

# **Stories:**

## **USING INFORMATION IN COMMUNITY BUILDING AND LOCAL POLICY**

Expanded Edition, July 1999

National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership

THE URBAN INSTITUTE

The nonpartisan Urban Institute publishes studies, reports, and books on timely topics worthy of public consideration. The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders.

# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD-LEVEL APPLICATIONS: SPECIFIC INITIATIVES</b> .....	<b>2</b>
1. Documenting the Relationship Between Vacant Housing and Crime (Camden) . . . .	2
2. Studying the Need for Grocery Stores in a Neighborhood (Milwaukee) . . . . .	3
3. Mounting an Alcohol Licensing Campaign (Milwaukee) . . . . .	4
4. Working Out Renovation Strategies with Parcel-Level Data (Atlanta) . . . . .	5
5. Targeting a First-Time Parents Program (Milwaukee) . . . . .	6
6. Pitching the Market Potential of a Neighborhood (Milwaukee) . . . . .	8
7. Examining Boys and Girls Club Service Penetration (Milwaukee) . . . . .	8
8. Reforming the Handling of Tax-Delinquent Properties (Providence) . . . . .	10
9. Benchmarking Child and Family Welfare (Atlanta) . . . . .	11
10. Abating Lead Paint Hazards (Milwaukee) . . . . .	13
11. Starting a Comprehensive Teen Parenting Program (Oakland) . . . . .	14
12. Making Schools Accountable (New York City) . . . . .	16
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD-LEVEL APPLICATIONS: ORGANIZING AND CAPACITY BUILDING</b> . . . .	<b>17</b>
13. Displaying the Institutional Assets of a Community (Milwaukee) . . . . .	17
14. Using Information to Train Emerging Community Leaders (Denver) . . . . .	17
15. Establishing the Identity of a Neighborhood Split by Census Tracts (Milwaukee) . . . . .	18
16. Getting Realistic Stories About Neighborhoods into the News (Denver) . . . . .	20
17. Creating a Community Management Information System (Milwaukee) . . . . .	20
<b>CITYWIDE INITIATIVES AND POLICY CHANGE</b> .....	<b>21</b>
18. Citywide Strategic Planning Based on Neighborhood Characteristics (Cleveland) . . . . .	21
19. Ensuring a Neighborhood-Sensitive Allocation of Job Tax Credits (Atlanta) . . .	22
20. Preparing for Welfare Reform: The Spatial Pattern of Welfare Recipients, Jobs, and Services (Cleveland) . . . . .	23
21. Implementing the Family Preservation and Support Act (Denver) . . . . .	24
22. Assessing Recent Neighborhood Population Change (Milwaukee) . . . . .	25
23. Integrating Social Services Around Schools (Oakland) . . . . .	26
24. Spreading Understanding of Real Crime Risk Trends (Milwaukee) . . . . .	27
25. Facilitating Neighborhood-Based Service Delivery (Cleveland) . . . . .	28
26. Developing a New Spatial Service Delivery Concept for the YMCA: “Y Without Walls” (Indianapolis) . . . . .	30
27. Disseminating Neighborhood Data via the World Wide Web (Denver) . . . . .	31
28. Improving the Effectiveness of Child Care Services (Boston) . . . . .	33
<b>ENDNOTES</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>ANNEX A: AUTHORS AND SOURCES</b> .....	<b>37</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

While the possibility of using computerized neighborhood-level data for community-building purposes is very recent, the number of actual applications is growing rapidly. In many of these cases, the new technology has allowed the users to do something that simply would not have been feasible before. Enhanced information has had a substantial role to play in building community achievement and capacity.

This monograph presents brief descriptions of 28 of these cases. Most are drawn from experiences where citywide data intermediaries or universities worked with individual community groups to accomplish some practical purpose. The intermediaries include the partners in the National Neighborhood Indicators Project,<sup>1</sup> a rich program of activity under way in Milwaukee, and individual cases from Camden, New Jersey; Indianapolis; and New York City. Earlier versions of this monograph, with smaller numbers of cases, were published in 1996 and 1997. This current version contains a richer array.<sup>2</sup>

We begin with 12 cases oriented around the efforts of community groups and service entities to address particular issues at the neighborhood level. These include cases where neighborhood-level information was used (1) to better plan and implement specific internal improvement initiatives; (2) to influence outsiders (e.g., city agencies, potential investors); and (3) to accomplish both of these purposes. The next five cases also review neighborhood-level applications, but they focus on more cross-cutting uses to help in basic community organizing and building community capacity. The final 11 cases show how intermediaries developed and applied geographic data to address citywide or metropolitan areawide policy issues affecting the poor—that is, work designed to benefit all poor neighborhoods in the city rather than just one of them.

