

1. What are the pluses and minuses to housing as a focus for community development?

Positive

- a. housing meets immediate and basic need, hard to work on other issues when housing is unstable
- b. housing provides a foundation for social development, e.g., neighbors, neighborhood.
- c. housing, when owned, may provide equity

Negative

- a. without addressing other issues—crime, education, health, social services—housing may not provide security, social stability, or equity
- b. the system of housing production is too expensive (inefficient); poor people can't afford to own or rent at affordable prices, housing makes them 'rent poor' and drains resources for other needed things.
- c. concentrating large numbers of poor people together in public or subsidized housing may produce unwanted social outcomes.
- d. a focus on homeownership (individualistic) approach to social mobility may detract from advocacy around more important structural policy issues, e.g., job and industrial policy.

2. What are the pluses and minuses of neighborhood economic development approaches?

Positive

- a. improved shopping, street life, neighborhood appearance, attracts middle income/upper income residents and protects in enhances private investments (including home investments).
- b. better functioning and better-looking neighborhoods provide higher self-esteem for residents, prospering merchants provides alternative role model to youth attracted to illegal market activity.
- c. neighborhood businesses can provide some jobs.
- d. small businesses are often strong advocates for improved police, sanitation, and transportation services.

Negative

- a. a focus at the neighborhood level may obscure vertical growth opportunities at a citywide or regional level, e.g., wholesaling versus retailing.
- b. a focus on existing and legal businesses may distract attention from more significant informal, or illegal, economic activity, e.g., daycare, catering, security, home repair.
- c. a Main Street perspective, construed narrowly, does not leverage neighborhood social and economic assets, e.g., union membership and pension resources, transnational economic flows, church affiliation and investments.
- d. without broad economic development, neighborhood economic development can lead to commercial gentrification.