COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IN THREE SOUTH SIDE CHICAGO COMMUNITIES: LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, AND PROSPECTS

PREPARED FOR THE WOODS FUND OF CHICAGO
BY THE CENTER FOR IMPACT RESEARCH

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2003, the Woods Fund of Chicago requested the Center for Impact Research (CIR) to conduct an assessment of community organizing on the South Side of Chicago. Through its own process of strategic planning, the Wood's Fund had identified the South Side as an area that is not receiving the resources it needs to support effective community organizing activities. This study identifies barriers facing groups and leaders that limit not only their capacity for organizing but also their ability to attract resources for their work. The findings also provide key data on current activities at the grassroots level, with particular attention to groups and leaders that have the potential to expand the scope of their efforts to larger, community-based initiatives. In addition to assisting the Wood's Fund in its efforts to better serve South Side communities, the study's findings and recommendations might also be useful for other grant-makers as well as community organizers and decision-makers.

METHODOLOGY

In consultation with Woods Fund staff, CIR identified three communities with high levels of poverty on Chicago's South Side that would form the focal points of the study: Englewood, Washington Park, and Riverdale. At the outset of the project, CIR reviewed recent U.S. Census materials to obtain key demographic and socio-economic data on each community. This information provides a statistical profile of the communities and a context for the specific issues facing them individually and as a group.

CIR then identified and interviewed key community members in each of the three communities (28 in Englewood; 12 in Riverdale; 13 in Washington Park). CIR conducted these interviews between September and November 2003, and had follow-up conversations with many of the interviewees in February and March 2004. These interviews targeted people involved in a variety of community sectors such as aldermanic offices, social service providers, religious institutions, health care providers, community development organizations, and community policing groups. In addition CIR sought input from four experienced community organizers working in other communities.

CIR planned to conduct a series of focus groups to bring together community members to discuss past and current organizing activities and issues of concern to the community. The group was also to assist CIR in identifying local leaders and activists for subsequent interviews. However, it became evident that political and organizational tensions within the communities made focus groups an inappropriate research strategy for this project. Accordingly, during the course of individual interviews, CIR was able to identify local leaders and activists for subsequent interviews and did not use the focus group format for obtaining this information. Thus, in addition to contacting well-known community members for interviews, networking and referrals were the two most common methods for identifying interviewees.

KEY FINDINGS

Major Issues Facing the Communities

All three communities have extremely low median household income levels ($13,000 in Riverdale; $15,000 in Washington Park; and $19,000 in Englewood) and high levels of unemployment (25 to 34% of "active labor participants" and much higher levels when including people who are no longer actively seeking employment). These three communities are confronted with many of the same social and economic problems that face other low-income minority neighborhoods in Chicago and across the country: high levels of drug and alcohol abuse; a large number of youth and adults participating in the illegal drug trade;[1] high crime rates and levels of gang involvement; insufficient and substandard housing stock; a lack of quality youth activities and after-school programs; a lack of jobs that pay a living wage; insufficient job training programs that prepare people for living wage employment; an increasing number of former offenders returning to the community who face barriers to finding employment and housing; high rates of HIV/AIDS; poor infrastructure; a lack of City of Chicago services (missing garbage cans, irregular garbage collection, infrequent rat abatement in alleys); a polarized political climate; and ineffective policing, police corruption and brutality, and racial profiling.

Community Organizing Capacity

CIR's research finds the scale and amount of community organizing activity on the South Side to be limited. Furthermore, CIR's interviews with community leaders and residents indicate that most did not have a clear understanding of the purposes and activities conventionally associated with community organizing and the capacity of organizing to create systemic social change. Interviewees consistently specified the community's organizing approach as one that focuses on delivering social services and quality of life programs. Interviewees justified their current direct service efforts as necessary to address the community's urgent needs.

With the exception of older persons who had been involved in the Civil Rights Movement, community groups and residents do not have a strong history of working collaboratively to develop social change. Some of the interviewees claim that they are open to the idea of collaboration but they do not know how to successfully build a coalition. Others explicitly stated that they have no interest in collaborating. Intense competition for limited resources gives rise to a pervasive fear that individuals and groups who collaborate on issues may be forced to compromise their views or share their resources.

Current Resources and Organizing Activities

Englewood, Riverdale, and Washington Park vary significantly in terms of their individual and institutional capacity to provide the leadership necessary to attract resources and coordinate community organizing efforts. The full report presents details of current resources and discusses the potential to expand organizing in each of the communities.

Current efforts to organize in these three communities vary substantially. Activity was most evident in Englewood and to a lesser degree in Washington Park. However, in Riverdale community organizing was almost entirely absent. In most cases, groups in these communities that are organizing are not building alliances with other community groups or constructing coalitions across groups. Most groups are less than five years old; with a few exceptions, ongoing organizing efforts that are older tend to be

[1] Given the high rates of unemployment and lack of jobs that pay a living wage, many of the youth and adults in these communities turn to the illegal drug trade as it provides an accessible source of income.

comprised of one or two people who are committed to change but have not been able to construct a coalition within the community around the issue.

Institutions and Individuals with Potential to Create Change

In order to understand the range and extent of community organizing activities in Englewood, Riverdale, and Washington Park, CIR conducted a series of interviews with stakeholders including community residents, activists, leaders, direct service providers, and elected officials. Interviewees were asked to describe their knowledge of current and past organizing in their community. Most interviewees responded to CIR's questions about organizing by describing their frustration over an event or course of events as well as their individual and collective efforts to influence an issue. Most of the community groups interviewed by CIR were not conversant with conventional definitions of community organizing. Community organizing was rarely defined as the ability of a community to mobilize its members and leverage resources to influence social justice or economic equity. Instead, community organizing was most often understood to be the effort by an individual or the community to apply an immediate service-oriented solution to a specific problem in the community. Often, community organizations are based on a specific locale, issue, or interest.

CIR identified several specific barriers to organizing efforts in each of the three communities. Political fragmentation within these communities is perhaps the most apparent and frequently cited barrier. Whether it is a lack of cooperation or a lack of incentives for cooperation among multiple aldermen who represent the same community, or the fact that re-election does not depend on an incumbent's responsiveness to the community and its needs, the current political landscape does not foster collaborative, community-building initiatives.

Additional Issues in South Side Organizing

The predominant type of community activity that CIR found in these neighborhoods is oriented to social services. To a lesser extent there are sporadic episodes of "reactionary activism," when community members were upset and spoke out about particular incidents, but did not pursue any other organized or sustained response. However, CIR also identified a small number of South Side organizations that take a much different approach to organizing. Their proactive and systemic approach to problems can lead to substantial changes within the community.

The efforts of such organizations focus on educating constituencies, creating collaborations with other organizations, and pushing the opposition to change when necessary. However, they characterize their approach as different from other community organizing groups whose more oppositional and aggressive style they see as the norm. These organizations find a collaborative model of building community support to be more effective in achieving long-term outcomes that benefit their constituencies.

This group of organizers not only speaks about its distinctive style of organizing, it also comments on the differences between the work undertaken by African-American organizers within their own communities and that of outside community organizing entities that come into African-American communities. They regard locally based African-American community organizers as more in touch with the specific needs of the residents and the community. However, at the same time, they expressed an awareness of and frustration with those African-Americans who use their leadership positions within the community to opportunistically pursue their own personal agendas to the detriment of the larger interests of the community.

There is a lack of organizations on the South Side of Chicago that are doing any work that broadly falls within the parameters of community organizing. There are even fewer that have demonstrated the capacity to sustain this work at a high level of efficacy, and still fewer that are run and staffed by African-Americans. Strengthening competent African-American organizations and working with them to build on their successes would be a strategic approach to establishing community organizing as a viable response to systemic social and economic injustice in these South Side neighborhoods.

INTRODUCTION

In July 2003, the Woods Fund of Chicago requested the Center for Impact Research (CIR) to conduct an assessment of community organizing on the South Side of Chicago. Through its own process of strategic planning, the Wood's Fund had identified the South Side as an area that is not receiving the resources it needs to support effective community organizing activities. This study identifies barriers facing groups and leaders that limit not only their capacity for organizing and but also their ability to attract resources for their work. The findings also provide key data on current activities at the grassroots level, with particular attention to groups and leaders that have the potential to expand the scope of their efforts to larger, community-based initiatives. In addition to assisting the Wood's Fund in its efforts to better serve South Side communities, the study's findings and recommendations might also be useful for other grant-makers as well as community organizers and decision makers.

METHODOLOGY

In consultation with the Woods Fund, CIR identified three communities with high levels of poverty on Chicago's South Side that would form the focal points of the study: Englewood, Washington Park, and Riverdale. At the outset of the project, CIR reviewed U.S. Census materials to obtain key demographic and socio-economic data on each community. This information provides a statistical profile of the communities and a context for the specific issues facing them individually and as a group.[2]

CIR then identified and interviewed key community members in each of the three communities (28 in Englewood; 12 in Riverdale; 13 in Washington Park). CIR conducted these interviews between September and November 2003, and had follow-up conversations with many of the interviewees in February and March 2004. The interviews targeted people involved in a variety of community sectors such as aldermanic offices, social service providers, religious institutions, health care providers, community development organizations, and community policing groups. In addition CIR sought input from four experienced community organizers working in other South Side communities.[3]

CIR used semi-structured interviews with community members, allowing the flexibility needed to explore unanticipated issues as well as ensure that the same type of interview data were gathered from all of the informants. Issues explored included the following: community history; major issues and needs within the community; current resources, including institutions and individuals; current community organizing activities; and institutions and individuals with potential to expand their community organizing role.

[2] See Appendix 1 for data on each community from the 2000 U.S. Census.

[3] See Appendix 2 for a listing of interviewees and their contact information.

CIR had planned on conducting a series of focus groups to bring together community members to discuss past and current organizing activities and issues of concern to the community. The groups were also to assist CIR in identifying local leaders and activists for subsequent interviews. However, it became evident that political and organizational tensions within the communities made focus groups an inappropriate research strategy for this project. Accordingly, during the course of individual interviews, CIR was able to identify additional local leaders and activists for subsequent interviews, and did not use the focus group format for obtaining this information. Thus, in addition to contacting well-known community members for interviews, networking and referrals were the two most common methods for identifying interviewees.

CIR research staff met regularly to discuss the interview data and analysis and strategize about additional individuals and organizations that were identified during the interviews and their relevance to the research.

FINDINGS

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IN ENGLEWOOD

Historical Background

Originally settled by Swedish, German, and Irish immigrants, Englewood became a destination for middle-class African Americans during the mid-twentieth century. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, many of Chicago's poorer blacks were displaced by the construction of the South Expressway, later renamed the Dan Ryan Expressway. These poorer blacks moved to Englewood and by the early 1970s most of the whites and middle class blacks had relocated to surrounding communities. By the early 1980s and throughout the 1990s, increased unemployment and crime beset the community causing alarm among residents and elected officials.[4]

In 1999 Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley acknowledged the need to invest in Englewood. He announced a $256 million revitalization plan that included relocating Kennedy-King College to a large site at the intersection of 63rd Street and Halsted, constructing a 255,000 square-foot retail center and a 500,000 square foot community center, developing mixed-income and mixed-use housing, building a new police station and library, and updating parks and city infrastructure. [5] Four years later, only the police station, library, park projects, and minor infrastructure improvements have been completed.