Specifically, the groups providing assistance in the cases discussed in this chapter include the Data and Policy Analysis Group (DAPA) of the Atlanta Project; the Boston Persistent Poverty Project of the Boston Foundation; the Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change (CUPSC) at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland; the Data Initiative of the Piton Foundation in Denver; United Way in Indianapolis; the Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee; the Urban Strategies Council in Oakland; The Providence Plan in Providence; and the Center for Social and Community Development (CSCD) of Rutgers University.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD-LEVEL APPLICATIONS: SPECIFIC INITIATIVES**

### ***1. Documenting the Relationship Between Vacant Housing and Crime*** (Camden)

Camden Churches Organized for People (CCOP) is an interdenominational federation of 18 religious organizations set up to improve conditions in Camden via community organizing. The deterioration of the city's housing stock and the spread of abandoned and vacant units had become a priority concern. Virtually everyone had a bad experience with one of the city's vacant units: a fire on the block, drug dealing from the corner unit, dumping on the premises, and so on. Residents believed that the dilapidated condition of many units created an atmosphere conducive to crime. In 1996, CCOP decided to make vacant housing its main focus for the next several years.

To prepare to address the issue, CCOP asked the Center for Social and Community Development (CSCD) at Rutgers University to help with initial analysis. As the first step, a block map was prepared with shadings indicating each block's housing vacancy rate (1990 census data). Next, data on crimes (provided by the police department) were address matched and then plotted. The plots for several types of crime (e.g., arson, drug arrests, aggravated assaults) were then overlaid on the vacancy rate maps. The results showed strong relationships between vacancy rates and criminal activity. On average, aggregate crime rates in blocks with vacancy rates of 20 percent or more were 3.5 times higher than in areas where vacancy rates fell below 10 percent.

The maps were presented at a community action meeting held in one of the CCOP churches in May 1996. Schmitt (1997) notes the following:

...the maps provided a compelling focus for the residents' experiences. Everyone knew about problems on their block or in their neighborhood, but before that night no one could say with authority that vacant units were linked to higher crime rates. The effect that these maps had on the crowd was powerful.

A local newspaper became aware of the story and later published the maps and related news coverage on their implications. Schmitt said media coverage both "informed the region of an issue which the local community group had determined to be significant" and "reinforced community participation in the organizing project because it showed residents that their concerns could be brought to the fore."

Public interest in the issue was heightened. Recognizing that the initial maps were based on outdated census information on vacancies, the fire department conducted a comprehensive survey to gain a more accurate and up-to-date listing of vacant properties. Other groups also began maintaining their own lists. The Rutgers group combined these to construct a master list, and the

results were geocoded. It also address matched schools, day care centers, and churches; mapped population densities; drew buffers around the vacant units that had been identified; and then counted the number of “sensitive facilities” within the buffer areas. The examination of all of these data helped CCOP set criteria for action and, more specifically, select the order in which buildings should be rehabilitated and/or demolished.

CCOP also began to use geographic information system (GIS) technology to monitor and analyze progress. The city’s efforts to address the issue expanded quickly. By January 1997, the city agencies had already sealed up 393 units and demolished 30. Schmitt points out: “A competitive bidding process had replaced the inefficient crisis-management process used in the past.... Tipping fees for debris had been reduced by 40 percent thanks to a CCOP-initiated agreement between the city and a county-operated landfill. The city made the decision to use \$300,000 of Community Development Block Grants to fund seal-ups. The state, never before very confident of the abilities of Camden politicians, agreed to provide \$2.5 million to cover demolition costs. And, the newspaper continues to regularly cover the progress of the campaign.”

## **2. *Studying the Need for Grocery Stores in a Neighborhood* (Milwaukee)**

The Lisbon Avenue Neighborhood Development corporation (LAND) is a comprehensive community development corporation serving a neighborhood on the west side of Milwaukee. One of its objectives was to improve access to retail services for neighborhood residents. A number of larger stores, including grocery stores, had left the area. LAND wanted to mobilize evidence to demonstrate the need for a grocery chain to return.

Standard U.S. Census material built the basic case for a market area. The area has remained a high-density urban neighborhood. Maps showing a large base of families were more critical than data showing a high disposable income to making the case for local demand for a basic food store. But it was also important to show prospective chains the nature of the competition. This was complicated by the proliferation of many small stores for which no inventory existed.

A low-cost CD-ROM listing business establishments from the Yellow Pages was the starting point for creating such an inventory. Stores were extracted for several zip codes that matched SIC (Standard Industrial Code) classifications for food sales. The list was geocoded (address matched to a street map) to locate the stores in and around the neighborhood, and a map showing their locations was prepared. It was recognized, however, that these data were one and one-half years old by the time they were obtained. Small grocery stores change often. An update would be necessary. A student intern, using the computer-generated map and listing as a base, drove the local streets and marked changes in name, location, or presence of stores as observed. Altogether, changes were made to the entries for nearly 20 percent of all stores.

