Introduction to Qualitative Research Coding

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adapted from Dr. Zawadi Rucks-Ahidiana & Dr. Claudia von Vacano

- Its Okay Not to Know (IOKN2K)
- special research projects
- working groups
- 280 workshops & presentations offered per year
- 1,100 consultations provided per year
- 6,000 scholars served per year

Introduction of Facilitators & Participants

Josué Meléndez Rodríguez

- Qualitative Research Lead at D-Lab
- PhD Student at School of Social Welfare
- MA in Postsecondary Education & MSW in Macro Practice
- Research on Social Wellbeing in/through Higher Education

Participants

- Names
- Educational & Work Backgrounds
- Current Research
- Interests/Goals for Training

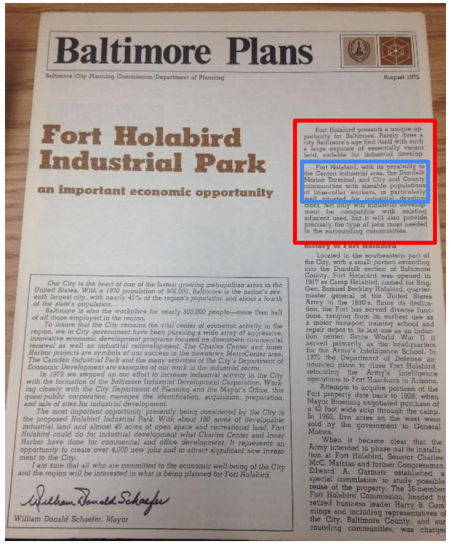
What are Codes? What is Coding

- Deductive & Inductive Coding
- Defining Codes
- Organization of Coding Scheme
  - Establishing Hierarchies
- Multi-Step Nonlinear Process
- Best Practices
- What is Analysis?
- Data Management Tips

What are Codes? What is Coding

Coding is a way of organizing the data around some common idea, concept, or category ACROSS sources.

A

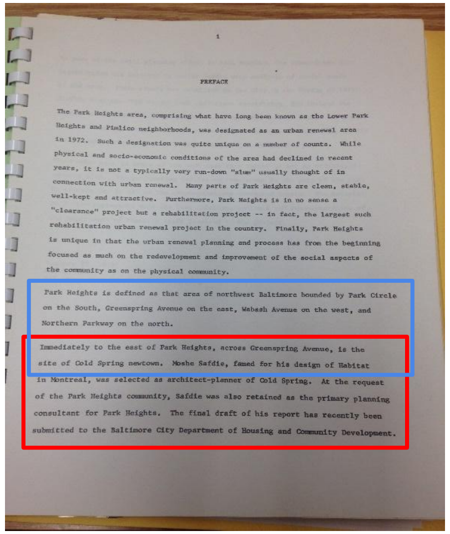


Baltimore Plans

Fort Holabird Industrial Park

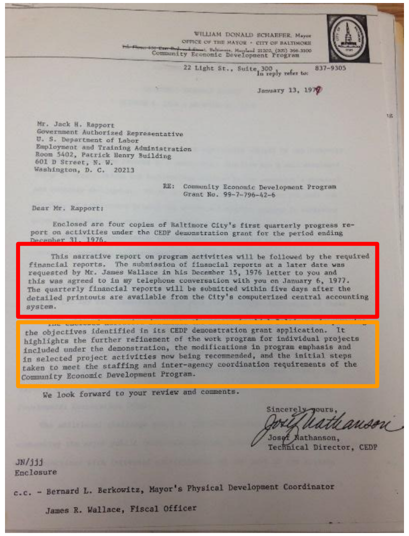
an important economic opportunity

B



PREFACE

C



WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER, Mayor

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR · CITY OF BALTIMORE

Community Economic Development Program

The code of "financial planning" is applied to the selected text from documents A, B, and C, because they all discuss this topic.

Deductive and Inductive Coding

You create codes because you deem the identified topics/concepts/ideas as important and relevant to your study.

