

**Common Good Initiative  
Lincoln Park**

**Allegheny Franciscan Ministries**

**Evaluation Report  
December 2016**

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## Introduction

In late 2011, the Allegany Franciscan Ministries Board of Trustees began a process to identify a new strategic opportunity that would allow the organization to more deeply fulfill its mission, be more open to new and innovative ways to create healthier communities, provide for the highest and best use of available funding, promote systemic change, and continue to energize our community, volunteers and staff. In December 2013, the board of trustees approved a new strategic initiative called the Common Good Initiative. In keeping with the mission to serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities, Allegany Franciscan Ministries has identified one community in each of the three regions and will work with its citizens and stakeholders to create opportunities, develop strategies, and make investments that lead to positive health outcomes in each community.

The initiative has multiple interrelated goals: to build collaboration, advocacy capacity, and resident leadership; to influence system changes and through those changes, long-term health and wellness indicators; and to ensure sustainability. Activities to achieve these goals include convening and engaging, investing, Councils for the Common Good, partnering, and others. Allegany Franciscan Ministries obtained community input to identify priorities, each council then identified strategies to address priorities. In Lincoln Park, priorities and strategies are as follows:

### Figure 1: Community priorities and strategies

**Priority: Quality jobs and livable wages.** All Lincoln Park residents will have access to quality jobs and livable wages.

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- Strengthen and leverage existing job training resources to align with potential workforce opportunities for Lincoln Park residents
- Promote small business creation in Lincoln Park community

**Priority: Safe and healthy neighborhoods.** Lincoln Park residents will live in a safe and healthy community

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- Facilitate opportunities for neighborhood clean ups
- Create wellness opportunities for Lincoln Park residents
- Endorsing positive images in the Lincoln Park community

In addition, the council noted the need to build the capacity of organizations focused on the community to support both priorities. Business capacity is reflected in the priority, quality jobs and livable wages.

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## Progress to Date

This section presents the progress toward the goals listed above.<sup>1</sup> This section first presents data on implementation and investments, then the goals. Data in this section come from multiple sources: monthly and board reports of initiative activities and investments made, investment results from partner reports, and interviews with staff and stakeholders.

### *How is the Common Good Initiative being implemented?*

Figure 2 presents Common Good Initiative planning and council milestones. In the past six months, the Common Good Initiative continued to develop the council, researched strategies, and developed connections for future strategies. For example, the council held a workshop with representatives from Indian River State College and the school district to learn more about job training resources and talk about potential partnerships. Also, the vice president met with state officials about leveraging their work in Lincoln Park. Next steps are to develop an implementation plan for strategies, recruit additional council members, and continue to identify partners for the Common Good Initiative.

Implementation, however, also encompasses Allegany Franciscan Ministries' approach to the work. The board provided clear direction that the Common Good Initiative should work with the community and help build capacity. The project has not kept to the original timeline due to the deliberate and intentional engagement with the community. See the initiative-wide report for data on this aspect of implementation.

**Figure 2: Common Good Initiative milestones**

Timeframe	Milestones
June 2014	Determined the Common Good Initiative neighborhood.
June 2014 through December 2014	Gathered community input. Identified potential priorities.
January 2015 through December 2015	Finalized potential priorities. Conducted a community visioning session. Researched strategies. Explored possible investments. Began investments.

<sup>1</sup> For details on the methodology, please see *Evaluation Plan v4* dated October 2014.

Timeframe	Milestones
January 2016 through June 2016	Established the Council for the Common Good. Confirmed strategies with the council. Continued to make investments.
July 2016 through December 2016	Continued to develop the council. Conducted research on proposed strategies. Finalized strategies and identified system changes and long-term indicators. Worked with partners on strategies. Continued to make investments.

### ***What have been the investments to date?***

To date, the Common Good Initiative has made two types of investments: impact funds and grants and grant-related investments. Impact funds are smaller grants that support goals, address community needs, and/or communicate Allegany Franciscan Ministries' commitment to the community. Grants and grant-related investments address priorities and/or system change. To date, over \$657,000 has been invested: \$80,000 in impact funds and \$577,000 in grants and grants-related investments.

In fiscal year 2014-2015, the following grants and grants-related investments were made:

- The Roundtable of St. Lucie County, Inc., for three street outreach worker positions for the Gang Initiative (\$120,000). An additional \$15,000 for the Lincoln Park Advisory Committee to create a resource guide for Lincoln Park residents, a memorial garden in memory of victims of violence in Lincoln Park and materials to support LPAC's community mobilization activities. Total funding: \$135,000.
- St. Lucie County BOCC, for the Lincoln Park Community Center to support "A Time to C.H.I.L.L.," a youth summit. Total funding: \$10,000.
- The City of Fort Pierce, for matching grants to nine organizations for summer youth programming in the Lincoln Park community, Total funding: \$41,950.

