

Abstract

How can cities improve neighborhood quality after years of decline? One prominent attempt is the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) established in 1991 that earmarked \$400 million over 20 years for neighborhoods to engage residents and create plans to improve the community. Previous studies evaluated the NRP program, but were completed too soon for the program to have a noticeable impact. Additionally, reviews of the first decade of implementation completed by 35 of the 67 neighborhoods assessed the success of the program, but these documents mainly served marketing and accountability purposes. This study adds to the critical appraisal of the NRP program by using census data and indicators for neighborhood income, home value, rent, and vacancy rate to examine whether or not the City of Minneapolis increased neighborhood quality. Propensity score matching paired Minneapolis study site neighborhoods with similar neighborhoods in St. Paul and difference-in-differences and hot spot analysis determined any significant changes in Minneapolis and its neighborhoods from 1990-2014. Regression models explored the relationship between each indicator and variables for NRP participation, amount of NRP funding, number of days participated in the NRP, and neighbor funding levels, and spatial analysis explained why some neighborhoods were more successful than others. Results show that Minneapolis performed better than St. Paul during the study period, and that some neighborhoods in the city experienced statistically significantly greater improvements, most notably the neighborhoods in downtown. Based on this analysis, the study recommends solutions to improve future iterations of this program in other locales.