[4] Chanel Pole and Mick Dumke, "A Brief History of Englewood," *The Chicago Reporter*, December 1999. Accessed at http://www.chicagoreporter.com/1999/12-99/1299timeline.htm on September 3, 2003.
[5] Office of the Mayor, "Mayor Daley Unveils Revitalization Strategy for Englewood," Accessed at http://www.ci.chi.il.us/mayor2/SpecialNotices/Englewood.99.10.06.html on November 12, 2003.

Englewood is home to 40,222 residents.[6] Most interviewees expressed their eagerness to improve the community and some have begun to organize in order to pursue the desired changes. CIR's research in Englewood finds community organizing activity to be on a limited scale. Furthermore, CIR's interviews with Englewood leaders and residents indicate that most did not have a clear understanding of the purposes and activities associated with community organizing. For example, when CIR asked interviewees to describe their knowledge of community organizing in Englewood, only a few expressed familiarity with the concept and its capacity to create systemic social change. Even fewer defined Englewood's current organizing efforts as mechanisms to initiate and create sustainable reform. Interviewees consistently specified the community's organizing approach as one that focuses on social services and quality of life programs. Interviewees justified their current direct service efforts as necessary to address the community's urgent needs. As one interviewee expressed, "we need to take care of immediate concerns first, things like safety and housing."[7]

Community groups and residents do not have a strong history of working collaboratively to develop social change with the exception of older persons who were involved in the Civil Rights Movement. Many of the interviewees claim they are open to the idea of collaboration but do not know how to successfully build a coalition. Others stated that they have no interest in collaborating. Intense competition for limited resources gives rise to a pervasive fear that individuals and groups who collaborate on issues may be forced to compromise their views or share their resources. One interviewee summed up this point of view: "If we agree to work with other organizations, then they will have the power to undermine our efforts and we don't want that."[8] However, some groups have effectively attracted community support but not without controversy.

Major Issues

CIR conducted 28 interviews with Englewood community leaders, organizers, activists, and residents. Most of the interviewees with whom CIR spoke were candid about the problems facing the community. A variety of ideas and opinions were expressed; the two problems most frequently cited were the lack of quality jobs and political fragmentation.

Of the 12,619 households in Englewood, 32.4% earn less than $10,000 per year, with a median household income of $18,955.[9] Unemployment is widespread with 25.8% of the population over 16 years of age out of work and actively searching for employment.[10] Interviewees expressed concern over widespread poverty and the unemployment and underemployment of community residents. All interviewees emphasized strong job training and job placement programs as the community's bridge out of poverty.

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[6] "Census 2000: Summary Tables of Social, Economic, and Housing Data for the 77 Community Areas in the City of Chicago (August 20, 2002)." Accessed at http://www.nipc.cog.il.uc/dp234_CA_2000.htm on September 11, 2003.
[7] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[8] Confidential interview, September 2003.
[9] "Census 2000: Summary Tables of Social, Economic, and Housing Data for the 77 Community Areas in the City of Chicago (August 20, 2002)." Accessed at http://www.nipc.cog.il.uc/dp234_CA_2000.htm, September 11, 2002.
[10] Ibid. The U.S. Census Bureau measures the unemployment rate as follows: all civilians 16 years old and over are classified as unemployed if they (1) were neither "at work" nor "with a job but not at work" during the reference week, and (2) were actively looking for work during the last 4 weeks, and (3) were available to accept a job. Also included as unemployed are civilians who did not work at all during the reference week, were waiting to be called back to a job from which they had been laid off, and were available for work except for temporary illness. For details, see http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/glossary/glossary_u.html.

Political fragmentation in Englewood reportedly hampers the ability of community leaders and residents to accomplish anything that requires the involvement of their alderman. Englewood is divided into six wards. The constituency of each alderman extends beyond the borders of Englewood. Interviewees reported that no incentives exist for Englewood's six city council members to work collaboratively among themselves and with Englewood residents. To further exacerbate the issue, some interviewees stated that even if collaboration were possible, Mayor Daley has no interest in the community and that his power over the aldermen is so strong that his political will always prevails. Many interviewees expressed a lack of trust in city government.

Interviewees expressed other concerns about the community such as the lack of tangible results from research projects,[11] the presence of drugs, crime, and gangs, a lack of quality youth activities and after school programs, high rates of HIV/AIDS, inadequate housing stock, poor infrastructure, lack of City of Chicago services (missing garbage cans, irregular garbage collection, infrequent rat abatement), ineffective policing, police corruption and brutality, racial profiling, the sale of alcohol and tobacco to minors, expired freshness dates of food in local stores, and dissatisfaction with the media's negative images of Englewood.

Major Needs

Interviewees discussed a desire for jobs and job training programs, a need for political unity, tangible economic investment, a greater need for youth programs, additional decent and affordable housing, access to technology, effective policing, a community newspaper, an organized forum for community change, and a unified business community.

Quality job training and placement programs are necessary according to the interviewees. If current residents are unable to invest in their own community through earned income, community leaders wondered how they would be able to attract outside investment. An organization reported to be making strides in this area is Rebirth of Englewood Community Development Corporation (ROECDC), which recently received a $468,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. Two-hundred-twenty individuals have received job-training services from ROECDC and it has reportedly brought $1.5 million in wages into the Englewood and West Englewood communities.[12] ROECDC's founder, U.S. Representative Bobby Rush and its executive director, Vincent Barnes have worked intensively to secure funding for job training since the organization's inception almost four years ago.

Community leaders and residents long for political unity among the six aldermen and alderwomen so that they will have a cohesive group to represent them at City Hall. Interviewees would like nothing more than for their concerns to be acknowledged and addressed by those with access to financial resources. Yet, very few seem willing to directly confront the problem of political fragmentation. When CIR asked several interviewees why they are not working on this issue, interviewees expressed frustration with "machine politics" and its control of Englewood aldermen.[13]

[11] Several interviewees were suspicious of CIR and our work claiming that their community has been studied excessively and that the studies have not produced positive results for the community.
[12] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[13] Confidential interviews, October 2003 and November 2003.

Interviewees described tangible economic investment as investment in parks, infrastructure, and business development. Community leaders and residents hope that the city, state, and federal governments will make these investments in the community.

Interviewees reported that after-school, youth, and teen programs in Englewood are rare but highly desired. A lack of money and resources prevents those with good intentions and potential from creating constructive programs. Boulevard Arts Center manages one of the only successful independent programs in the community but funding cuts over the last several years are weakening the program. Once serving approximately 1,500 students at a time, the program now serves 100 to 125.[14] CIR was told that St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church and the New Englewood Terrace Building have after school programs offering an afternoon gathering place with adult supervision but neither reportedly had a curriculum at the time of CIR's interviews.

Housing needs in Englewood are similar to those in Chicago's other low-income, minority communities. There is a shortage of decent and affordable homes. Of the 15,210 housing units in Englewood, 17% are vacant or uninhabitable.[15] Efforts are underway by local institutions and private developers to address the demand. St. Bernard Hospital has completed Phase I of a two-phase development project, which will yield 90 new homes.[16] Recently, a private development company purchased a former CHA building and was granted an $11.5 million loan to rehabilitate the structure. The 303-unit building will house residents at affordable rents and plans to offer access to state-of-the-art technology and job training programs.

Effective policing in Englewood is another need reported by community members. Interviewees reported that the Chicago Police have been accused of corruption, neglect, and racial profiling in Englewood. Most interviewees expressed concern over the police's ineffectiveness within District 7. A new commander was recently appointed and several community groups including the Greater Englewood Community and Family Task Force and CAPS were involved in his selection.

Englewood does not have a community newspaper. Interviewees expressed concern that without a vehicle for communication, many residents were not informed about community events and activities. CIR learned that Franz Printing, a West Englewood owned and operated printing company, is in the process of creating a community newspaper.[17]

Current Resources

Englewood is rich with individuals and institutions that have the potential to build and strengthen the community. However, at present there is no single individual or organization—or coalition of groups—providing the leadership necessary to attract resources and coordinate the activities of key stakeholders.

Politicians viewed the relocation of **Kennedy King College** as the catalyst of Englewood's revitalization. When the new campus plan was unveiled in the fall of 1999, it was projected to be fully operational by the fall of 2003. However, in October 2003, the wrecking ball had barely grazed the abandoned structures

[14] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[15] "Census 2000: Summary Tables of Social, Economic, and Housing Data for the 77 Community Areas in the City of Chicago (August 20, 2002)." Accessed at http://www.nipc.cog.il.us/dp234_CA_2000.htm, September 11, 2002.
[16] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[17] Confidential interview, November 2003.

that stand on the site of the new complex. The college proposes to construct facilities to house the Washburne Culinary Institute, WYCC Channel 20 television studio, WKKC radio station, a state-run Employment and Training Center, a performing arts center, and a new community center. Englewood residents are delighted by the prospect of the new programs and amenities at the local college. However, they urgently need job training programs and living-wage jobs and fear that these new programs will not provide the practical skills necessary for community residents to quickly secure stable employment. The widespread feeling is that the college's goodwill attempts towards the community fail to meet Englewood's needs. Many residents would like the college to alter its curriculum from one boasting "liberal arts and sciences," to one focused on "technical aptitude and training." According to several interviewees, the college's expanded curriculum may offer opportunities for non-neighborhood students but is less relevant to community residents who need programs that are geared to the local labor market.[18]

Pullman Bank purchased Chicago City Bank and Trust in Englewood approximately five years ago. The bank, both today and under its previous name, has been a stable presence in Englewood for over 75 years.[19] The bank aims to promote economic health and independence among residents and businesses in Englewood. Shortly after coming to Englewood, Pullman Bank established Pullman Bank Initiatives to act as its community development arm. Saul Klibanow, a former housing developer, leads Pullman Bank Initiatives. CIR asked around in order to understand the impact Pullman Bank Initiatives has had on the community. When asked about the bank's role in the community, the consensus among interviewees was that Pullman Bank Initiatives provided leadership in establishing a relationship with Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)/MacArthur Foundation and their New Communities Program (NPC). Klibanow worked with LISC to formulate the community-based project and to prepare the proposal. Pullman Bank Initiatives and Englewood were selected. To avoid a conflict of interest between LISC/MacArthur and Pullman Bank Initiatives, TEAMWORK Englewood was created to receive the $1.5 million in funds.[20] The funds support the salaries of an Executive Director and a Community Organizer for a period of ten years. All specific project funding must be raised via grants and contributions for other entities.

TEAMWORK Englewood is currently led by Pullman Bank Initiatives head Saul Klibanow. Klibanow assumed the role after its original executive director resigned. The group's Board of Directors is composed of community residents, two aldermen, and executives from the community's two largest organizations, Pullman Bank and St. Bernard Hospital. As the community plan is implemented, some board members who represent these large organizations will be replaced by community residents and community leaders. An ongoing effort is underway to begin to develop the community plan as required by the New Communities Program. As of early March 2004, TEAMWORK Englewood is still in the process of developing the community plan.