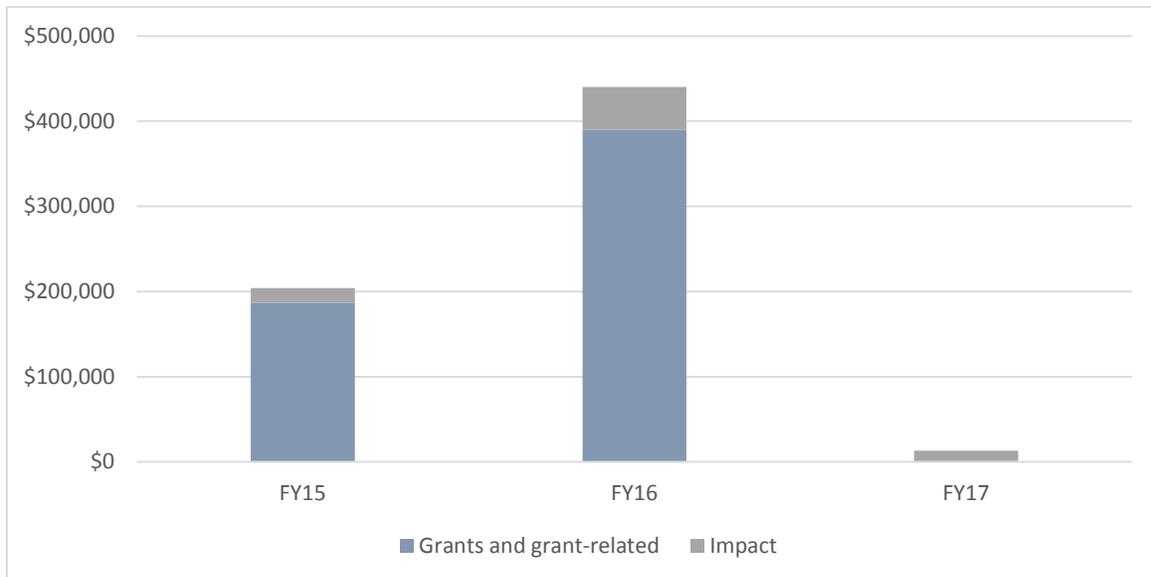
In fiscal year 2015-2016, the following grants and grants-related investments were made:

- Fort Pierce Police Department, to decrease crime, improve community relationships and increase transparency through equipment, technology, and a community relations efforts (matched by City of Fort Pierce). Total funding: \$250,000.

- Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County, to decrease infant deaths by hiring a registered nurse to assess, monitor, and improve the service system for women and infants. Total funding: \$140,000.

Figure 2 provides the impact funds and grants and grant-related investments, by fiscal year.

**Figure 2: Impact funds and grants and grant-related investments, by fiscal year**



### ***What is the progress in promoting and supporting collaboration, advocacy, and leadership?***

This section provides highlights from the last six months in three areas of interest: collaboration, advocacy, and leadership. Please note that this only reflects the period from July to December 2016; the next report will reflect the initiative to date. Data in this section are from monthly reports provided by the vice president of each region, board reports, investment reports, and interviews with stakeholders.

#### *Collaboration*

In the past six months, the initiative has encouraged collaboration through developing partners for strategies (including non-traditional partners), building relationships, and funding collaborative efforts. A few highlights are as follows:

- With Common Good Initiative funding for the Restoring the Village Gang Initiative, the Roundtable of St Lucie County is building a collaborative infrastructure, establishing an intervention team of 13 agencies, implementing MOUs, and building a referral network.
- In addition to existing partners for strategies, the initiative began to engage the college and school district as well as another philanthropist and the local government.

***From an interviewee:***

“[There are] some that work great with others, and some that don’t at all. So, I think it’s kind of mixed. There’s a little bit of a competition.”

Community interviewees offer mixed perspectives on collaboration. While most describe it as good, the more grassroots representatives describe it as poor or needing improvement. This may be related to the issue of capacity: Interviewees report that smaller organizations lack the time and resources to develop collaborations and are more competitive for funding.

### *Advocacy*

In the past six months, the initiative has supported advocacy through investments. With Common Good Initiative funding, the Lincoln Park Advisory Council hosted a meeting with Chief Probation Officer Wydee’a Wilson around issues of disproportionate minority contact and the civil citation process. The Lincoln Park Advisory Council has also set a priority of engaging residents in the civic process.

Interviewees noted that there is capacity to advocate, but that currently “it’s more reactionary than proactive. Like, ‘Here’s what we want, and here’s what we need. Let’s start planning forward.’ There’s little of that.” Interviewees noted that residents lack both the time and skills to effectively advocate for the community.