- Deductive Coding
  - Codes emerge from your research question and/or the literature review.
- Inductive Coding
  - Codes emerge through engagement with your actual data sources and/or data set.

Defining Codes

Your codes should be defined, just as variables in a quantitative study should be defined. The level of specificity will depend on various factors, such as the complexity of your coding scheme, whether you have a team of coders or are conducting coding on your own, requirements of your field or committee or journal of choice...

- Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- Weighing Scale

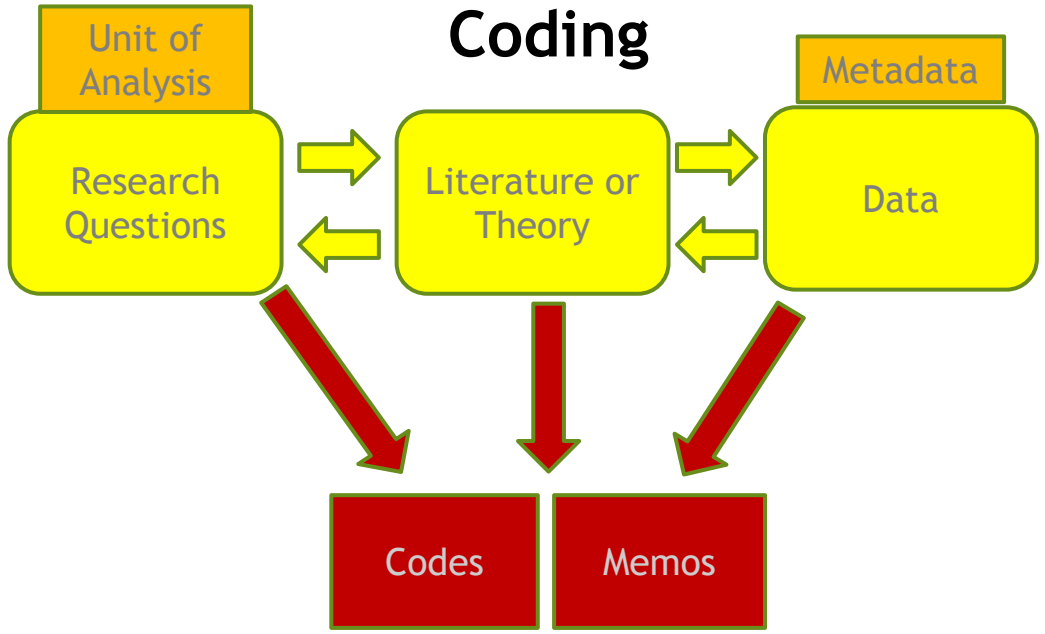
Organization of Coding Scheme

Whether deductive or inductive, codes are organized into a coding scheme that you then use to systematically identify relevant segments of data within your entire data set.

- Flat Coding
  - Codes are organized at the same conceptual level.
- Hierarchical Coding
  - Codes are organized into groups and subgroups based on whatever conceptualization the researcher deems appropriate/relevant.

Multi-Step Nonlinear Process

Different researchers engage the coding process in different ways… However you choose to create and organize codes, you should expect it will be a multi-step process, maybe 4, 5, or more rounds, and that there will be a great deal of "back-and-forth" throughout the process.