St. Bernard Hospital, like Pullman Bank, is a community anchor in Englewood. The hospital employs approximately 700 people who provide healthcare services for neighborhood families and children. The hospital launched a health bus in November 2003 that visits local schools and administers immunizations and wellness checks to area children. In the first year of service the hospital predicts that the health bus will serve between 1,000 and 1,500 community children. Part of the hospital's mission is to address community needs. As a result, the hospital launched a New Homes Program in 1996 in order to develop

[18] Confidential interviews, September 2003 and October 2003.
[19] Follow-up conversation with Saul Klibanow on March 2004.
[20] Interview with Saul Klibanow of Pullman Bank Initiatives, October 2003.

affordable housing in Englewood. Phase I of the project was recently completed yielding 62 new single family and two-flat homes priced between $155,000 and $220,000 each. All of the homes have been purchased and Phase II is underway, which will build 25 to 28 new homes all to be sold at or below market rate. The hospital works independently on its housing initiative although it is attempting to build a partnership with Antioch Baptist Church.[21] The hospital, which has a representative on the board of TEAMWORK Englewood, is also beginning to develop a housing plan in conjunction with the community plan. It is not yet clear how many new homes this plan will yield as it is still in the development phase.

Imagine Englewood if… was started by Jean Carter Hill in 1997 to "develop and establish community linkages that enable residents to improve their qualify of life and strengthen families."[22] Hill is an advocate for community change and is involved in many community groups. Most of them are social service programs that promote reading, tutoring, and health education. She has organized residents in the past for "Make a Difference Day" but lately she finds the community to be slow to galvanize around issues. When CIR interviewed Hill, she quickly pointed out: "people in this community need to communicate, collaborate, and connect. It is only then that they will feel empowered and be able to transform this community."[23] In previous years, Imagine Englewood if… has received three grants, none larger than $500, from the MacArthur Foundation and the Crossroads Fund in order to advance its organizing work. Current activities are centered on neighborhood children. Hill coordinates periodic reading and tutoring programs in partnership with the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs.

New Englewood Terrace (NET) is a former CHA high-rise building that was purchased by Don Samuelson, a private housing developer. Samuelson plans to transform the building into a housing facility where low-income families can use the resources of NET to connect with neighborhood services.[24] His larger vision is to commercially develop the area around 63rd Street and Lowe in order to provide NET residents and others access to quality goods and services. He is currently seeking partners to invest in his vision. Lorez Morris-El is employed by NET as the Director of Community and Resident Services and acts as a community change agent by encouraging those who might not otherwise come forward to speak about community issues. She is a 14-year resident of Englewood and has three school-age children who live with her in the community.

Rebirth of Englewood Community Development Corporation (ROECDC) was originally created in 1995 as the Rebirth of West Englewood (ROWE). In April of 2000 ROWE reorganized to become a community revitalization project focused on Englewood and West Englewood. The reorganization was lead by Congressman Bobby Rush of the First Congressional District of Illinois who sought to "positively impact"[25] one of the nation's most impoverished communities. The organization operates on the principle that economic stimulus is the key to revitalization rather than the social service and program approach.[26] Today, ROECDC promotes economic and social security for community residents via its proprietary "Ten Weeks to Homeownership Course" and "The Englewood Employment Initiative" among other smaller programs.

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[21] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[22] "Do You Know Iei?" Jean Carter-Hill (program brochure).
[23] Interview with Jean Carter Hill, Executive Director of "Imagine Englewood if…," October 2003.
[24] Don Samuelson, "Tackling the Digital Divide in Englewood."
[25] Phone conversation with Vincent Barnes, Rebirth of Englewood Community Development Corporation, February 2004.
[26] Phone conversation with Vincent Barnes, Rebirth of Englewood Community Development Corporation, February 2004.

Vincent Barnes is the executive director of ROECDC and comes to the organization after working in Washington D.C. as Legislative Counsel to Congressman Rush. According to Barnes, ROECDC's programs are in high demand and space is the primary reason they are unable to fulfill requests. The proprietary "Ten Weeks to Home Ownership" class is so popular that the sessions run at capacity with a constant waiting list long enough to fill at least one or more additional class offerings.[27] Since the program's inception, several hundred people who thought they might never own a home have participated in the program and 62 have purchased homes.[28]

The Englewood Employment Initiative (EEI) is designed to provide immediate and long-term opportunities for residents of Englewood and West Englewood.[29] Each EEI class can enroll up to 50 participants. ROECDC set a goal to graduate 20 participants from each class, recognizing that participants may face numerous barriers to completing the program. In 2003, 82 participants graduated and 82 participants have been placed in jobs that pay at least $11 per hour and offer benefits.[30] According to Barnes, all 82 are still employed full-time and some have even received promotions.

New Englewood Historical Society of Chicago (NEHSC) is being established by Kwame John R. Porter, Ph.D. A civil rights activist and former community resident, Dr. Porter hopes to capture Englewood's history for posterity. The organization is in its early phase and planning meetings underway. Pullman Bank is donating space for the planning meetings; Kennedy-King College has offered 2,000 square feet of office and exhibition space to the group at no charge. Depending upon NEHSC's ability to secure funding, Kennedy-King College may provide similar space in its new complex. No matter the location, NEHSC encourages residents to be proud of their history and hopes to inculcate youth with a deep understanding of their past and potential.

Boulevard Arts Center is under the leadership of Board Chair John Zeigler, a community leader in Englewood and throughout the City of Chicago. Zeigler is an artist and works to make the Center's programs attractive and educationally rewarding for neighborhood children. He also leads a coalition comprised of local leaders who are working with art as a tool for education and community change. Zeigler is well respected and connected to the community. Martha Jones is the Executive Director of the Boulevard Arts Center. Jones is an artist and works daily with children at the Center to ensure that exposure to art is available in a community that offers few after-school programs or organized activities. The Center currently serves approximately 100 children per week. At one point, the Center served approximately 1,500 children per week. The decline in attendance is the direct result of funding cuts. Jones views art as a tool for individual and community economic development, which is the mission of the Center. Further, she advocates for the benefits of arts education with parents and school leaders. Most of the children who frequent the studio live in the neighborhood and have a desire to explore various artistic media. Jones invites them to the studio regardless of their ability to pay for classes or instruction. Because of her inclusiveness, she is a well-respected leader. Community residents define her as a model citizen working to make the studio a learning environment for all children, including children with learning or behavioral problems.[31]

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[27] Interview with Vincent Barnes, Rebirth of Englewood Community Development Corporation, October 2003.
[28] E-mail from Rebirth of Englewood Community Development Corporation, March 2004.
[29] Interview with Vincent Barnes, October 2003. Also accessed at http://www.roecdc.net/pres.htm on September 11, 2003.
[30] E-mail from Rebirth of Englewood Community Development Corporation, March 2004.
[31] Confidential interview, September 2003.

Tax Counseling Project (TCP) of the Center for Economic Progress has had limited success in providing services in Englewood.[32] TCP provides free tax preparation and consulting services in low-income communities. After seven years of working in Englewood during the tax season, TCP decided not to return to Englewood in 2004 because it has not been able to find a consistent and technologically equipped local community sponsor. In the opinion of TCP Director J.C. Craig, without credibility in the community and a reputable local sponsor, people do not know about or understand TCP and do not use its services. Many fewer clients came for services in Englewood than in other Chicago neighborhoods. Thus, resources that TCP invested in Englewood in the past are being reallocated to the Auburn Gresham community, where there is a large demand for TCP services.

Patricia Bailey is the **State Representative for the Sixth District**. Rep. Bailey cancelled her interview with CIR and declined to reschedule.

CIR attempted to schedule a meeting with **Alderman Shirley Coleman of the 16th Ward.** CIR's telephone calls to the ward office were not returned.

Carlos Estes is the **Senior Legislative Liaison for Connie Howard, State Representative for 34th District of Illinois.** Housing is a large part of Representative Howard's agenda, as she views it as a tool for economic growth and stability. Estes is active in the community on her behalf and is currently working with local developers to create subsidized and affordable housing in the neighborhood.

District 7 Advisory Council of CAPS is chaired for the eighth year by Jamesetta Harris. When Harris moved to Englewood from the West Side in 1992, she did not realize she was moving to a "war zone."[33] Over the last 11 years Harris has worked to rally her neighbors to create a community where families can sit on their porches and children can ride their bikes up and down the street. The grassroots efforts of Harris have been undertaken with "not as much assistance as is needed" from the community because in her view, many residents are afraid of the police. Although few community members have collaborated with her, Harris claims that District 7 police officers, Superintendent Cline, and Mayor Daley are aware of her efforts to halt crime and clean up the community. Harris told CIR that now when she needs something she is able to go straight to Mayor Daley.[34]

Current Community Organizing Activities

Organizing activities although present in Englewood are currently underdeveloped. Those who are organizing are doing so without building alliances with other community groups or constructing coalitions across groups. CIR found little evidence of organizing groups who have sustained themselves over the long term. Most groups are less than five years old; campaigns that are older are comprised of one or two people who are committed to change but have not been able to build a coalition within the community around the issue.

Greater Englewood Community and Family Task Force (GECFTF) is a community development corporation (CDC) focused on a variety of issues in Englewood. John Paul Jones is a lifetime Englewood resident and Chairman of GECFTF. The group is concerned with many issues that face the community,

[32] Interview with J.C Craig, Director of the Tax Counseling Project, September 2003.
[33] Interview with Jamesetta Harris, Chairwomen of the 7th District Advisory Council of CAPS, October 2003.
[34] Interview with Jamesetta Harris, October 2003.

including crime, violence, public safety, health, economic justice, education, and transportation. In previous years and months, the group has successfully lobbied for a new CAPS liaison and community access to technology. The group is also concerned about Kennedy-King College, fearing that the school does not have a strong enough technical focus to provide community residents with the skills necessary to obtain jobs quickly.[35] Further, the group is involved in transportation issues. As Metra decides how and where to expand, the group is advocating for a new stop in Englewood.[36] According to Jones, underlying all the barriers faced by community organizations and economic development initiatives are the political climate of Englewood, i.e., the factions and struggles for power, and the constant struggle to insert a public voice into community based initiatives.[37]

ACORN, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, began organizing in Englewood in 1983. ACORN reports that it has over 1,000 members in the Englewood community, and 2,000 in nearby West Englewood.[38] CIR spoke with Madeline Talbott, a Lead Organizer for ACORN, who has been working in the Englewood community since 1983.[39] Like other interviewees, she also reported that the political climate in Englewood is the major barrier to community organizations and economic development.

ACORN created a "squatting" campaign in abandoned buildings in Englewood in 1985. This campaign led to the creation of the ACORN Housing Corporation, which has rehabbed more than 50 abandoned buildings in Englewood and sold them to low and moderate income families. Over the past two decades, ACORN has also led campaigns around issues related to banking and financial services for Englewood, particularly related to homeownership. Other community issues addressed by ACORN include: abandoned buildings; schools and local school councils; drug, gang, and crime prevention activities; police corruption and community policing; mobilization to bring resources into the community such as utility assistance and home repair programs, street cleaning, and rat abatement services.

ACORN partners with a range of organizations based in or with projects in Englewood, including the Greater Englewood Community and Family Task Force (GECFTF), TARGET, and school principals and pastors in Englewood. Together, ACORN and GECFTF work on housing and transportation issues and according to Talbott they have had many successes with irresponsible landlords and disrespectful developers.