### *Leadership*

In the past six months, the Common Good Initiative has developed leadership through the Council for the Common Good and through funding efforts to build leaders. For example, one resident was supported in starting a new 501c3 and has taken on a leadership role in the community.

Most interviewees identified that there are resident leaders, but that there is also more capacity than actual leadership, in part due to the same barriers of time and skills. As one person noted, “I think the local leadership is great. I know that from the grassroots perspective there’s a lot of people out there who are wanting a voice or wanting to lead or wanting to be the go-to person or go to for Lincoln Park. I go back to we need to help facilitate some type of tool for them to access to become better at grassroots leadership.” Others noted that there are existing structures for residents to hone leadership skills, such as local organizations and faith-based organizations.

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### ***What system changes have occurred (i.e., is the fence gone)?***

System changes have been described by staff and council members as long term, multi-faceted, not a Band-Aid, leveraged, fiscally sound, preventative, root cause, partner driven/collective, diverse, policy-focused, inclusive, barrier-breakers, generational, and disruptive. Another way to think about system changes is to consider the adage “Give people a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach people to fish and they will be fed for a lifetime.” But as Allegany board member Sister Margaret Mary asks, “What do you do if there is a fence around the pond?”

In the past six months, the Council for the Common Good identified desired system changes (listed below). For example, the council hopes that the strategies of financing grocery and retail healthy food systems, supporting positive images of Lincoln Park, and facilitating opportunities for community cleanups will result in more healthy food at more local food outlets and changed social norms in the community around pride and safety.

#### **Figure 3: Priorities and system changes**

##### ***Priority: Quality jobs and livable wages***

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- Increased alignment between job training resources and workforce opportunities
  - Increased resident participation in in-demand job training
  - Changed social norms and resident expectations around training and employment
  - Increased resources and partners that support business creation
  - Strengthened partnerships for sustained efforts
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##### ***Priority: Safe and healthy neighborhoods***

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- Increased capacity of local food systems to offer healthy food
  - People in Lincoln Park have increased access to healthy food
  - Changed social norms around Lincoln Park’s image
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Capacity building should influence system changes such as increasing organizational capacity and increasing sustainability.

Future reports will report on how the strategies listed on page 3 influenced system changes and the results. For example, multiple investments have been made to support safe and healthy neighborhoods (including reducing gang violence, community signage, and a crime prevention event), and two of the community interviewees noted the impact of neighborhood cleanups.

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## ***Is there positive movement in health and wellness indicators?***

As noted, the community set priorities, and each council developed strategies to address those priorities. Those strategies should result in the system changes listed above and the system change should result in the changed health and wellness indicators listed below. The next step will be to define these indicators and establish baseline data.

### **Figure 4: Priorities and health and wellness indicators**

#### ***Priority: Quality jobs and livable wages***

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- Increased employment rates for Lincoln Park residents
  - Increased wages for Lincoln Park residents
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#### ***Priority: Safe and healthy neighborhoods***

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- Lincoln Park residents report healthy eating habits
  - Lincoln Park residents report increased feelings of safety
  - Decreased chronic health conditions in Lincoln Park
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## ***How will efforts be sustained?***

Baseline sustainability will be assessed after strategies have begun. Sustainability indicators may include diverse funding streams, system changes, ongoing support of behavior changes, dissemination of relevant products (NORC, 2010), leadership, capacity, and a sustainability plan.

## **Conclusions**

There are several items of note in this six-month report:

- Strategies for priorities were finalized and the desired system changes and long-term health and wellness indicators were identified.
- The Common Good Initiative has invested over \$600,000 in Lincoln Park to date.
- In addition to addressing priorities identified by the community, the initiative is working to promote collaboration, build advocacy capacity, and support resident leadership.

Please see the initiative-wide report for lessons learned.

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## References

- Davidson, J. (2005). *Evaluation methodology basics: The nuts and bolts of sound evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- NORC. (2010). *Developing a conceptual framework to assess the sustainability of community coalitions post-federal funding*. Bethesda, MD: NORC.
- Thomas, D. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation, 27*, 237-247.
- Weiss, C. (1998). *Evaluation: Methods for studying programs and policies* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
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## **Appendix A: Data Sources**

### ***Interviewees***

Interviewees included seven stakeholders. While most interviewees were repeated from the first set of interviews, some substitutions have been made. The design is not longitudinal but cross-sectional, so any substitutions must represent the same community sector. The vice president also participated in a formal interview.

### ***Documents & other***

- Monthly reports from the vice president.
  - Documents forwarded from the vice president (e.g., meeting summaries).
  - Board reports
  - Information obtained through email updates and staff meetings.
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