.

Improve the fit between your organization's activities and your community's needs and opportunities.

Improve commitment of staff and Board to your organization's mission.

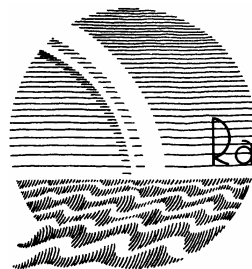
Improve communication between your organization and its various stakeholders and publics.

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Related Rainbow Research Publications:

- **The Church as Partner in Community Economic Development: Proceedings from a Forum and Consultation;** By T. Williams and B. Bakama of the Fairness and Social Justice Project of the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota; 55 *pages* (1990);- \$7.00
- **Better Together: Religious Institutions as Partners in Community-Based Development;** By David Scheie, Jamie Markham, T. Williams, John Slettom, Sharon Ramirez and Steven E. Mayer; 80 *pages* (1994);- \$8.00



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