Reverend Anthony Williams, Pastor of St. Stephens Evangelical Lutheran Church organizes community residents around jobs and employment. He recently organized a group of 500 local men to complete employment applications for City of Chicago jobs. The group then went to City Hall to drop-off the applications at Mayor Daley's office.

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[35] Interview with John Paul Jones of the Greater Englewood community and Family Task Force, September 8, 2003.
[36] Interview with John Paul Jones, September 2003.
[37] Interview with John Paul Jones, September 2003.
[38] Information about ACORN from written materials provided by ACORN and from an interview with Madeline Talbott, Lead Organizer for ACORN, September 2003.
[39] Interview with Madeline Talbott, September 2003.

Expanding the Role of Community Organizing in Englewood: Institutions and Individuals with Potential to Create Change

In order to understand the depth and breadth of community organizing activities in Englewood, CIR conducted a series of interviews with stakeholders including community residents, activists, leaders, direct service providers, and elected officials. In Englewood, almost all interviewees were asked to describe their knowledge of current and past organizing in their community. Instead, most interviewees responded by describing their frustration over an event or course of events as well as their individual and collective efforts to influence an issue. Many community groups in Englewood were not conversant with conventional definitions of community organizing. Among the people interviewed in Englewood, community organizing was not defined as the ability of a community to mobilize its members and leverage resources to influence social or economic development. Instead, community organizing was understood to be the effort by an individual or the community to apply an immediate service-oriented solution to a community ill. Often, community organizations are based on a specific locale, issue, or interest. Citizen groups typically begin as informal associations. Some remain this way while others evolve into highly sophisticated community-managed organizations. This process builds healthy communities, and organizing provides a rich web of voluntary structures that nourish a healthy civil society. In Englewood, the process is underway, but no single individual or organization has successfully been able to sustain mobilization of a broad coalition of community groups.

CIR identified several specific barriers to organizing efforts in Englewood. The most apparent is the political fragmentation and the lack of cooperation among the six aldermen. Almost everyone interviewed by CIR felt that there are no incentives for the aldermen to work together. Each is reportedly concerned only about their own separate constituency and their ability to be re-elected. The political climate in Englewood is charged: constituents want improvements in the socio-economic conditions of the community and seek assistance from their aldermen in making them. Some residents blame Mayor Daley, indicating that he controls the six aldermen of Englewood. This control discourages the aldermen from asserting themselves and addressing the needs of the community. Some refer to Chicago's machine politics as the reason that aldermen do not work together.

Englewood's activism in the Civil Rights Movement shows that mobilization and revitalization have important historical precedents in the community. In order to achieve organizing results in contemporary Englewood, the community needs to mobilize its residents and develop leadership committed to collaborative work on the community's most pressing issues. If community organizing efforts were to achieve demonstrable and sustainable short-term results, it is probable that more residents and groups would become involved in organizing activities.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IN RIVERDALE

Historical Background

Community organizing in Riverdale began over twenty years ago as community residents learned about the inordinately high rates of cancer in their neighborhood that were attributed to the severe industrial pollution on the Southeast Side of Chicago. As the community with all four of Chicago's landfills that accept hazardous waste, over one-quarter of Chicago's "hot spots" (sites where hazardous wastes have been dumped or stored), and among the city's highest levels of child lead poisoning, the Southeast Side of the City was ripe for grassroots organizing. Spearheaded by Hazel Johnson, whose husband died of lung cancer in 1969, People for Community Recovery was established in 1983, organizing residents in the Altgeld Gardens housing project around environmental and health issues.[40]

Riverdale is located close to the Roseland/Greater Roseland and Pullman/West Pullman communities, which have significant levels of community involvement and active community based institutions. However, Riverdale and its residents are isolated from the community revitalization efforts of these neighbors. Its economic landscape is much bleaker and it is physically separated by the railroad and highway.

Most of Riverdale's residents live in one of its housing projects: Altgeld Gardens (1,900 CHA units); Golden Gates (300 private homes); Eden Green (439 co-op units); and Concordia (297 multi-family Section Eight units). The old Riverdale community has an additional 300 single-family homes, all over 100 years old and many others are abandoned or in serious disrepair. When non-Riverdale residents were asked about the Riverdale community (as contrasted with the suburb, Riverdale) most were unclear about what CIR was referring to, until the street boundaries were described. The response then was usually, "Oh, you mean The Gardens," a shortened name for Altgeld Gardens, which was used to refer to all four of the low-income housing complexes. Residents of Riverdale who live outside of the housing developments not only see them as separate from the rest of Riverdale, but also often had little knowledge or concern about them. The Gardens is seen as another world by most Riverdale residents who do not live there. According to one community resident who has been working to improve the larger Riverdale community:

> Even in the Gardens, some folks don't see themselves as part of the Ninth Ward. They want their own everything. Four million dollars are going for sidewalks in the Gardens. The Gardens and the homeowners are completely different people. We pay our taxes and help the community. There were job opportunities but they were only made available to the people who lived in the Gardens. There are other organizations for the folks in the area. And the single-family homes in the 130th and Ellis area [adjacent to Altgeld Gardens] are inhabited by folks who don't pay taxes and they have well water and few services.[41]

[40] See Linc Cohen, "Waste dumps toxic traps for minorities" for more information about the specific environmental threats to the community (*Chicago Reporter,* April 1992).

[41] Confidential interview, September 2003.

This comment that residents of public housing are fundamentally different and separate from people living outside of public housing was echoed by a veteran community organizer working on the Southeast side of Chicago:

> These folks in public housing do not process information the same way that those of us outside of public housing do. It's scary. They just don't think that there is anything that they can do to change their situation, and if anyone in any position of authority to which they are connected tells them "no" about anything, they assume that this is the end of the discussion.[42]

Major Issues

CIR conducted 12 interviews with Riverdale community leaders, organizers, activists, and residents. In addition to the problems described in this project's other community areas, Riverdale has the severe environmental hazards described above. Furthermore, given its isolation and lack of power base in the City, its ability to attract recognition and attention to its issues—much less have them addressed—is extremely limited. Riverdale's median household income is just over $13,000; 34% of active labor force participants are unemployed; and only 54% of the population over 16 is actively participating in the labor force.[43]

Although criminal activity, drug abuse, and gangs were issues raised by some of the interviewees, their assessment of Riverdale's problems had far more to do with the absence of employment opportunities (despite the presence of large industry on the Southeast side of Chicago and Northwest Indiana), economic development, and viable commercial establishments.

> We have no major stores in this community. The Rosebud [a mid-sized store] is still a mom and pop establishment that was convinced to open as a larger store with meat and vegetables. But it still doesn't have everything. But builders don't want to build without those stores either there or guaranteed. We need a land designation from the City so that we can take over lots and build some good stores. Then we can sell them to a developer who will get a tax break.[44]

Riverdale is within Alderman Anthony Beele's Ninth Ward. Respondents' thoughts about his effectiveness in representing the needs of the Riverdale community were mixed; most of the residents and staff members within the Riverdale organizations interviewed by CIR expressed skepticism about his connection with or commitment to the area. One interviewee said, "Alderman Beele says that the folks out here are low-class, that they don't want anything, and they don't get anything."[45] Another issue related to the community's political situation is the connection between Alderman Beele and Rev. Meeks, the State senator whose district encompasses the southeast side of Chicago. Few informants commented positively about the impact of Senator Meeks on the community. Meeks obtained a large grant from the State and TIF designation to build the 10,000-seat church/community center where he will preach.

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[42] Confidential interview, October 2003.

[43] "Census 2000: Summary Tables of Social, Economic, and Housing Data for the 77 Community Areas in the City of Chicago (August 20, 2002)." Accessed at http://www.nipc.cog.il.uc/dp234_CA_2000.htm, on September 11, 2003.

[44] Interview with Georgiana Welch, Regional Riverdale Development Corporation, September 2003.

[45] Confidential remark, September 2003.

However, most Riverdale interviewees do not believe that they will benefit from this new venture, but rather think that it will attract people from outside the neighborhood who will drive in for services or events and then promptly depart. Beele is seen as being dependent on Senator Meeks, who is expected to use his power to keep Beele in aldermanic office.

Major Needs

Riverdale's economic and environmental problems described above reflect the obvious need for job training, employment with living wages, commercial (retail) development, improved low-income housing, and action by the State and City to clean up the environmentally hazardous conditions and prevent further deterioration of the community.

According to Georgiana Welch, the director of the Regional Riverdale Development Corporation, the current housing crisis is compounded by the City's long-standing neglect of the community and the resulting passivity among the residents. The situation is further complicated by the fact that few people pay property taxes in the community:

> No one pays property taxes, so they don't squeak. We [RRDC] fix up a place and then we want to fix up the area around it, but these folks aren't eligible for anything because they haven't paid for their water or any property taxes. These people have no pride in the community... 85% of the properties are on the scavenger list. They don't want to fix up their homes because their taxes will go up, but I tell them about the programs that are available to help them. We even have to give them gifts to get them to come to meetings, but we can't get them to come.

In addition, respondents talked about the need for improved schools and family recreational facilities. Because of gang boundaries, there is no place where all children in Riverdale can safely play or congregate. According to one respondent, children cannot even go into each other's housing projects. The Riverdale Regional Development Center attempted to establish a community center, but they were unable to raise the necessary money. Foundations were willing to fund community center programs but unwilling to fund construction of the community center building.

Current Resources

As described earlier, a number of organizations in Roseland and Pullman serve the greater Roseland area. This section addresses only those organizations that work in Riverdale or serve its residents.

Regional Riverdale Development Corporation (RRDC) was established in 1992 as a result of the efforts of John Seifer, the chair of Heritage Community Bank. The RRDC received a $559,000 grant from HUD (Hope III grant) in 1993 to rehab and build new low- to middle-income residential properties in the community. It rehabbed 25 of the homes through private developers who employed some local residents. Fifty dilapidated homes were demolished. RRDC works with the homebuyers to help them maintain their homes and stay current with their mortgage payments. However, RRDC is struggling financially as Heritage Bank is using its federal low-income housing funds for a senior housing project, rather than for supporting RRDC's current program. Most organizations to which RRDC has applied for funding are not

interested in supporting the rehab or creation of new single-family homes. According to RRDC director Georgiana Welch, "We've run out of money." She is now the only staff member of the organization.

RRDC owns a large parcel of land on in northwest Riverdale, where it would like to build a senior housing center. "The people out here don't want to move, even though the area is blighted." But according to Welch, RRDC cannot cut through the "red tape" and the development is not moving ahead. RRDC also has ideas about building houses on the Calumet River, which runs through Riverdale. However, it does not have the capital to pay the initial costs and cannot find a developer who is willing to invest. When RRDC was first created, there were no other developers in the community. Although there are now a number of developers who are willing to work in Riverdale, the development process proceeds slowly.

Alderman Anthony Beele's office is located in Roseland, and as we have described earlier in this report, residents question his level of knowledge about and commitment to Riverdale. That said, there are staff in his office who are concerned with the region's economic and social development and have expressed interest in supporting development within Riverdale. According to Joyce Chapman, the Alderman's Business Advisory Board president, Riverdale residents need to be empowered to be "more economically astute" and have greater input into the community's development. Some of the Riverdale residents and staff working in Riverdale organizations are already connected with Beele's staff. Thus, there may be potential for the community to leverage the Alderman's support for services or change within Riverdale.