A final map was prepared of the stores of different sizes then operating in the area; that is, the pattern that would represent the “competition” for any new store. And service gaps were indeed apparent. LAND engaged a grocery store consultant in the next steps. More detailed information was required about the larger stores. An on-site survey of these stores determined size, coverage patterns, and other characteristics and site requirements for these businesses. The final package of information was carried to negotiations with prospective chains.

So far, LAND has not been able to entice a new chain to set up an establishment in the neighborhood. However, the preparation of the maps and other data has made a difference. At least one major store still operating in the neighborhood has decided to expand. And the Local Initiatives Support Corporations is now working with LAND to follow up on other opportunities.

### **3. Mounting an Alcohol Licensing Campaign (Milwaukee)**

Representatives of a number of neighborhood organizations in Milwaukee formed a coalition—the W.A.D.E. City-Wide Liquor License Reform Program—to deal with a common problem: the effect of taverns and small grocery stores selling liquor on their communities. Their coalition’s experience suggested that such outlets were hubs for criminal activity but that, under current city procedures, there was little constraint on the granting of new licenses and renewals for outlets concentrated in distressed inner-city neighborhoods.

Their coalition’s attention, and frustration, focused on the way the city of Milwaukee reviews and allocates licenses. The reviews of renewals frequently proceed with little resident input. And a number of times, license renewals have been granted over the protest of residents and the police department. It is generally understood that aldermanic privilege plays a strong role in the decision process.

The coalition asked the Nonprofit Center to assist in developing maps and data that would frame the issue more clearly. Data on current licenses (address, type, dates in approval and renewal processes, etc.) were obtained from the city of Milwaukee.<sup>3</sup> The locations were geocoded (address matched to a street map) and a point map was prepared, demonstrating clearly that licenses were heavily concentrated in the inner city. When different maps were created for each type of license, a stronger pattern became clear. Malt beverage licenses were almost exclusively located in the central city.

An aldermanic map was then overlaid across the point map. This map made it easier to demonstrate to central city aldermen their stake in the issue. The license data and the aldermanic layer were joined to create a new data file in which each license record incorporated the aldermanic district number. From this new file it was possible to generate a variety of reports (maps, tables, and bar charts) summarizing licenses by aldermanic district.

Maps and charts were printed in a large format for use at a series of citizen rallies mobilized by the coalition. Through this process, the coalition generated broad support from many neighborhood organizations, and policymakers began to pay attention. The Common Council of the City of Milwaukee agreed to create a task force to review alcohol licensing procedures, and a number of representatives from the coalition were appointed to the task force.

The research the coalition had done, both with maps and data and with other information gathered by coalition members, was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the new task force. The task force worked over a six-month period. A comprehensive list of reforms was proposed. The coalition did succeed in increasing the visibility of the licensing process and gaining some procedural revisions (including better public notice of meetings), even though the council has not yet accepted its more far reaching recommendations.

The coalition continues to work on the issue. In a town like Milwaukee, taverns can hardly be painted as an evil influence generically. There was a need to develop additional distinctions. With the help of coalition members, the “taverns” category in the city system was divided into three subcategories: family restaurants, restaurants with bars, and exclusively bars. Maps produced from these classifications demonstrated that an extremely high percentage of central-city licensed taverns were exclusively bars. Very few family-oriented establishments were to be found in inner-city neighborhoods.

A more critical distinction would be to identify taverns with a record of incidents recorded by the police. During license renewal hearings, the police department reviews paper files and summarizes the pattern of incidents at or near an establishment in a typed report. At this point, review of these files seems cumbersome. But future analysis could extract material from this printed record. Another plan is to develop maps showing the extent to which crimes are actually clustered around tavern sites. At this point, crime data by address are not available to community groups in a computerized form, but it is expected that such data will become available in the near future.

#### ***4. Working Out Renovation Strategies with Parcel-Level Data*** (Atlanta)

On the basis of programmatic interests expressed by resident groups, the Data and Policy Analysis Group (DAPA) has provided considerable parcel-level data to 11 Atlanta Project neighborhood clusters to assist in planning for redevelopment and reinvestment. The work entailed (1) preparing data on the status of property tax delinquency for all parcels within each cluster; (2) analyzing the effectiveness of the Homestead Exemption Program; (3) locating properties with buildings that had potential for redevelopment; (4) identifying elderly homeowners in jeopardy of losing their homes because of outstanding tax liens; and (5) identifying, by name, absentee property owners whose decaying and abandoned properties hamper the residents' quality of life. The data

were made available in tables and listings and also, via DAPA's GIS, in a series of parcel-level maps for each cluster.

