

**Allegany Franciscan Ministries
Common Good Initiative**

**Lincoln Park Evaluation Report
June 2015**

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Introduction & Background

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” (CGI). 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.

Also at the December 2013 board meeting, the board approved the desired results and evaluation expectations regarding the CGI and an initial evaluation plan was prepared; the plan was modified with input from the regional vice presidents and the board of trustees. As part of that plan, an evaluation report for each community and for the initiative as a whole will be prepared every six months. This is the second of those reports. As it is early in the CGI process, the report includes limited baseline data. As future reports are prepared, additional baseline data and conclusions will be provided. The table below presents when evaluation data will be available and when impacts are expected to occur.

Figure 1: Table of expected evaluation information

Year 1: Community input and setting priorities (July 2014 – June 2015)	Years 2-7: Implementation
Assess implementation	Assess implementation, document lessons learned, document investments (ongoing).
Document lessons learned	Changes in systems, increased collaboration, and changes in community engagement. Initial changes may occur at the end of Year 2 and then builds over time.
Gather baseline data	Sustainability begins to develop the end of Year 2.
Document quick wins and initial investments	Movement in health & wellness indicators beginning Year 4.

Evaluation Questions

Each evaluation question is listed below. The criteria for assessing each evaluation question is provided in a text box on the left hand side of the page. Data, if available, are then provided and analyzed. For details on the methodology, please see *Evaluation Plan v4* dated October 2014. Limitations are also noted, mostly that it is early in the process and so there is limited data available. Future reports will be able to document trends over time and draw initial conclusions.

This report presents data on Lincoln Park. Although this report is for the internal use of the foundation, a few summary items are listed below to provide context for the report.

- Local residents have been involved in revitalization efforts and there are existing structures to support community development and mobilization.
- There are established collaborations around specific services; however, interviewees report some competition among individuals and groups.
- Interviewees noted the hope that people can “have the community’s interests at heart, even above their own personal interests.”

To what extent is the CGI being implemented as planned?

Criteria

Describing and comparing (Weiss, 1998) commonalities; a general inductive approach for qualitative data (Thomas, 2006).

Each region chose a Common Good Initiative neighborhood in June 2014. Between June 2014 and December 2014, efforts focused on gathering community input and identifying priorities. During the time period January 2015 through June 2015, the timeline called for the following activities to occur:

- Identify priorities
- Conduct a community visioning session
- Select priorities
- Develop and test strategies
- Make investments

Implementation, however, also encompasses how CGI is approaching 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.¹ While all the listed activities have not been completed as scheduled, progress has been made in each activity as follows:

¹ See the initiative-wide report for data on how the Common Good Initiative is working with the community.

- Based on community input, identified a list of priorities along with short- and long-term outcomes.
- Identified a consultant and scheduled the visioning session.
- Discussed possible strategies with community members while gathering input.
- Explored possible investments and met with potential partners who could invest in strategies.

In addition, the VP identified potential Common Good Advisory Council members, begun to engage other sectors, convened to build collaborations, and identified investments to build capacity and support community mobilization.

What are we learning through this process?

This question is only analyzed at the initiative-wide level, not at the individual community level. See the Common Good Initiative evaluation report for data on this question.

To what extent is there positive movement in health and wellness indicators?

<p><u>Criteria</u> Positive movement in indicators (e.g., % of residents that have been to a doctor in the last 12 months).</p>	<p>Priorities for each community have not been identified, so no baseline data in health and wellness indicators are provided at this time. Community members, most likely the Council for the Common Good but also others, will provide input into the appropriate indicators.</p>
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To what extent are there documented changes in systems that create/maintain health deserts?

<p><u>Criteria</u> Positive movement in system indicators.</p>	<p>Priorities for each community have not been identified, so no baseline data for system indicators are provided at this time. Specific indicators will be identified in a participatory process by the community.</p>
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What is the evidence that efforts will be sustained?

Criteria

Each community will demonstrate achievement of X% of system indicators.

Baseline sustainability will be assessed in September 2015, after strategies have begun. Sustainability indicators may include diverse funding streams, system changes, ongoing support of behavior changes, dissemination of relevant products (NORC, 2010), increased awareness, and a sustainability plan.