Metropolitan Family Services (MFS) has a Calumet Center, and its service area includes Riverdale. MFS provides counseling through the local elementary schools, at the request of Alderman Beele. The Calumet Center's director, however, was not familiar with any organizations working exclusively in Riverdale.[46] MFS tried to work in Riverdale, specifically in Altgeld Gardens. They initiated a City-funded Youth Net project but it was not able to attract the support of local residents.

People for Community Recovery (PCR) was begun by Hazel Johnson and now is run by her daughter, Cheryl Johnson. PCR focuses its organizing around urban pollution, including indoor pollution such as lead and asbestos, and outdoor pollution such as toxic waste dumps and air pollution. It also focuses on economic development, particularly generating jobs for local residents and improving working conditions. PCR has a partnership with Purdue University to address pollution avoidance. It educates people about the environmental risks by taking them on "toxic tours" to see the pollutants on the Southeast side of Chicago. PCR also helps residents file housing grievances and is working to establish a credit union in the neighborhood.[47]

The organization has remained in existence for 21 years, and clearly has taken on major community issues. They have collaborated with larger environmental organizations to oppose industrial practices that were adversely affecting the community. They recently partnered with another organization, Instituto Del Progresso Latino, in applying for funds from MOWD to provide job placement for local residents in local industrial sites, but due to insufficient funding of the project, PCR was not funded.

[46] Interview with Dian Powell, Metropolitan Family Services, Calumet Center Executive Director, September 2003.
[47] They are working with Al Hofeld, who also worked with Washington Park/Woodlawn to establish the South Side Community Federal Trade Union.

The **Local Advisory Council** (LAC) of Altgeld Gardens is the tenant association that represents the public housing residents. [48] The president of Altgeld Garden's LAC is Bernadette Williams, who has had this position since 1995. Williams described her role and that of the LAC as enforcing the CHA and private management company's rules with the residents—ensuring that they are paying their rent on time, not engaging in bad social behavior, able to move back into the housing development if they moved out in order to allow rehab to take place—and helping residents access job opportunities. According to Williams, the schools are in good shape in Altgeld Gardens and do not need any organizing initiatives. Furthermore, when asked if there were any other organizations or groups of people organizing around any issues of concern to the community as a whole, Williams stated, "Oh no. I wouldn't allow that. That would be too confusing. If anyone from the outside wants to do anything here, they have to go through this office. And if any resident tried to do anything on their own, they'd end up having to come through me anyway." Williams said that LAC has two committees: an interagency committee that visits the on-site social service agencies; and a tenant patrol committee. She does not see the need for any other committees. When asked about environmental issues, Williams said, "There aren't any environmental problems here. You can ask Ms. Johnson [president of PCR] about it."[49]

Calumet Region Cluster Organization (CCRO) is designed to disseminate information to promote economic development for the 12 economically disadvantaged census tracts (including Riverdale) that comprise the Calumet Cluster. CCRO was funded by the City for $75,000 per year for four years beginning in 2001**.** Cheryl Johnson (PCR), its first president, helped to train to Barbara Jones, the current president. Jones traveled as part of a three-person team (funded by Ford Foundation through a grant to People for Community Recovery) to Washington, D.C. for an environmental justice conference**.** CRCO has been involved in forming the Roseland Redevelopment Planning Board that makes recommendations about removal of dilapidated properties and business development. Progress is slow, but Jones feels that the organization has made a good start, with five new businesses opening and a bank scheduled to open soon. CRCO's community organizing potential seems to be primarily as a convener of individuals and organizations interested in economic development.

[48] The Local Advisory Council (LAC) is the resident governing body within CHA residential developments.

[49] Interview with Bernadette Williams, November 2004.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IN WASHINGTON PARK

Historical Background

Prior to the 1970s, Washington Park was a thriving black, middle class community. However, over the following thirty years, the community experienced middle class flight as poorer African Americans moved to the area, with the population dropping from approximately 90,000 residents to its current level of just over 14,000.[50]

As a consequence of middle class flight, the majority of the members of the three largest churches in the area (Church of the Good Shepherd, St. Edmund's Episcopal Church, and St. Anselm Church) have moved away from the community. However they have remained affiliated with these churches, creating a Sunday morning influx of middle and upper-middle class African Americans into the community. These churches have established a variety of social, educational and medical services to help the Washington Park community residents.

In the mid-1980s, a federal consent decree was issued against the Chicago Park District, requiring citizen participation in its planning activities. As a result, Mayor Harold Washington created the Chicago Park Advisory Councils to deal with issues related to the City's parks and their surrounding neighborhoods. In the mid-1990s, the Washington Park Advisory Council became active in organizing the community to advocate for improvements in Washington Park, resulting in the renovation of the dilapidated pool and refectory. Currently, the Washington Park Advisory Council is working on the building of a band shell in the park.[51]

When asked about community organizing activities in their neighborhoods, few residents or staff members of local organizations were familiar with the concept of organizing for social change or saw a possibility of achieving greater social justice by working with other community members to make systemic changes. Whether it is a sense of "weary fatalism,"[52] or a lack of familiarity with this type of activity, most residents and local organizations involved in the community are focused on creating activities or events designed to improve the quality of life for the residents, rather than addressing the disparities between the economic and social resources available to the members of this community and those available to other Chicago communities.

Major Issues

CIR conducted 13 interviews with Washington Park community leaders, organizers, activists, and residents. Washington Park has a median household income of just over $15,000 and extremely high unemployment rates (25% of the active labor force participants are unemployed, a figure far lower than the total number of adults who have ceased actively pursuing employment). Thus, the community is

[50] All demographic data for these communities are from "Census 2000: Summary Tables of Social, Economic, and Housing Data for the 77 Community Areas in the City of Chicago (August 20, 2002)." Accessed at http://www.nipc.cog.il.uc/dp234_CA_2000.htm, September 11, 2003.

[51] From an interview with Cecilia Butler, President of the Washington Park Advisory Council, September 2003, and a subsequent telephone conversation, February 2004.

[52] See Cynthia Peters, *The Class Divide,* ZNet Commentary, October 25, 2003.

confronted with many of the same social and economic problems that face other low-income minority neighborhoods in Chicago. The high levels of drug and alcohol abuse are discussed by residents and service providers alike, as well as the devastating impact of drug sales on the neighborhood. Given the high rates of unemployment and lack of jobs that pay a living wage, many of the youth and adults in these communities turn to the illegal drug trade as it provides an accessible source of income.

Not surprisingly, the crime level within the community is also high. CIR attended a meeting in September 2003 at which the Chicago Police presented the crime statistics for Beat 311 in Washington Park for the previous month: 29 crimes were reported against individuals and 49 crimes were reported against property. [53] The police report being overwhelmed by the community's "hot spots" where crimes routinely occur.

According to a number of interviewees, everything has to go through the office of Arenda Troutman, the Alderman for Washington Park, who is closely aligned with Mayor Richard Daley. Other concerns mentioned sporadically were poor schools, high rates of HIV with insufficient educational and healthcare outreach, homelessness, lack of good healthcare facilities, a weak community coalition, lack of public transportation routes responsive to the residents' needs, weak infrastructure, including concerns about street lights, garbage cans, benches, aesthetics as well as the lack of businesses such as a major grocery store and cleaners and the lack of entertainment facilities such as movie theaters, bowling alleys, and concert venues.

Major Needs

The housing stock in Washington Park has been seriously neglected; only 10% is owner-occupied and 23% is currently vacant. Two churches, St. Edmund's and Good Shepherd, have created redevelopment corporations to rehab and construct multi-unit residences as well as townhomes near church facilities. Few residents can afford to purchase the vintage single-family homes that are in the community, and residents and organization staff members expressed concern as to how many residents would be able to afford the new homes.

The relocation to Washington Park of former residents of the Robert Taylor Homes is a major concern in the community. An insufficient number of units are being built to replace the ones that are being lost, and most CHA residents cannot afford the new units. Community Renewal has become involved in organizing around this issue.

Youth have few places to go in the community. Interviewees reported that there are only a handful of after school programs for children and none for teens. Most spoke about the need for jobs and job training programs that would lead to jobs with living wages. One interviewee referred to the number of community residents who are former offenders and are unable to find employment. A number of older residents expressed a desire to improve the appearance of the community, making it more attractive with flowers and trees and park benches along the street. Residents and organization staff also discussed crime and that they wanted more effort directed toward increasing neighborhood safety.

[53]Crimes against individuals include: battery, robbery, assault, offenses involving children, criminal sexual assault, kidnapping, and sex offenses. Crimes against property include: criminal damage, theft, criminal trespass, arson, recovery of foreign substance, damage to personal property, violation order of protection, and deceptive practice.

Current Resources

When discussing the housing resources available to the Washington Park community, invariably the discussion referred to the work being carried out by the Rev. Richard Tolliver, pastor of the **St. Edmund's Church** and **St. Edmund's Redevelopment Corporation** (SERC). As one of 14 local LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) program participants and with $8.9 million dollars from federal, City and private donors, SERC is converting 56 former Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) units in three sites around the church into mixed income housing. [54] Furthermore, **Good Shepherd Community Services Organization** has partnered with private developer Rich Sciortino to redevelop housing in the neighborhood. Since 1994, they have rehabbed 46 units and built 56 units, 10 of which were reserved for residents from the Robert Taylor homes. Those involved in the building and rehabbing of property expressed enthusiasm and optimism about the impact that this better quality housing will have on the viability of the neighborhood, in particular for encouraging middle class African Americans to return to the community. Yet the same factors lead some residents and organization staff members to express uncertainty about the impact on the current residents of Washington Park who, they are afraid, may become "undesirable" to a more upscale community.

St. Edmund's Church also operates a charter school (Chicago International Charter School) and hosts a local block club composed of residents from a number of blocks in the neighborhood.

The **Good Shepherd Church Community Services Organization** sees its mission as revitalizing the housing stock and providing social programs for the neighborhood. Towards that mission, it provides daycare, after-school tutoring, a senior program that provides lunch, a weekly free medical and social work clinic in conjunction with the University of Chicago, scouts and a summer camp. Good Shepherd focuses its activities on the area within a one-mile radius of its church.

St. Anselm Church focuses all of its outreach work on providing "direct services rather than organizing or anything related to policy, given the overwhelming immediate needs of the neighborhood residents and our limited resources."[55] They provide an after school program and have an outreach ministry to needy families. Last year, there was an attempt to establish an expanded childcare program between four of the churches, but it has not gone forward.

Father Webber estimated that there are approximately 50 small churches in the neighborhood and that most church-going residents of Washington Park are affiliated with these institutions.

Current Community Organizing Activities

Most community organizing activity in Washington Park is a function of the interests of individual organizations; it is infrequently motivated by the issues around which a variety of organizations and individuals have coalesced. Therefore, the following presentation of activities is according to sponsoring organizations.

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[54] "Church to make CHA sites home again," *Chicago Tribune*, August 12, 2003, pp.1-2.

[55] Interview with Father Mark Webber, St. Anselm Church, September 2003, and a subsequent telephone conversation, February 2004.