Best Practices

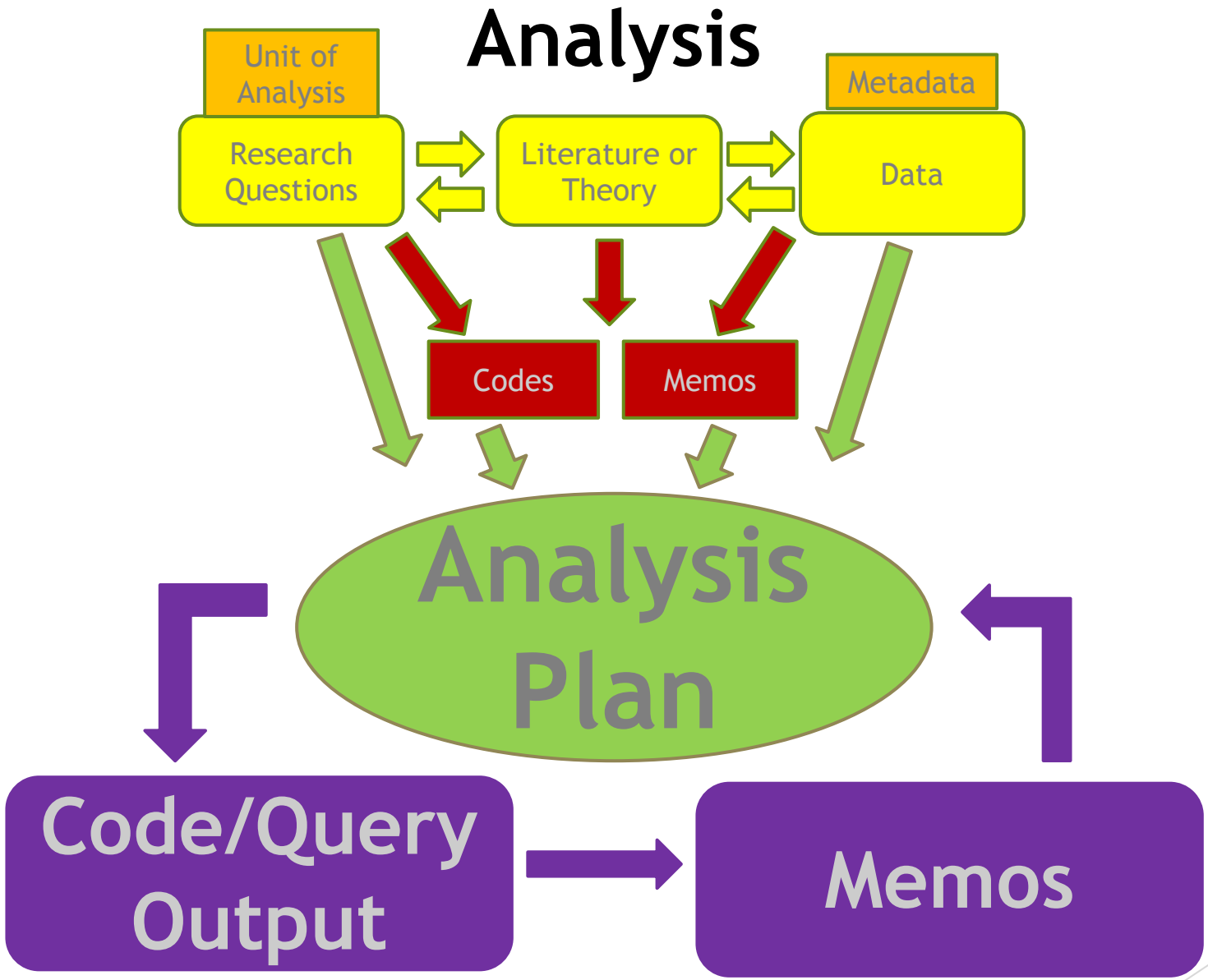
- Treat Coding as an Iterative Process
  - Test Codes and Revise
    - Look for codes that aren't being used, aren't distinct enough from other codes, are defined too broad or too specific…
  - Review Coding Process
    - Make sure you and other coders are being consistent in your application of the codes across the data set.
- Actively Work with 20-30 Codes at a Time
  - You'll likely have more than 20-30 codes, but should actively code with only 20-30 codes to ensure consistency.
- Break Up the Coding Process
  - You can code for a specific chapter rather than the whole dissertation/book.
  - You can split the codebook thematically, and code in rounds.
- Keep a Codebook
  - Include information noted on "Defining Codes" slide, and regularly refer back to it.
  - This is a living document that should be revised as needed.
- Memo as You Code
  - Make notes reflecting on the coding process, perhaps noting ideas for codes that aren't yet included and/or revisions to existing codes.
  - You may also write analytic memos, making a note that reflects initial thoughts about the meaning of your work (i.e., preliminary analysis)

What is Analysis?