What is the evidence of collaboration and partnership?

Criteria

Each community will demonstrate increased collaboration and partnerships.

The goal, over time, is that each community will demonstrate increased collaboration and partnerships on items such as the number and quality of relationships, the level of relational trust between partners, and the diversity of roles. In order to assess the baseline status of the community, the evaluator conducted qualitative interviews with representatives in

various sectors to ask about their work in the neighborhood, their collaborations, and the activities of other organizations. Results reflect interviewees' perception, which may or may not be accurate.

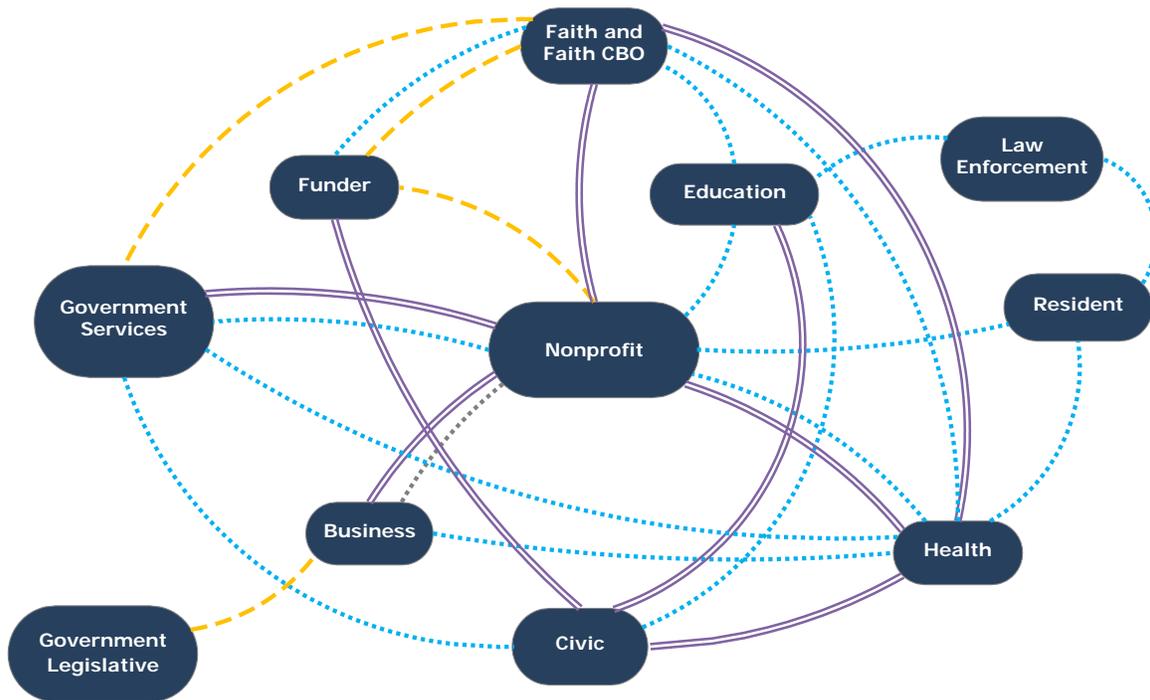
Figure 2 provides a picture of current collaboration and partnership. Each sector is represented by a circle, with the number of entities in that sector mentioned by interviews noted. The lines between sectors represent awareness (...); resource sharing of events, referrals, or donations (---); or service delivery collaborations (===). As shown, the Lincoln Park area has a fairly well developed network, where sectors show a mix of relationships. Interviewees described collaborations, information sharing, or simple awareness. Since December, additional connections have been described by interviewees, most of which had occurred since the last interview. (Others had occurred before the last interview but were not mentioned at that time).

Interviewees noted a lack of communication, with one stating that "communication of services and programs and resources in the community can probably be a little bit better" and another noting "What we discover is that the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing around here. There are groups that come in and do things, and they get funding on their own, and then we find out about it later, and there's a total lack of communication." One investment is addressing this issue. Organizations collaborate, but for very specific purposes and with specific partners. Interviewees also noted competition among some neighborhood efforts.