This information has been used to facilitate resident planning processes. One result was the development of a program through which religious organizations and others assist elderly homeowners in repaying delinquent taxes. The work has also caused the county commissioners to revisit their policy of selling tax liens to outside third parties and the state legislature to pass new laws expediting foreclosure processes when communities are prepared to redevelop sites with nonprofit housing.

Another information-based initiative has since evolved in a few of these same areas. DAPA had worked with the city of Atlanta to develop data on historic patterns of housing code enforcement and to create improved data files that could be used for orderly record keeping and monitoring of the code enforcement process. To permit closer tracking of enforcement efficiency, the new system includes dates of the initiation of each case and steps inspectors have taken to close it. All such data are parcel-based and can be mapped via GIS technology.

The data system serves as the basis for a new approach to code enforcement in selected areas. In this approach, the city trains community residents to serve as Neighborhood Deputies (NDs). The NDs patrol the neighborhood and, when they observe suspected code violations, they send a notice to the owner and occupant of the property. They then follow up to see whether the conditions are corrected and if not, the matter is referred to the city for formal action. This initiative keeps community residents much more directly involved in the code enforcement process and gives them a basis for a more complete strategic approach to neighborhood improvement.

### **5. Targeting a First-Time Parents Program (Milwaukee)**

The Next Door Foundation is an innovative youth agency on Milwaukee's West Side. It had grown rapidly from its origin as a neighborhood church-sponsored activity into an independent agency substantially supported by program grants.

The Foundation saw a special need for service in the West Side neighborhood. The neighborhood had experienced substantial turnover in the 1980s. Many lower-income families with older children had moved in. By the early 1990s, those children had become young adults and many had children of their own. The perception was that a large proportion were single parents and that this proportion was higher than in most other neighborhoods in the city.

The Foundation began developing plans for a First-Time Parents Program in the neighborhood. The program would employ paraprofessionals to visit the homes of these young parents, provide counseling on parenting skills, and offer friendships and connections that would

help diminish their isolation. In preparing their plans (and proposals to secure funding for the program) they recognized the need for mapped information. Most important, they felt they had to have clear visual evidence of need for the program and that the same data could be used to target resources effectively to those blocks where needs were particularly high and efficiencies could be gained in service deployment.

The 1990 U.S. Census data include block-level details on the age of residents. Maps were prepared showing the location of children under age seven. Maps with shades indicating the absolute number of children on each block, however, would distort perceptions of concentration because of wide variation in the size of actual blocks. It was decided that a density map would be more appropriate; shadings reflect the number of young children per block of a standardized area. This map clearly demonstrated the need (high numbers of very young children per block compared with other areas in the city), and a subset of blocks in the neighborhood did stand out, suggesting the most critical areas for focused outreach.

Family structure data are also available at the block level.<sup>4</sup> The percentage of family households with two parents is frequently calculated because of the ready availability of this statistic. But for the purposes of this program, it was more powerful to use different census data that showed the percentage of all children who were in two-parent homes—that is, of all children on a block, what percentage live in two-parent homes? This was the basis for another neighborhood map.

With these maps as guides, the neighborhood was partitioned into a number of subneighborhoods by combining clusters of block groups for maximum flexibility. Each service area so defined was given a name. Select detailed demographic tables were prepared, customized for the service areas of this agency. Recognizing the distinctions within the neighborhood helped make the program implementation process more sensitive to local conditions. The Nonprofit Center has designed a series of report templates to allow efficient production of such tables.

Program organizers felt that the First-Time Parents proposal and subsequent operating plans were much more solid because of the use of geographic information in this way. The tables, maps, and additional graphics both demonstrated the need and suggested specific target areas to make implementation more effective. The proposal was funded and the program has now been operating for several years.

## **6. *Pitching the Market Potential of a Neighborhood* (Milwaukee)**

The Riverwest neighborhood on Milwaukee's east side is an older working-class neighborhood with a long tradition of small local retail shops. Commercial areas are weaker today. The East Side Housing Action Corporation (ESHAC) hired an economic development specialist to

help market the Riverwest neighborhood to potential retailers. Part of his role is to work with potential entrepreneurs to help them assess their options and prepare a case for business financing.

An area like Riverwest has a moderate median income, somewhat below the median for Milwaukee County as a whole. But the area is a high-density, pedestrian-focused community. The potential market for a retailer cannot be adequately defined by median income alone.

U.S. Census data, however, can provide another useful income statistic: the total household income of an area. When aggregate household income is divided by the size of an area in square miles, it yields the “income per square mile” statistic, which is in many ways a better indicator of the potential of the retail market. A block-group map showing these data often produces a much different pattern from a map showing median incomes. For working-class, high-density neighborhoods, it is quite likely that their income per square mile will be considerably higher than that of other neighborhoods where individual families are typically richer (i.e., have a higher median income) but the densities are lower. This was, in fact, the conclusion drawn from the block-group map on income density prepared for Riverwest.