The process of identifying themes related to your research findings. This is different than identifying ideas/concepts/topics that come up throughout your data set. It's "bigger picture" stuff…

- Overarching Themes
  - What is happening in your data overall?
- Subgroup Themes
  - What is happening in your data for specific subgroups?
- Typology Themes
  - What is happening in your data by specific dimensions of coded data?

What is Analysis?, cont.



Creating an Analysis Plan

An analysis plan is a living document that you revise as you discover new questions, add codes to your codebook, and revise your plan based on null findings.

The plan should document:

- Research questions you want to answer
- Codes, attributes, and queries you'll use to answer each question
- Relevant subgroups and typologies

What is Analysis?, cont.

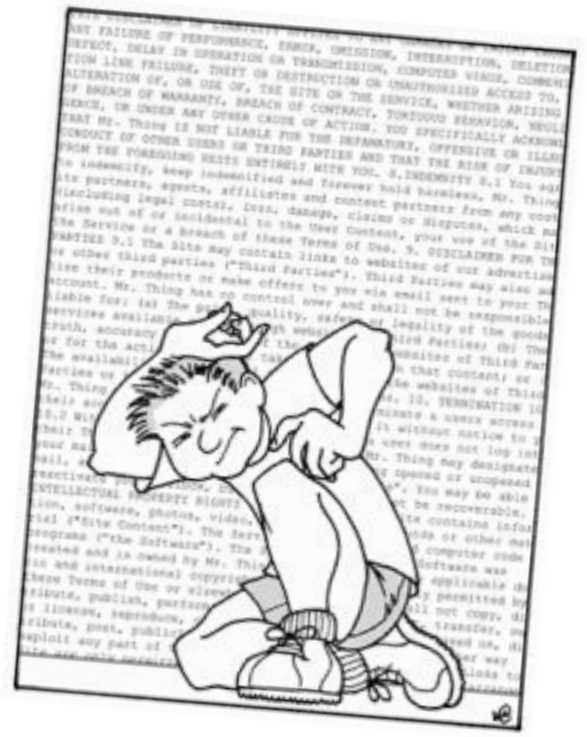
Multi-Step Nonlinear Process

1. Identify Specific Questions to Answer
   - These questions will be more specific than the research questions that motivate your study, and will focus on your actual data.
2. Identify Codes and Attributes Associated with the Specific Questions
   - Which codes help answer the specific question?
   - What aspects of codes are you interested in? (i.e., co-occurrence)?
   - If you have a hypothesis, plan to test both to prove and disprove.
3. Identify Relevant Subgroups
   - Make note of subgroups within the data or aspects of the data that are important to your research.
   - What unit of analysis is important to answer your question (e.g., individual or group, stakeholder type, document age)?
   - How might codes vary across subgroups?
4. Identify Relevant Typologies of Coded Data
   - How might the concepts/ideas/categories for which you coded contribute to your research question?

Types of Analysis

You may hear different verbiage related to qualitative and other types of analysis. As with many other concepts, different researchers, including established and respected methodological leaders, may use different terms to refer to the same thing or the same terms to refer to different things… Following is some information on some of the terms you may hear us use during this training and/or that you may be thinking about when you're determining how to proceed with your analysis.

- Qualitative Text Analysis
- Qualitative Content Analysis
- Content Analysis
- Thematic Analysis
- Discourse Analysis
- Audio Analysis
- Visual Analysis
- Video Analysis
- Picture or Image Analysis
- Computational Text Analysis



Example Code Creation and Organization

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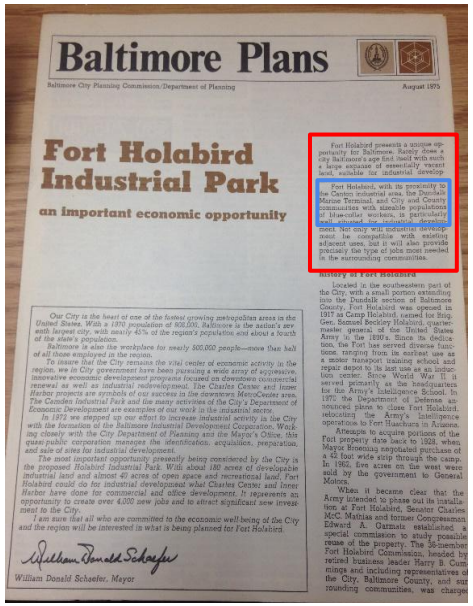

