

**Research Topic:** Community/Neighborhood Sustainment  
Lincoln Lemington/Street Upkeep & Appearance

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## **Lincoln Lemington Community Upkeep**

### **Introduction**

Unmaintained physical disorder has been prevalent in Pittsburgh neighborhoods. Specifically, individuals primarily located in low income neighborhoods have been negatively affected by the poor upkeep of their communities. Factors of physical disorder specifically in the Pittsburgh Lincoln community consist of overgrown trees, cracked roads and sidewalks, abandoned buildings, and litter on the streets. Previous research states the lack of maintenance on neighborhood streets can be associated with higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress for residents within the community. Additionally, studies have demonstrated that maintained communities have a positive correlation with low crime rates. This topic is important to showcase because if the upkeep of the Lincoln community continues to go untreated, it could be detrimental to the Lincoln residents.

### **Literature Review**

Recent studies suggest that there is growing evidence that residents are more likely to walk in attractive neighborhoods, and cracked roads stop residents from engaging in physical activity (Foster, Giles-Corti, Knuiman 2016). This research explores cracked streets and potholes and how the upkeep could inhibit the incidence of physical disorder in the community streets, thus contributing to a more unpleasant walking environment for pedestrians. According to the article, "Stressful Neighborhoods and Depression," which dives into the concept of neighborhood disorder, explains how people within urban neighborhoods are negatively affected by the physical signs of decay in their neighborhoods and their communities' social disorganization. Other research states that based on a series of studies, a neighborhood level of physical disorder is linked to fear of neighborhood crime such as abandoned buildings, litter, and graffiti (Latkin & Curry 2003). Studies have found that overgrown trees lead to a large percentage of residents moving out or forcing residents' houses to go under construction (Neal and 2019). This issue is hazardous to the community because the overgrown trees can lead to fires. We are contributing to this research by tailoring our research to low income residents in the Lincoln community and exploring how the poor upkeep affects them specifically.

### **Method**

We conducted a survey on the Lincoln communities street up-keep. We created this survey using questions developed during an in class assignment for our community-based research projects. The survey consisted of 10 questions. The first set captures the demographics. The second set included the Lincoln residents' view on what they Observe. The next set explored what the residents felt on a scale of 1-10, what was happening every day but was overlooked. Respondents were asked the following,

- On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the highest 1 being the lowest), how many vacant lots do you see within your community each week?

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- Do the overgrown trees in your neighborhood bother you? (Yes or No)
- How many times have you witnessed someone littering or doing graffiti? (Multiple Choice)

## Results

Our study sought to explore the street upkeep and how the overgrown trees affected the community. Results reveal that most people think that the street upkeep such as potholes and the overgrown trees needs to be fixed in their community. The following sections provide further insight into how impactful this issue is for residents and potential solutions to fix it.

### *Respondent Profile*

Survey respondents provided feedback on street upkeep in Lincoln Lemington. Our total survey population included 31 respondents. Of those surveyed, our typical survey respondent fits a unique profile. Our average survey respondents were African American females, 15 and under and 31-40. These individuals also had some college education and the majority lived in single parent homes.

### *Community Needs Assessment*

Respondents provided valuable insight on their community. 64.7% of respondents reported they've seen six or more vacant lots in their community, and 58.1% of respondents seen at least more than five uneven and cracked roads per week. Additionally, 67.8% of respondents witness littering or graffiti seven or more times a week. Results also show that 64.6% of respondents said that overgrown trees bother them. When we asked them to explain how the overgrown trees have affected them, they responded as shown in the table below.

If so, how does it affect you?

28 responses

Blocking like of site of driving
Does not effect me
Doing more
Trees have fallen on houses before.
Sometimes road signs aren't fully visible
It doesn't
They can fall over if they get too big with no care.
It be blocking my house sometimes
Because sometimes it go so bad it block my normal way to go

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*Study Specific Findings*

Our study sought to explore how the street upkeep of Lincoln Lemington affects the community. The overall results from our survey reveal that City Works and those responsible for community appearance need to find ways to fix the street upkeep of Lincoln Lemington. For example, cracked roads, potholes, and overgrown trees can occasionally cause drivers to even have to take different routes.

Overall results from our survey reveal that issues other than upkeep still are present such as gang violence and drug abuse. While street upkeep and general neighborhood appearance are issues, it seems that there are bigger and more pressing issues plaguing the community. Street upkeep is simply a first step of many to strengthening the community.

**Discussion**

With our study we experienced lots of the same people with the same problems such as the overgrown trees blocking the site of people's houses and traffic lights. Additionally there are a lot of potholes and vacant lots in the Lincoln Lemington community that contribute to resident dissatisfaction.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the findings from this study suggest that the Lincoln community's upkeep isn't safe or very visually pleasing to outsiders and residents. This study will also help researchers understand that something needs to be done so that everyone that lives in and outside of the community is pleased with the community's appearance. Results from our research suggest residents agree that the upkeep needs to be better maintained, and some residents try to help a bit, which is very appreciated. The overgrown trees present a hazard as they aren't very safe for drivers or pedestrians that cannot see signs that keep everyone safe. We propose that the city should follow up with the Lincoln community residents to see what can be done about the upkeep or even start a petition to get volunteers to help the Lincoln community.