St. Edmund's Redevelopment Corporation focuses its efforts on the area bound by 55th and 63rd Streets, and King Drive to State Street. With funding from their LISC New Communities grant, SERC hired a director and a community organizer in October 2003. It plans on surveying local businesses and speaking with members of the small churches to find out their needs and the ways in which SERC can become involved. Some respondents raised questions about the way that SERC has worked with the community in the past, particularly around its housing initiative. For example, one interviewee said: "It looks to me like SERC did not involve the residents of the community before it came in and started doing its work, and there is thus considerable mistrust of the SERC. I don't know if they even have any residents on their board of directors. This has to change, or [SERC] will never be trusted." [56]

When probed about the impact of the housing development on the community, interviewees spoke of SERC's difficult position. For example, one person said, "If residents were pushed out by the gentrification, that would be bad. They [SERC] don't want to alienate folks, but residents assume that they aren't invested in the community. At a recent block club meeting, residents said, right out, that they assume that SERC isn't invested in the community. These are community residents versus the owners. A connection needs to be made with the renters. Most of the homeowners are absentee. How do you empower the residents who feel they are being exploited?"[57] However, other residents are appreciative of the rehabbing work that SERC has done: "They can now get insurance whereas it was difficult to impossible before, and their property values are increasing. Even the values of the vacant lots are going up."[58]

SERC plans to create a resident leadership development program providing forums on community involvement to residents with the hope that it will generate some local community leaders. SERC believes that "residents know what they want, but do not know how to get it – who to call and what to do."[59]

When asked about residents who are involved in community organizing, SERC's deputy director was able to identify only one person, someone who had been a candidate for the LISC New Communities director position. SERC was aware of "some concern about the Dan Ryan closures" but felt that the meetings held by the Chicago and Illinois Departments of Transportation were not well attended due to lack of publicity, rather than disinterest of residents. [60] SERC has yet to determine how it will be involved in the issue beyond disseminating materials to residents.

Reverend Tolliver, the Church's rector and director of SERC, did not agree to be interviewed by CIR for this study.

West Washington Park Residents' Association Block Club is somewhat unconventional in its membership. It covers the area from 60th to 63rd Streets, from King Drive to State Street because there was not enough interest from any one block to support a block club. Nonetheless, it is still a small group of residents that looks at what one local leader referred to as "mundane matters" such as wrong way traffic on one-way streets. According to this respondent, "The participants don't have the skills, background or interest to move in the direction of community organizing." Those most invested and

[56] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[57] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[58] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[59] Comment by LISC New Communities' director at a meeting on October 2003. This program is funded by Polk Bros. Foundation, and covers the costs of the program staff.
[60] Comment of SERC's deputy director at October 2003 meeting and in a subsequent phone conversation, March 2004.

involved in the block club are local homeowners. Its major activity last year was a block club party and the focus at the meeting CIR attended was the upcoming holiday party. When CIR explained the topic of the study, the residents inquired about the possibility of the foundation purchasing computers for their after school program.

CIR attended a local CAPS meeting for Beat 311 in Washington Park, which was held immediately following the block club meeting. The issues of greatest concern for the residents present at the meeting were acts of arson in the neighborhood and the large number of adults and teens congregating around the churches and residential centers including around the senior housing center run by St. Edmund's.[61]

Good Shepherd Community Services Organization (GSCSO), is led by its executive director, Reverend Jesse Knox. Under his skillful leadership, this organization has become a kind of "community center," providing multiple social services to a range of local community members, from children to senior citizens. He envisions GSCSO fostering community organizing through individual projects, like the pre-apprenticeship program which GSCSO directed for two years in collaboration with DuSable High School.[62] Knox worked with the Washington Park Interfaith Advisory Council, from which Greater Washington Park Community Development Corporation later evolved. The Council held meetings at Good Shepherd Church to determine areas targeted for a constellation of development resources in order to avoid financial conflicts. Although the GSCSO was successful in building and rehabbing 56 units, some members were concerned that its principles were compromised by the lack of available low income units and the scarcity of minority contractors. Eventually ten units were reserved for Robert Taylor residents, and GSCSO's plan for future projects slated includes as high as 80 percent minority participation. While he believes that the area desperately needs mixed income residents, Knox expressed concern that gentrification might involve displacement of the poor. Knox thinks that foundations interested in supporting community organizing in Washington Park, should expand their concept of organizational development to include the type of work in which he and his organization are engaged.

St. Anselm Church is led by Father Mark Webber who came to Washington Park one year ago after an extended stay in Africa. Like Englewood's other large churches, the majority of his congregation does not live in the parish, and are interested in supporting the church's current direct service activities. Father Webber was notable among CIR's interviewees for expressing a desire to learn more about community organizing and how he and his church could engage in this activity. "It might be helpful to see write-ups of other community organizing efforts that the foundation has funded and how that evolved. What are the basics of community organizing? I have a little book knowledge and am interested. I contacted United Power for help in this area, but they aren't in the neighborhood and they never called back. If there were forums for the ministers, some don't live in the community - some would be interested."

Washington Park Advisory Council (WPAC)/Washington Park Community Coalition (WPCC) is the one organization/institution that appears to be doing grassroots, community organizing within

[61] Police officers told residents to encourage their tenants to call the police if they ever see any suspicious activity, and that "if you or they use your cell phones, we can't trace where the call originates." In a later interview with a community organization, CIR was told that the previous captain of the third district was discovered to be working with local drug dealers, reporting the identity of those making complaints to the persons about whom they were complaining, resulting in retaliations. Although the captain was replaced, the residents are still leery of working with the police.

[62] The church worked with 10 youth per year who were learning carpentry, plumbing and painting. The hope was that the youth would be hired to help with some of the rehabbing in the community. All of the youth in the program graduated from high school.

Washington Park.[63] The organizations are run by Cecilia Butler who became WPAC's president in the 1990s and has been its president ever since. WPCC formed in 1994 out of three separate organizations, with the goal of addressing issues of concern to the Washington Park community. It took on a number of issues in their early years including:

- Investigating Commonwealth Edison's transmission towers that were in the backyard of the 12 CHA buildings in the community. Residents believed that cancer levels were inordinately high among the community members and residents, and WPCC did a survey to assess the cancer rates.
- Preventing the closure of the CTA station adjacent to the community.
- Creating an empowerment zone in Woodlawn and Washington Park.

Butler participated in community organizing training provided by the Woodlawn Organization (TWO). Although she felt that she learned a lot from it, she did not believe that the Alinsky model that highly influences TWO's activities and focus, would work well in Washington Park. She feels that this model allows for and encourages the integration of the church and religion into the community organization, and she believes that they should have separate roles and domains.

WPCC rents its space for $1 per year from a church that is now closed. WPCC rehabbed the space, although there is still no heat in the building and thus cannot be used from December until April or May. During the winter, Ms. Butler runs the organization out of her home. WPCC became the Community Economic Development Agency (CEDA) for Washington Park that helps residents have electricity and gas turned on in their buildings. In addition to the funds from CEDA, WPCC has received funding from Crossroads, Wieboldt Foundation, State Rep. Howard Kenner (now replaced by Rep. Ken Duncan) and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

WPCC has also offered several GED classes to help residents become qualified for better jobs, and is currently working with Chicago Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues on the Building Bridges Program to help residents enter the trades. They want to expand the program that WPCC began that teaches skills in metal refinishing.[64]

WPCC is currently involved in two organizing campaigns:

- Stopping the efforts to eliminate the on/off ramps on the Dan Ryan Expressway at 43rd, 51st, 59th and 76th streets.[65]
- The establishment of a non-church based credit union. The church-based credit unions in the neighborhood do not allow open meetings and transparency in their transactions, so Butler felt that a secular community-based credit union would be helpful to the larger Washington Park community. The South Side Community Federal Credit Union opened in November 2003 as a joint project of WPCC and Woodlawn and is located on the corner of 55th Street and King Drive. WPCC, which will act as the credit union's fiscal agent, will share space there.

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[63] The information about these organizations and Ms. Butler's role within them is based on an interview with Ms. Butler, September 2003, and subsequent telephone conversations.

[64] There are rusting rail cars on the tracks that run next to the community, and they believe that they could create a neighborhood industry of refinishing them.

[65] The article, "Residents say Dan Ryan ramp closures will create a hot mess," listed Butler as a member of the Committee to Save the Dan Ryan and gave her telephone number as the contact for more information (*South End*, September 11, 2003, p. 3).

ADDITIONAL ISSUES IN SOUTH SIDE ORGANIZING

In the effort to better understand the community organizing efforts on the South Side of Chicago, CIR spoke with several people who are involved in community organizing, although not necessarily in the three communities targeted in this study. It was CIR's intention to learn from those who understand the dynamics of community organizing and might be aware of organizations or individuals on the South Side that we had not identified. In these interviews, CIR also probed for ideas about how nascent organizing initiatives that emerge from within the communities, in contrast to those brought in from outside the community, might be supported and strengthened. Repeatedly, CIR was referred to two organizations: the TARGET Area Development Corporation (TARGET) and the Developing Communities Project (DCP). CIR spoke at length with the staff from both of these agencies, and then talked with people from the community and other organizing agencies to hear their perspectives on the work that TARGET and DCP are doing and their potential for catalyzing other community organizing initiatives on the South Side.

CIR's interviews in Englewood, Riverdale, and Washington Park found that the predominant types of community activity in these neighborhoods are oriented to social services. Interviewees also spoke about sporadic episodes of "reactive activism" after something harmful occurred, for example after a shooting people are upset and speak out, but then activism around the issue would stop. Both TARGET and DCP take a significantly different approach to organizing, addressing problems with a proactive and systemic approach that results in achieving significant change.

An example of DCP's organizing strategy and its impact, is its current organizing campaign that has focused on extending the CTA Red Line from 95th Street to 130th Street. The City scheduled a meeting to solicit community input but it was at 71st Street and South Shore Drive. Only four people attended the meeting, including three from DCP, who heard a radio announcement about it at the last minute. DCP staff organized a meeting in the community at a church that was attended by 200 community residents and members of the CTA, and presented a petition with 1,400 signatures endorsing the extension of the Red Line. DCP brought together the six aldermen from the communities affected by the proposed Red Line extension and helped them as a group to prepare for their budget meetings so that they could present a united demand for the proposed extension. The successful outcome included the Mayor's endorsement of the Red Line extension and an increase in the level of funding proposed for the extension from $500 million to $680 million. If this project goes ahead, it will be have positive economic impact on the Southeast side of Chicago.

DCP's work covers a range of community issues, including:

- Organizing residents to successfully lobby for a library in Roseland.
- Organizing and training residents to become citizen alert patrol persons in West Pullman.
- Compiling a resource manual for former offenders.
- Spearheading a campaign to register former offenders to vote.
- Lobbying successfully in partnership with TARGET for a bill in the Illinois legislature to allow for the expungement of records for former offenders with misdemeanor or lesser offences.
- Collaborating with TARGET to create the Developing Justice Coalition that now includes ten organizations.

TARGET (Teaching Area Residents in Gresham and Englewood to Take part in area development) started initially as a project out of Ambassadors for Christ Church (on 79th Street and Ashland) in 1995 to

address the area's deteriorating commercial corridors. For two years it worked to create community plans for commercial strips on the Southeast side. Because of residents' fears regarding the potential negative impact of gentrification, the group was unable to move their ideas beyond the planning stage. The group disbanded and TARGET was formed. This time, TARGET involved community leaders and over the following two years, the group was able to attract support for the plan. TARGET was successful at obtaining endorsement by the Chicago City Council for the plan.