The VP is working to engage diverse organizations and groups such as the business community, economic development council, planning council and providers including

faith, youth development, and arts and culture organizations. While there has not been substantial movement in the past six months, there are new stakeholders participating which provides opportunities for future collaboration. The VP has also worked to convene stakeholders to address community issues (i.e., a nonprofit facility, new programming).

Figure 2: Network map as of June 2015



In fall 2014, some interviewees reported that the Children’s Services Council and county provide funding and that the county and state provide programs. County and city resources continue to be seen as minimal by interviewees. This spring, interviewees added that the Hunt Foundation and United Way provide resources.

Between January and June 2015, the VP has met with United Way, the Children’s Services Council, and the County to share updates and discuss potential partnerships. The VP has also developed relationships with city staff. Investments made to date also support collaboration.

What is the evidence of community mobilization and capacity?

Criteria

Each community will demonstrate increased capacity on indicators relevant to that community.

The goal is that each community will demonstrate increased capacity on indicators relevant to that community but may include items such as structures and mechanisms for community input and participation, the presence of resident leaders, resident and institutional participation in the community, the presence of a champion, residents having facilitation and problem-solving skills, and residents having and using social capital. In order to assess the status in each community, the evaluator conducted qualitative interviews with representatives in various sectors to ask about how they mobilize the community (or how they are engaged, if a resident), structures for community mobilization, and examples of community mobilization. Results reflect interviewees' perception, which may or may not be accurate but is the most relevant.

As expected, there has been little change since December. Most interviewees described an engaged community that had several established structures, such as the advisory council (part of the county-wide roundtable group), and Restoring the Village. There are also project-specific advisory committees. Some structures are being put into place, such as formalizing the process for recruiting resident leaders and developing bylaws for community groups.

Interviewees report that the community will attend forums and other events to talk about Lincoln Park. However, interviewees did express concern over limited advocacy skills (i.e., moving from input to action). As one interviewee noted, "I can't really tell you like an actual result of anything, but I think we have to crawl before we walk. I think we're still crawling and I think we are moving with our crawl."

When asked about resident leaders last fall, a few interviewees mentioned elected officials or educators, while others were of the opinion that there were relatively few resident leaders. This spring, interviewees were still mixed on the topic with some naming leaders "who are from the area" and others noting "nobody lives in that area anymore."

Investments made to date also support developing community mobilization and capacity.

From an Interviewee:

"There's the reality that they [residents] just don't have a track record of committing themselves or understanding why they need to be committed or what's the end goal."

What investments were made, how were they made, and what were the results?

Quick wins and initial investments include:

- \$120,000 to Roundtable of St. Lucie County for two street outreach workers in the Restoring the Village Youth Initiative
- \$15,000 to Roundtable of St. Lucie County for general operating support of the Lincoln Park Advisory Committee. Funds will also be used for activities to engage the community, such as community memorial gardens, surveys, etc.
- \$500 honorarium to Lincoln Park Academy for hosting community meeting; funds to be used to improve the school environment.
- \$5,000 to Boys and Girls Club of St. Lucie County for staff of the Infinity Club to attend the National Boys and Girls Clubs Conference to enhance their skills and provide better services for youth at the club.
- \$1,470 to Roundtable of St. Lucie County for the Lincoln Park Advisory Committee to create and maintain a community mobilization and resource guide for Lincoln Park residents and youth that can be accessed through an app for smart phones and other electronic devices.
- \$5,000 to Community Outreach Youth Program, Inc. for Camp Destiny/Camp Lincoln Park Summer Camp, an eight week program for Lincoln Park children age 4-18 in an environment that encourages advanced thinking and creative problem solving.

Criteria

The number and type of investments and a summary of the process used.

Please see the initiative-wide report for an analysis of the investments made to date.

Conclusions

As this report includes predominantly baseline data, there are no conclusions to draw at this time.

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, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Appendix A: Data Sources

Interviewees

Interviewees included eight stakeholders from nonprofits, the faith community, businesses, education and residents. 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).
- Information obtained through email updates and staff meetings.