Data on aggregate household income can also be summed for the market area. For Riverwest, block groups were selected within a half-mile radius of the neighborhood’s center, using a radius selection tool (now available in a number of mapping software packages). The process was repeated for circles of a 1- and 2-mile radius. A map layer was prepared showing the concentric circles, and the aggregate household income in each ring was calculated. These results were especially useful for the Riverwest community because the circles also included concentrated incomes in a higher-income community on the East Side. Retail prospects with a unique niche might also appeal to this broader market area.<sup>5</sup>

### **7. Examining Boys and Girls Club Service Penetration (Milwaukee)**

The Milwaukee Boys and Girls Club operates five neighborhood centers that provide a variety of activities for youth and their families, ranging from sports and social gatherings to job training and linkage programs. One of the newest and largest—the Mary Ryan Center—was built on Milwaukee’s West Side in Sherman Park. This center was the first to track participation in its programs on a computer. A simple computer file of members for one year included 1,300 names. The address, age, sex, and race of each member was included in the profile.

The Boys and Girls Club was interested in analyzing where these members lived. Maps showing this pattern could help the club target outreach activities by pointing out areas with comparatively low participation near the existing center. The maps could also help the club decide where there might be a need for a new center. The club asked the Nonprofit Center to work with it in preparing this analysis.

Because data entry for the club's listing had frequently been done by volunteers, a fair amount of time had to be spent first in clearing up errors and incomplete addresses.<sup>6</sup> After that, the file was processed for address matching (all but about 50 addresses were mappable). A map with dots showing the residential locations of the members could then be prepared. The first map generated did show a concentration of members near the center, but it was misleading because dots for different members covered one another (for example, where two or more children lived at the same address). This map, then, visually understated the high concentrations of members living around the center.

The distribution of members was represented more accurately by presenting the data as a block-level dot map. A data set containing the number of members in each block was prepared. This data set was then mapped as a dot map on the block layer. In this case, small dots are scattered randomly within each block on the map. The result is that dots are not as likely to block each other. The visual result was much more effective than the earlier map in communicating densities.

Next, a circle (one-quarter-mile diameter) was drawn in a new map layer that was centered at the Mary Ryan Center, and a map selection tool was used to demarcate all members located within this circle. Several other circles of different sizes were then drawn. The number of members was counted in each case. From these data, a bar chart was prepared that showed the effective reach of the center.<sup>7</sup> One chart summarized the density of children served at each incremental distance from its location. Another presented the cumulative percentage of children served by distance from the center. The chart showed that 75 percent of the children served by the center lived within one mile of it. These data helped the Boys and Girls Club respond to its key questions: How much of a neighborhood does the youth center cover? Would a new center in a specific neighborhood compete with the constituency of a center that already exists?

Block data from the U.S. Census include data on the number of youth in each block. The penetration of club membership on each block can be calculated by dividing the number of members living in the block by the total number of youth the Census reports are living there. In a few blocks, more than 20 percent of youth were Mary Ryan Center members. The proportions drop dramatically with distance. This map also permits recognition of blocks where more recruiting might be appropriate.

The additional demographic data in the membership database and in the U.S. Census block data have made it possible to carry the analysis further. Patterns were assessed for different age groups and by race. Among other findings was the information that, although the Mary Ryan Center is located in an integrated neighborhood, it has been more successful at attracting participation from African-American students than from white students in that neighborhood.

The Boys and Girls Club has found these maps and data useful for program-planning decisions. They have more recently computerized the membership rosters at their other centers and plan to conduct similar analyses for them as well. In the summer of 1997, the Nonprofit Center began processing data from all the centers to replicate the study. Procedures will be developed to standardize the reports generated by the geocoded data sets so that the time and costs of the process are reduced. When this is done, the club will have an ongoing tool for monitoring and adjusting its activities citywide.

### **8. Reforming the Handling of Tax-Delinquent Properties** (Providence)

The Rhode Island Organizing Project (RIOP), a faith-based organizing group with constituents throughout Rhode Island, was able to benefit directly through the use of information in an action agenda. In RIOP's primary neighborhood of Olneyville, abandoned properties are a rampant problem and a threat to neighborhood stability and health. Abandoned housing is creating similar blight and safety problems in a number of Providence neighborhoods. RIOP's original intent was to find occupants for the abandoned houses. After examining the patterns of ownership, however, RIOP organizers discovered that a number of the abandoned homes belonged to a small group of land speculators abusing a state-sanctioned system for auctioning off the tax titles of owners who are delinquent on their property taxes. These owners habitually bought properties in low-income neighborhoods that were put on the market because of unpaid property taxes. They were under no obligation to keep the properties in good repair, and they typically did not do so. Liability rested with the property title owner, not the tax title owner.