TARGET has focused much of its efforts on enlarging its constituency of community members who are trained and active in community organizing. TARGET sends many of its members to workshops and training in a variety of organizing styles.

TARGET's successes include organizing community members and clergy from local churches to "take back the streets" from drug dealers and those involved in other criminal activity. Rather than calling in the police to either push the criminal activity to another corner or neighborhood, or to simply lock up the offenders, TARGET has purposively worked to provide alternatives for those involved in criminal activity and reconnect them to individuals in the community in a way that discourages their involvement in activities harmful to themselves and the community. TARGET also worked with the office of Cook County State's Attorney Richard Devine to reexamine his office's support of legislation that was harming the community. This led to the collaboration between Devine's office and TARGET to lobby for laws that improve conditions in the community, rather than harm them.

Both TARGET and DCP spoke explicitly about the ways that their organizing strategy differs from that of other community organizing agencies. Approaches DCP considers particularly effective include educating its constituency, creating collaborations with other organizations, and pushing the opposition to change when necessary.

> We're not doing the Saul Alinsky model. Alinsky put a lot of folks in the room. But those folks often don't know why they are there. We are not able to put in 1,000 people, but the 200 to 300 know why they are there. We had a training [for community members] on agitation—traditional Saul Alinsky. But we are moving beyond that to making alliances that are lasting. We understand the need for making people uncomfortable. But we can work with individuals or groups, or agitate.[66]

Another organizer described DCP, saying "They are not always the ones speaking out in meetings. But that doesn't mean that they aren't contributing and strategizing. When its time to speak out, they do. But they are careful and thorough in their work. They get things to happen and they get them done."[67]

TARGET staff also addressed how its approach differs from that of other organizing groups:

> We had to figure out how we could do organizing. We aren't going to do things that would send us to jail or hold signs at someone's home unless there was no other way to accomplish something. We wouldn't do those actions where they call people to a meeting and then yell at them [accountability sessions].[68]

[66] Interview with Developing Communities Project staff, October 2003.
[67] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[68] Interview with Patricia Watkins, TARGET, October 2003.

One African American organizer who was familiar with the work of TARGET and DCP said that she sees a significant difference between the work taken on by black organizers within their own communities, and outside community organizing entities that come into the black communities to do their work:

> Whites can address the little issues. They bite off something where they think they can be successful. But they aren't concerned about the issues that I care about. While they are interested in fighting for union people, I am concerned about the needs of our people who are in jail.[69]

Another seasoned organizer had a different perspective on the role of African-American leadership in community organizing:

> We have community leaders – black and white – who are actually "misleaders," taking away power from the community. We need to teach our community how to access power and use the resources that are out there without fighting each other. Englewood has 1,000 organizations that behave like pigs at a trough, knocking each other down. Until that happens, it will never be able to make significant change in the community.[70]

This perspective on some leaders and their harmful interactions with the community was echoed by another organizer in the black community:

> Some of the leaders in the community have sold out. They and their families are being taken care of – look at where their kids are going to school. Look at where they end up living. But all of the folks who they supposedly are representing get nothing.[71]

There is a lack of organizations on the South Side of Chicago that are doing any work that broadly falls within the parameters of community organizing. There are even fewer that have demonstrated the capacity to sustain this work at a high level of efficacy, and still fewer that are run and staffed by African Americans. Strengthening competent African American organizations and working with them to build on their successes would be a strategic approach to establishing community organizing as a viable response to systemic social and economic injustice in these South side neighborhoods.

[69] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[70] Confidential interview, October 2003.
[71] Confidential interview, October 2003.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1
COMMUNITY PROFILES FOR ENGLEWOOD, RIVERDALE, AND WASHINGTON PARK[72]

Profile of Englewood (Community Area 68)

General Demographics

Englewood is an urban neighborhood nestled between the Dan Ryan Expressway and Racine Avenue on Chicago's South Side. It is home to 40,222 residents.

- 55% of residents are female and 45% of residents are male.
- The median age of the neighborhood's population is 28 years.
- Of the total population, 14,569 or 36% are under age 18, while 25,653 or 64% are 18 years of age or older.
- Of those over 18 years of age, 11.39% are 65 years of age or older.
- The neighborhood is 98.2% black or African American.

Households

- There are 12,619 households in the Englewood community with 47% of the households occupied by individuals under 18 years of age.
- 29.5% of households are occupied by an individual 65 years of age or older.
- The average household size is 3.16 persons.

Housing

- There are 15,210 housing units in Englewood and 12,619 of the units are occupied.
- Of the occupied units, 258 lack complete plumbing facilities and 288 lack complete kitchen facilities.
- 31.5% of the housing units are owner-occupied.
- 68.5% of the housing united are renter-occupied.

School Enrollment

Of individuals over 3 years of age, 13,900 are enrolled in school.

- 975 in nursery or preschool.
- 928 in kindergarten.
- 7,133 in elementary school grades 1-8.
- 3,099 enrolled in high school grades 9-12.
- 1,765 are enrolled in college or graduate school.

[72] All demographic data for these communities are from "Census 2000: Summary Tables of Social, Economic, and Housing Data for the 77 Community Areas in the City of Chicago (August 20, 2002)." Accessed at http://www.nipc.cog.il.us/dp234_CA_2000.htm, September 11, 2003.

Educational Attainment

- Of the 25,849 residents who are over 25 years of age, 9.2% have less than a 9th grade education.
- Over one-third or 31.4% of the population does not have a diploma or GED.
- 28.9% have earned a high school diploma or a GED.
- 21.3% have some college but no degree.
- 4.0 % have an associate's degree.
- 4.0% have a bachelor's degree.
- 1.2% have a graduate or professional degree.
- Of the population 5 years of age and older, 96.2% speak English only.

Employment

- Of the Englewood population 16 years of age or older, 46.1% are active participants in the labor force. Of those, 74.2% are employed and 25.8% are unemployed.
- Of workers 16 years of age and older, 39% use public transportation to commute to and from work. Those who do not use public transportation, use alternate means such as driving alone, driving or riding in a carpool, walking, they may work at home, etc.
- The mean travel time to work is 43.6 minutes.

Income

- The median household income in Englewood is $18,955.
- Of the 12,619 households in Englewood, 73.1% earn less than $35,000 per year, 59.8% earn less than $25,000 per year, and 32.4% earn less than $10,000 per year.
- 83.4% of families with related children under 18 years of age living in the household live in poverty.

Profile of Riverdale (Community Area 54)

General Demographics

Riverdale is a community of 9,809 residents.

- 56.5% of residents are female and 43.5% of residents are male.
- The median age of the neighborhood's population is 20.5 years.
- Of the total population, 5,305 or 54.1% are under age 18, while 4,504 or 45.9% are 18 years of age or older.
- Of those over 18 years of age, 9.5% are 65 years of age or older.
- The neighborhood is 98.1% black or African American.
- Of the population 5 years of age and older, 96.8% speak English only.

Households

- There are 2,868 households in the Riverdale community with 64.1% of the households occupied by individuals under 18 years of age.
- 14.6% of households are occupied by an individual 65 years of age or older.
- The average household size is 3.4 persons.

Housing

- There are 3,226 housing units in Riverdale and 2,868 of the units are occupied.
- Of the occupied units, 67 lack complete plumbing facilities and 24 lack complete kitchen facilities.
- 10.1% of the housing units are owner-occupied.
- 89.9% of the housing united are renter-occupied.

School Enrollment

Of individuals over 3 years of age, 4,116 are enrolled in school.

- 328 in nursery or preschool.
- 313 in kindergarten.
- 2,319 in elementary school grades 1-8.
- 761 enrolled in high school grades 9-12.
- 395 are enrolled in college or graduate school.

Educational Attainment

- Of the 4,258 residents who are over 25 years of age, 7.1% have less than a 9th grade education.
- Over one-third or 30.5% of the population does not have a diploma or GED.
- 29.1% have earned a high school diploma or a GED.
- 25.3% have some college but no degree.
- 5.4 % have an associate's degree.
- 2.6% have a bachelor's degree.
- 0% have a graduate or professional degree.

Employment

- Of the Riverdale population 16 years of age or older, 53.1% are active participants in the labor force. Of those, 66.5% are employed and 33.5% are unemployed.
- Of workers 16 years of age and older, 34.8% use public transportation to commute to and from work. Those who do not use public transportation, use alternate means such as driving alone, driving or riding in a carpool, walking, they may work at home, etc.
- The mean travel time to work is 44.9 minutes.

Income

- The median household income in Riverdale is $13,178.
- Of the 2,868 households in Riverdale, 80% earn less than $35,000 per year, 69.7% earn less than $25,000 per year, and 40.9% earn less than $10,000 per year.
- 92.5% of families with related children under 18 years of age living in the household live in poverty.

Profile of Washington Park (Community Area 40)

General Demographics

Washington Park is a community of 14,146 residents.

- 54.5% of residents are female and 44.6% of residents are male.
- The median age of the neighborhood's population is 26.1 years.
- Of the total population, 14,146 or 62.3% are under age 18, while 5,332 or 37.3% are 18 years of age or older.

- Of those over 18 years of age, 3.4% are 65 years of age or older.
- The neighborhood is 98.1% black or African American.
- Of the population 5 years of age and older, 96.8% speak English only.

Households

- There are 4,742 households in the Washington Park community with 46.3% of the households occupied by individuals under 18 years of age.
- 22.5% of households are occupied by an individual 65 years of age or older.
- The average household size is 2.94 persons.

Housing

- There are 6,153 housing units in Washington Park and 4,742 of the units are occupied.
- Of the occupied units, 83 lack complete plumbing facilities and 129 lack complete kitchen facilities.
- 10% of the housing units are owner-occupied.
- 90% of the housing united are renter-occupied.

School Enrollment

Of individuals over 3 years of age, 5,229 are enrolled in school.

- 380 in nursery or preschool.
- 248 in kindergarten.
- 2,677 in elementary school grades 1-8.
- 1,292 enrolled in high school grades 9-12.
- 632 are enrolled in college or graduate school.

Educational Attainment

- Of the 7,213 residents who are over 25 years of age, 8.4% have less than a 9th grade education.
- Over one-third or 31.3% of the population does not have a diploma or GED.
- 30% have earned a high school diploma or a GED.
- 19.8% have some college but no degree.
- 4.4 % have an associate's degree.
- 4.3% have a bachelor's degree.
- 1.6% have a graduate or professional degree.

Employment

- Of the Washington Park population 16 years of age or older, 49.8% are active participants in the labor force. Of those, 75.1% are employed and 24.9% are unemployed
- Of workers 16 years of age and older, 50% use public transportation to commute to and from work. Those who do not use public transportation, use alternate means such as driving alone, driving or riding in a carpool, walking, they may work at home, etc.
- The mean travel time to work is 47.7 minutes

Income

- The median household income in Washington Park is $15,160
- Of the 4,742 households in Washington Park, 77.2% earn less than $35,000 per year, 66.6% earn less than $25,000 per year, and 36% earn less than $10,000 per year
- 84.5% of families with related children under 18 years of age living in the household live in poverty.