Baltimore Plans

Baltimore City Planning Commission/Department of Planning — August 1975

Fort Holabird Industrial Park

an important economic opportunity

Fort Holabird presents a unique opportunity for Baltimore. Rarely does a city Baltimore's age find itself with such a large expanse of essentially vacant land, suitable for industrial develop

Fort Holabird, with its proximity to the Canton industrial area, the Dundalk Marine Terminal and City and County communities with sizeable populations of blue-collar workers, is particularly well situated for industrial develop-ment. Not only will industrial develop-ment be compatible with existing adjacent uses, but it will also provide precisely the type of jobs most needed in the surrounding communities.

History of Fort Holabird

Located in the southeastern part of the City, with a small portion extending into the Dundalk section of Baltimore County, Fort Holabird was opened in 1917 as Camp Holabird, named for Brig. Gen. Samuel Beckley Holabird, quartermaster general of the United States Army in the 1890's. Since its dedication, the Fort has served diverse functions, ranging from its earliest use as a motor transport training school and repair depot to its last use as an induction center. Since World War II, it served primarily as the headquarters for the Army's Intelligence School. In 1970, the Department of Defense announced plans to close Fort Holabird, relocating the Army's intelligence operations to Fort Huachuca in Arizona.

Attempts to acquire portions of the Fort property date back to 1928, when Mayor Broening negotiated purchase of a 42 foot wide strip through the camp. In 1962, five acres on the west were sold by the government to General Motors.

When it became clear that the Army intended to phase out its installation as Fort Holabird, Senator Charles McC. Mathias and former Congressman Edward A. Garmatz established a special commission to study possible reuse of the property. The 36-member Fort Holabird Commission, headed by retired business leader Harry B. Cummings and including representatives of the City, Baltimore County, and surrounding communities, was charged

Our City is the heart of one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States. With a 1970 population of 905,000, Baltimore is the nation's seventh largest city, with nearly 40% of the region's population and about a fourth of the state's population.

Baltimore is also the workplace for nearly 500,000 people—more than half of all those employed in the region.

To insure that the City remains the vital center of economic activity in the region, we in City government have been pursuing a wide array of aggressive, innovative economic development programs focused on downtown commercial renewal as well as industrial redevelopment. The Charles Center and Inner Harbor projects are symbols of our success in the downtown Metro Center area. The Camden Industrial Park and the many activities of the City's Department of Economic Development are examples of our work in the industrial sector.

In 1972 we stepped up our effort to increase industrial activity in the City with the formation of the Baltimore Industrial Development Corporation. Working closely with the City Department of Planning and the Mayor's Office, this quasi-public corporation manages the identification, acquisition, preparation, and sale of sites for industrial development.

The most important opportunity presently being considered by the City is the proposed Holabird Industrial Park. With about 180 acres of developable industrial land and almost 40 acres of open space and recreational land, Fort Holabird could do for industrial development what Charles Center and Inner Harbor have done for commercial and office development. It represents an opportunity to create over 4,000 new jobs and to attract significant new investment to the City.

I am sure that all who are committed to the economic well-being of the City and the region will be interested in what is being planned for Fort Holabird.