The first step in RIOP's investigation was to map the vacant and abandoned properties in Providence, using information provided by the Providence Plan. By combining the parcel-based geographic information system (GIS) layer, property and ownership information obtained from the tax assessor's office, and a vacant and abandoned property database that the Providence Plan obtained from the Department of Code Enforcement, RIOP produced a series of maps illustrating the problem. Taking these maps to the RIOP parishes in Olneyville helped parish members recognize the problem and realize exactly how close to home it really was. RIOP gained its first success by moving people into action.

Its next step was to gather historical data about tax sales, including who was buying the properties, where they were buying, and what they were buying. RIOP asked the city for records of tax sales for the past five years. At first the city said the information did not exist. After a month of struggles—repeated phone calls, visits to the tax collector's office, and finally a group action at City Hall—RIOP was given what it requested. However, it was not given the more than 1,500 paper records regarding tax sales—only access to them. So RIOP organized volunteers to take turns photocopying the records at the tax assessor's office. Another group of volunteers entered the information into a database.

Now this new information had to be integrated with the base information. Using GIS software, RIOP linked the new tax sale database to the parcel-based data. This linking process allowed RIOP to identify not only which parcels had been sold at tax sales but also how many times the same properties had been turned over and who had been purchasing their tax titles.

The results were astonishing. Some properties had been sold at tax sales more than 16 times, a very small number of individuals were doing a large percentage of the buying, and some of these individuals owed back taxes themselves. Citywide, from 1991 to 1995, 1,425 titles of properties had been sold at tax sales, and one quarter of those titles had been purchased by only three investors. One investor had purchased the titles to 228 properties while already owing taxes of more than \$151,000.

Armed with this information and wielding GIS maps, RIOP successfully lobbied the state legislature to pass bills that reformed the tax sale laws (Rhode Island Senate Bill 97-S857 and House Bill 97-H6073). Rhode Island state law was changed to increase the accountability of absentee landlords by shifting full liability from the property title owners to the tax title owners. Owners who live outside of Rhode Island must now have a local agent as well. And municipalities have first right over private interests to buy tax-defaulted properties at tax sales, meaning that the city of Providence could purchase a property and then turn it over to a local nonprofit to rehabilitate and use for housing or other community revitalization purposes. Similar laws, though less stringent than the one that was passed, had been defeated each of the previous three years.

### **9. Benchmarking Child and Family Welfare** (Atlanta)

The state of Georgia funds a Family Connection initiative that supports child and family welfare services statewide. The Georgia Policy Council (GPC) defined a set of 25 indicators or benchmarks that county programs must monitor to continue to receive Family Connection funding. Initiative staff in DeKalb County asked the Atlanta Project's Data and Policy Analysis Group (DAPA) to implement the GPC indicators for six targeted communities within the county. DAPA complied with this request in a process that entailed the following seven steps.

**1. DAPA held two planning meetings with clients.** The meetings aimed to clarify the objectives, discuss availability of data, provide insight into operational definitions of the indicators, and reflect on how the indicators might be tied to the policy approaches of the family resource center in each of the six communities. A problem with the benchmarking effort was that the family resource center personnel lacked a clear understanding of how to link policy design and decisionmaking to the benchmarks—so training staff to understand those linkages was an important part of DAPA's mission in this project.

**2. DAPA developed the database.** The majority of the GPC indicators are based upon data collected by Georgia state agencies. The first step in preparing small-area estimates of the GPC indicators was to collect DeKalb County data and to geocode the information. The first step was collecting and geocoding 1996 birth records for DeKalb County (9 of the 25 GPC indicators are related to information in the birth certificate database—there were 9,775 births to DeKalb county residents in 1996, and each birth was geocoded using DAPA's street-line file). The next step was to collect and geocode data related to school performance (8 indicators are related to school performance or prekindergarten education). The third step was to collect and geocode census data from DAPA's indicator system (data related to child poverty and female-headed households in poverty were referenced to appropriate census block groups). The fourth step was to collect and geocode data from the Georgia Department of Labor on employment status and total employment by location of employer (reported at the tract level).

**3. DAPA digitized boundaries for the six study areas.** The six target communities had been defined using elementary school catchment areas, but the DeKalb County Planning Department does not maintain automated maps of those areas. DAPA staff obtained a hardcopy map of the areas and digitized the bounds of the six communities from that map.

**4. DAPA generated point-in-polygon and polygon overlay analysis.** DAPA used ArcView geographic information system to assign data from points representing records in the school and birth databases to appropriate study areas. Staff used polygon overlays to calculate indicator estimates for the targeted communities using data attached to census tracts or block groups.

