

“There are also many underlying similarities that characterize urban Indian Country and that these fundamental similarities create a setting that is “like home” in the city. Some of the significant factors influencing the parallels among different urban Indian communities (as well as each community’s unique qualities) include the historic role played by the relocation program and other types of policy-driven external influences, the degree of proximity and ease of travel and communication between cities and tribal areas, reservations, and home lands; and the availability of employment, housing, and educational opportunities (Lobo, pg. 73 of handout).

In result many Indian people have turned to live in cities in an effort to seek employment, housing, and educational opportunities. There are many Indian people in these big cities like Chicago, Minneapolis, etc who live in low-income housing complexes like Little Earth. The outcome leads to these big Indian centers like the one in Minneapolis on Franklin Avenue and the Chicago Indian Center which was established in 1955 and is the oldest urban Indian centers in the U.S., and these places create a setting that is “like home” for Indian people who live in the city. Many are in response to the federal relocation program. These Indian centers hold events like pow-wows, celebrations, and selling Indian crafts which Indian people might do back home. It is essentially their home away from home.

Tribal homelands are a major source of identity since it is embodied in the land, and old stories and songs that tie personal reality to time and place. Yet in an urban

community there is essentially no land base, except for those few recently purchased buildings and properties. So in this urban context, the Indian organizations come to powerfully represent Indian “space” or “a place that is Indian” and are intimately tied to identity. Like the Indian center of Minneapolis or just Franklin Avenue is identified to represent Indian “space” because of the housing district, the Indian cafes, schools, museums, etc. There are also many Indian bars, housing complex’s, transportation opportunities, and Indian centers like I mentioned with this heavy Indian “space” since 60-65% of Indian people live in urban areas. In result you also have Indian publications and newspapers like The Circle, etc. You also have more services that are available to Indian people like clinics.