William Donald Schaefer

William Donald Schaefer, Mayor

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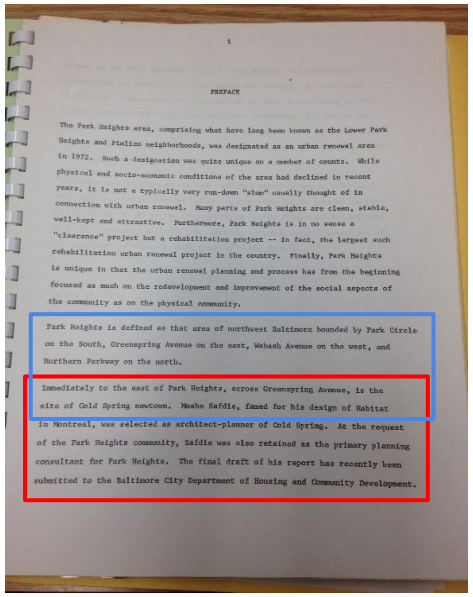

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PREFACE

The Park Heights area, comprising what have long been known as the Lower Park Heights and Pimlico neighborhoods, was designated as an urban renewal area in 1972. Such a designation was quite unique on a number of counts. While physical and socio-economic conditions of the area had declined in recent years, it is not a typically very run-down "slum" usually thought of in connection with urban renewal. Many parts of Park Heights are clean, stable, well-kept and attractive. Furthermore, Park Heights is in no sense a "clearance" project but a rehabilitation project -- in fact, the largest such rehabilitation urban renewal project in the country. Finally, Park Heights is unique in that the urban renewal planning and process has from the beginning focused as much on the redevelopment and improvement of the social aspects of the community as on the physical community.

Park Heights is defined as that area of northwest Baltimore bounded by Park Circle on the South, Greenspring Avenue on the east, Wabash Avenue on the west, and Northern Parkway on the north.

Immediately to the east of Park Heights, across Greenspring Avenue, is the site of Cold Spring newtown. Moshe Safdie, famed for his design of Habitat in Montreal, was selected as architect-planner of Cold Spring. At the request of the Park Heights community, Safdie was also retained as the primary planning consultant for Park Heights. The final draft of his report has recently been submitted to the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development.

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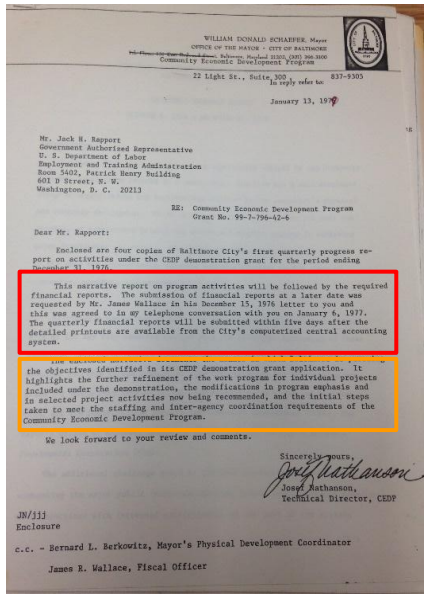

WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER, Mayor
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR - CITY OF BALTIMORE
Community Economic Development Program

22 Light St., Suite 300 — In reply refer to: 837-9305

January 13, 1977

Mr. Jack H. Rapport
Government Authorized Representative
U. S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Room 5402, Patrick Henry Building
601 D Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20213

RE: Community Economic Development Program
Grant No. 99-7-796-42-6

Dear Mr. Rapport:

Enclosed are four copies of Baltimore City's first quarterly progress report on activities under the CEDP demonstration grant for the period ending December 31, 1976.

This narrative report on program activities will be followed by the required financial reports. The submission of financial reports at a later date was requested by Mr. James Wallace in his December 15, 1976 letter to you and this was agreed to in my telephone conversation with you on January 6, 1977. The quarterly financial reports will be submitted within five days after the detailed printouts are available from the City's computerized central accounting system.

the objectives identified in its CEDP demonstration grant application. It highlights the further refinement of the work program for individual projects included under the demonstration, the modifications in program emphasis and in selected project activities now being recommended, and the initial steps taken to meet the staffing and inter-agency coordination requirements of the Community Economic Development Program.

We look forward to your review and comments.

Sincerely yours,

Josef Nathanson,
Technical Director, CEDP

JN/jjj
Enclosure

c.c. - Bernard L. Berkowitz, Mayor's Physical Development Coordinator
James R. Wallace, Fiscal Officer