**5. DAPA developed and executed a Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) program to calculate indicators from birth records.** Once the birth records were assigned to service areas, DAPA developed a program to aggregate data records and indicators for each targeted community as well as for the county.

**6. DAPA compiled and calculated all indicators.** DAPA compiled all the data into a summary table, including denominators, numerators, and rates for each reported indicator. DAPA also prepared supporting graphics.

**7. DAPA prepared analytical maps.** DAPA staff prepared a set of maps illustrating the spatial distribution of 10 of the indicators. These graphics permitted the clients to target resources and policy decisions within the county, aiming to improve community performance on the indicators.

In this process, DAPA's short-range objective was to open up a dialogue between DAPA, the planning department, and representatives from each of the six centers on the utility of the GPC indicators in making policy and methods of implementing policies. During the dialogue the DAPA staff attempted to convey an understanding of what the GPC indicators measure and how they might

be linked to the policies of each family resource center. Once the benchmarking effort was linked to the operations of the centers, there was some discussion of setting reasonable objectives for measuring the indicators and showing changes in them. Advising the DeKalb County planning staff on the development of improved methods of data analysis became the long-range objective. The final phase of this project is still in progress. The DAPA staff plans to continue the dialogue with the DeKalb County Planning Department in an effort to improve the methodology for updating in future years.

### **10. Abating Lead Paint Hazards (Milwaukee)**

Juan Carlos Ruiz is a key organizer at Wisconsin Citizen Action, a statewide organization focusing on local environmental and social justice issues. He coordinates Parents Against Lead, a grassroots initiative that has been mobilizing to prevent lead poisoning. He has worked cooperatively with an active City of Milwaukee Health Department program as well as with local neighborhood health clinics and neighborhood-based groups. He has also realized the potential for using information to support his advocacy in this field.

Ruiz recognized that lead issues had been examined through research efforts contracted by the City Health Department. Through work in which the Nonprofit Center participated, the city had a well-maintained database of more than 60,000 actions over six years, covering lead screenings, clinic visits, lead inspections, and lead abatement work. That effort led to more sophisticated research and also to more focused neighborhood analysis. The research has included address matching, mapping, and analysis of underlying patterns.

Ruiz used the data to illustrate both the magnitude of the problem of lead poisoning citywide and its spatial pattern. Showing local groups the extent and pattern of the problems in specific neighborhoods tended to bring the problem closer to home and had substantial impact in heightening awareness of how serious the problem had become. As a result of this fact-based advocacy, his organization achieved a major victory with the City Council's creation of two target areas with tight lead abatement regulations; every property that is rented must be certified as lead-free. A \$3 million Department of Housing and Urban Development grant has also been awarded to support abatement efforts that can bring properties into compliance with the new law. It is expected that spatial data will be used further in program implementation and monitoring in the target areas.

### **11. Starting a Comprehensive Teen Parenting Program (Oakland)**

"I can see my baby anytime I want because it [will be] right here [on campus]," says Moneisha Williams, 14, a pregnant student at Oakland Technical High School. Williams is quoted in a June 1998 *Oakland Tribune* article about the Comprehensive Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Program,

or CTAPPP, which provides childcare and parenting classes for teenage mothers at three Oakland high schools.

CTAPPP opened its first sites in 1989, following a protracted campaign by community-based organizations, teen parents, public agencies, and the Urban Strategies Council. At issue was a fundamental shift in how school administrators, parents, and the public saw teen pregnancy. Many people worried that keeping pregnant girls in school would infect other girls with the desire to get pregnant. Pregnant students who tried to go to school were often sent home by school administrators. Those who managed to stay in school had to pay for child care and confront its attendant problem of transportation, or seek a friend or relative willing to baby-sit all day. Faced with these obstacles, many teen mothers left school for good.

Research supported the idea that, once pregnant, teen girls had severely limited their life chances. But many of the poor outcomes associated with teen pregnancy, such as short tenure in the labor market, long-term welfare reciprocity, and intergenerational poverty, were connected with dropping out of high school as much as with early childbearing. Moreover, there was little evidence in the research that girls deliberately got pregnant when they saw pregnant teens among their peers. Advocates for teen parents began to focus their energies on keeping young mothers in school in order to broaden the opportunities for the girls later in life. They soon realized that to do this, they had to provide a comprehensive set of services to teen mothers.

In 1987, the Urban Strategies Council initiated efforts that used information in various ways to address this issue. Its staff members first assembled and worked with broad data (as opposed to neighborhood-level data) in basic case-making. They gathered data from the East Bay Perinatal Council's Adolescent Family Life Program, a service provider for Oakland teenage mothers, on the background of teen mothers and their reasons for getting pregnant. This information was combined with data from the Children's Defense Fund and the Alameda County Public Health Department to make a convincing argument for "coordinated approaches that are comprehensive and provide multiple services either directly or through networking with other agencies." The Council also collected local and national data on the benefits of preschool programs to low-income children and the severe lack of preschools in Oakland.