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEWEE AND COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION

Organization	Contact	Title	Phone	Address
* Indicates individual or organization was interviewed or provided information for this project. Eleven interviewees requested anonymity.				
ACORN*	Madeline Talbott	Head Organizer	312-939-7488	650 S. Clark Street Chicago, IL 60605
Activist	Prexy Nesbitt	Community Activist and Professor at Columbia College	708-445-7359	502 Jackson Oak Park, IL 60304
Alderman for the 15th Ward*	Theodore Thomas	Alderman	773-778-9609	2440 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60629
Alderman for the 16th Ward	Shirley Coleman	Alderman	773-918-1670	1249 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60636
Alderman for the 17th Ward	Latasha Thomas	Alderman	773-723-0908	7811 S. Racine Ave. Chicago, IL 60620
Alderman for the 9th Ward*	Anthony Beele	Alderman	773.785.1100	34 E. 112th Place Chicago, IL 60628
Alderman for the 20th Ward	Arenda Troutman	Alderman	773.324.5224	5859 S. State Street Chicago, IL 60637
Altgeld/Murray Local Advisory Council*	Bernadette Williams	President	312.674.3512/3	922 E. 131st St. Chicago, IL 60827
Antioch Missionary Baptist Church	Rev. Clay Evans and Rev. Dew			415 W. Englewood Ave. Chicago, IL 60621
Boulevard Arts Center*	Martha Jones	Executive Director	773-476-4900	6011 S. Justine Chicago, IL 60636
Cable Program "My Guest Ain't Guessing!!!"	Leon Loving	Host/Producer	773-651-7059	
Calumet Region Cluster Org.*	Barbara Jones	Director	773.933.9384	10616 S. Torrence Chicago, IL 60617
Center for Economic Progress*	J.C. Craig	Director, Tax Counseling Project	312-252-0280	29 E. Madison, Suite 910 Chicago, IL 60602
Chicago Commons	Josephine Robinson	Director	773-376-5242	1335 W. 51st Street Chicago, IL 60609
Chicago Communicator Newspaper*	Morgan Carter	Media Council	773-488-9024	3531 W. Roosevelt Road Chicago, IL 60624
Chicago Dept. of Human Services (Englewood)	Vacountess Johnson		312-141-0254	641 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60621
Chicago Dept. of Human Services (Englewood)	Yusuf Hasan	Director of Youth Services	312-746-9946	641 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60621
Chicago Dept. of Human Services (Englewood)	Glenola Lashley	Outreach Worker		641 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60621
Chicago Interfaith Center for Worker Justice*	Rev. Anthony Haynes	Director - Building Bridges Project	773.773.728.8400	1020 W. Bryn Mawr Chicago, IL 60660

Organization	Contact	Title	Phone	Address
Chicago Park District	Jacqui Ulrich	Cultural Program Manager	312-747-7661	4434 S. Lake Park Avenue Chicago, IL 60653
Chicago Police Dept - 5th District*	Lieutenant Keith Reynolds	Community Policing	312.747.3100	
Chicago Police Dept - 7th District	Cmdr Tina Skahill		312-747-8223	6120 South Racine Chicago, IL 60636
Chicago Police Dept. - 2nd District*	Ofcr Cynthia Womack	Community Policing	312.747.8366	5101 S. Wentworth Chicago, IL 60609
Church of the Good Shepherd Congregation*	Rev. Jesse Knox III	Pastor	773.684.6561	5700 S. Prairie Chicago, IL 60637
City Colleges of Chicago	William Donahue	Vice Chair of Administrative Services	312-553-3306	
City of Chicago	Arnold Randall	Deputy Planning Commissioner		121 N. LaSalle St., # 1006 Chicago, IL 60602
Columbia College, Community Arts Partnerships*	Julie Simpson Michael Warr	Executive Director, Producing Director, DanceAfrica	312-344-8851 312-344-8868	33 East Congress Pkwy. Chicago, IL 60605
Community Renewal Society*	Seth Zurer	Intern	773-209-9543	332 S. Michigan Ave., #500 Chicago, IL 60604
Developing Communities Project*	Deborah Strickland	Executive Director	773.928.2500	212 E. 95th St. Chicago, IL
District 7 District Advisory Committee (Comm. Policing)*	Jamesetta Harris	Chairperson	773-776-8511	5528 S. Marshfield Chicago, IL 60621
DSSA*	Don Samuelson	Founder	847-356-7800	310 N. Milwaukee Ave. Lake Villa, IL 60046
Englewood Chamber of Commerce	Arness Dancy		773-471-2015	P.O. Box 21904 Chicago, IL 60621
Franz Printing*	Bill Jones	Sales Representative	773-776-0883	2046 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60636
Future Teachers of Chicago*	Patt Kroll	Technical Director	773-651-0954	513 W. 72nd Street Chicago, IL 60621
Greater Englewood Community and Family Task Force*	John Paul Jones	Community Development Liaison	312-939-7198	407 S. Dearborn, #1360 Chicago, IL 60605
Greater Full Gospel Community Church	Rev. Louise Dixon	Minister	773.493.0603	7326 S. Peoria Chicago, IL
Hope Center	Cheryl Spivey Perry	Director	312.949.9030	3424 S. State, #324 Chicago, IL
Imagine Englewood if…*	Jean Carter-Hill	Executive Director	773-471-1668 or 773-535-3285	P.O. Box 368888 Chicago, IL 60636
Kennedy King College	Wellington Wilson	President	773-602-5000	6800 S. Wentworth Chicago, IL 60621

Organization	Contact	Title	Phone	Address
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)*	Wesley Walker	Program Officer	312-697-6442	
Mayor's Office of Workforce Development*			773.746.7777	1615 W. Chicago Ave. Chicago, IL
Metropolitan Family Services - Calumet Center*	Dian Powell	Executive Director	773.371.3650	235 E. 103rd Street Chicago, IL 60628
MPACT	Kim Hunter	Executive Director	773-778-3414	6011 S. Justine Chicago, IL 60636
Neighborhood Capital Budget Group	Jackie Leavy	Executive Director	312-939-7198	407 S. Dearborn, #1360 Chicago, IL 60605
New Birth Church of God and Christ	Pastor Payton	Pastor	773-776-3134	1500 W. 69th Street Chicago, IL 60636
New Englewood Historical Society of Chicago*	Kwame John R. Porter, Ph.D.	Acting Senior Curator	773-324-7875	
New Englewood Terrace*	Lorez Morris-El, Lional Nixon	Director of Community and Resident Services Owners Representative	773-651-3078, 773-874-1122	6425 S. Lowe Street Chicago, IL 60621
On Our Own, Inc. - A Domestic Violence Prevention Agency	Lynda Jones	Executive Director	312-435-1007	1229 S. Michigan Ave. #102 Chicago, IL 60605
People for Community Recovery*	Cheryl Johnson		773.468.1645	13116. S. Ellis Riverdale, IL 60827
Pullman Bank*	Saul Klibanow	Director, Pullman Initiatives	773-602-8392	815 W. 63rd Street Chicago IL 60621
Rainbow Push			773-373-3366	930 E. 50th Street Chicago, IL 60615
Rebirth of Englewood Community Development Corporation*	Vincent Barnes	Executive Director	773-778-2371	1912 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60636
Representative Constance A. Howard*	Carlos Estes	Senior Legislative Liaison	773-783-8800	8729 S. State Street Chicago, IL 60619
Resources Plus*	John Porter	CEO	773-752-6255	1488 E. 52nd Street, #488 Chicago, IL 60615
Riverdale Redevelopment Corporation*	Georgianna Welch	Director	773.660.9431	305 E. 132nd Street Chicago, IL 60827
St Stephens Evangelical Lutheran Church*	Rev. Anthony Williams	Pastor	773-783-0416	910 W. 65th Street Chicago, IL 60621
St. Anselm Church	Father Mark Webber	Priest	773.493.5959	6045 S. Michigan Chicago, IL 60637
St. Bernard Hospital*	Charles Holland	Vice President of Hospital & Community Development	773-962-4165	326 W. 64th Street Chicago, IL 60621

Organization	Contact	Title	Phone	Address
St. Edmund's Episcopal Church*	Rev. Anna Henderson	Pastor	773.288.0038	6105 S. Michigan Chicago, IL 60637
St. Edmund's Redevelopment Corporation*	Rev. Richard Tolliver, Cecelia Hunt	Director, Deputy Director	773.752.8893	6105 S. Michigan Chicago, IL 60637
Southwest Organizing Project*	Jeff Barteau		773.471.8208	2609 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60629
State of Illinois	Mattie Hunter	Senator	312-949-1908	2008 S. Wabash Chicago, IL 60616
State of Illinois	James Meeks	Senator	708.862.1515	2050 E. 159th St. Calumet City, IL
State Rep. For the 5th District	Ken Dunkin	Representative	312-266-0340	1520 N. Wells Chicago, IL 60610
State Rep. For the 6th District	Patricia Bailey	Representative	773-471-9270	1822 W. 63rd Street, Chicago, IL 60609
TARGET*	Patricia Watkins	Director	773.651.6470	1542 W. 79th Chicago, IL 60620
TCA Health (Altgeld Gardens)	Eric Taylor	CEO	773.995.6300	1029 E. 130th St. Chicago, IL 60628
TEAMWORK Englewood*	Vincent Gilbert	Executive Director	773-602-8329	815 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60621
The Business and Economic Revitalization Association	Alicia Spears	Executive Director	773-783-2636	7312 S. Cottage Grove Chicago, IL
The Night Ministry	Michael Miller	Dir. Communal and Community Relations	773-784-9000 x221	
Unified Community Development	Rodney Weary		312-943-0162	
Veterans' Neighborhood Builders Assn.*	Leroy Bowers		773.667.4160	128 E. 58th St. Chicago, IL
Washington Park Advisory Council*	Cecilia Butler	President	773.667.4160	128 E. 58th St. Chicago, IL

CENTER FOR IMPACT RESEARCH

Founded in 1975, the Center for Impact Research (CIR) focuses its work on issues of economic and social justice. CIR uses community-based research to advocate for and achieve changes in public policy and programs. CIR works collaboratively with diverse partners, who are all striving to eliminate the fundamental causes of poverty and injustice. CIR research projects combine quantitative, ethnographic, and participatory methods to provide the community context and data for informing public policy and practice. CIR is focusing its current work in four project areas: Working Families; Children and Adolescents; Seniors; and Alternatives to Incarceration.

CIR'S WORK HAS IMPACT

- Adoption of the Family Violence Option in the 1996 federal welfare reform legislation, which provides battered women on welfare with more time and specialized services to enable them to go safely from welfare to work.
- Improvements by the Illinois State Board of Education's to the Chicago GED testing system.
- Formation of the U.S. Department of Labor's Chicago Sweatshop Task Force, which is creating innovative ways to identify and eliminate sweatshop working conditions.
- Establishment of the Prostitution Alternatives Roundtable, the first collaborative effort in Chicago to bring comprehensive services to women and girls in prostitution.
- Introduction of on-site domestic violence services at two Illinois Department of Human Services Teen Parent Services sites and appointment and training of teen specialists in local welfare offices.
- Launch of the City of Chicago's "Keeping Chicago Affordable" campaign to improve access to income support programs for working families.
- Identification of key barriers to service delivery in local offices of the Illinois Department of Human Services.

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