In collaboration with other Oakland advocates and service providers, Council staff took the data to state, county, and city offices, to individual high schools, and to parent groups. The Council highlighted the connection between teen parenting and persistent poverty, and focused public attention on the intergenerational nature of poverty. Even policymakers who were not interested in the fate of pregnant teens might be concerned with the plight of the young mothers' infants and the prospect of a new generation of children with limited hopes of economic success.

The Urban Strategies Council's work with neighborhood-level data, however, was what provided the basis for translating the general case into spatially programmable action. In 1988, the Council published *A Chance for Every Child*, a report describing poverty in Oakland. The report discussed the connection between teen pregnancy, education, and poverty, and it included a map showing where teen parents lived and demonstrating their concentration in certain parts of the city.

A concerned group of staff from the county Office of Education and the Oakland school district then began to meet to address the needs of teen parents, taking advantage of data developed by the Council. This new group conceptualized a program that would allow high-school-age mothers to take academic classes and parenting classes while they also received individualized instruction, health services, case management, and child development activities for their infants. The program would keep teen mothers in school, offering them the same opportunities their peers had. Council data on where teen mothers lived and the problems of their neighborhoods were critical in deciding where program support was most needed. In September 1989, the first CTAPPP sites opened in two Oakland high schools.

Today CTAPPP operates four sites: three in Oakland high schools and one as a stand-alone program. In the 1997–98 school year the program served more than 220 young mothers and their infants. The program has also expanded into pregnancy prevention, offering “Life Skills” classes that seek to delay childbearing to nonparenting high school students, and does outreach to teenage fathers to keep them involved in the lives of their children.

In June 1998, an *Oakland Tribune* reporter spoke with Kevin Younger, an 18-year-old father whose 15-month-old daughter Nhia participates in the CTAPPP program at Castlemont High School. “The baby pretty much stays with me for 18 hours,” Younger said. “Halima (the baby’s mother) doesn’t come home until 7, so me and Nhia do our one-on-one thing. It gives us a picture of the future.”

### **12. Making Schools Accountable** (New York City)

The New Settlement Apartments Parent Action Committee is a parents’ group in the New Settlement catchment area in New York City. The group held a number of exploratory meetings with a data intermediary (the Institute for Education and Social Policy at New York University) to examine possible school improvement strategies and options for parent advocacy and community organizing. These meetings were not originally convened to solve a specific problem, and before those meetings the New Settlement group had never taken on school improvement issues or organized around changing public institutions.

The Committee decided to organize its deliberations around data. The source of the information would be the Annual School Reports that are issued by each school in New York City. The reports are submitted to the Central Board of Education, but the Institute for Education and

Social Policy is the actual repository. The Institute makes the data available and interprets the information through graphs and charts. Comparative data show differences between schools. The data include demographic data on students, selected demographic data on teachers, and outcome data (test scores) indicating school performance.

When the parents at New Settlement Apartments first met with representatives from the Institute, no one really knew what actions would result from those conversations. They went through a process of fully analyzing performance data from the neighborhood school and comparing it with other schools. They also used qualitative information on school performance problems, including parent commentaries culled from breakfast meeting focus groups. Breakfast meetings gave parents a forum for voicing their experiences and concerns with the neighborhood school.

The parents found that their neighborhood school indeed had a very poor comparative performance record. They accumulated a rich mix of evidence, most prominently the fact that only 20 percent of the students were reading at grade level. Because the group had trouble presenting qualitative data about school performance with the same impact that the starkly contrasting quantitative data delivered, it had difficulty engaging local press in its campaign. Even so, the evidence the parent group had assembled was compelling. The pressure arising from its use of the data was clearly an important contributor to the ultimate resignation of the principal of the poorly performing neighborhood school. This whole process took place in the midst of broader governance change in which the New York City chancellor (appointed by the seven-member appointed Board of Education) recently, and for the first time, gained the authority to remove principals at schools that demonstrate "persistent educational failure."

## **NEIGHBORHOOD-LEVEL APPLICATIONS: ORGANIZING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

### ***13. Displaying the Institutional Assets of a Community*** (Milwaukee)

The Fondy/ North Business Association and the Campaign Neighborhood Inc. in Milwaukee have been organizing a central north neighborhood to work on economic development strategies. A key traditional program has been to create a BID (Business Improvement District) among local retailers. But the economic development plans include broader community development efforts as well. An organizing program, the Commerce and Clergy Initiative, brought together business, neighborhood association, school, and church leadership in the neighborhood to address issues of economic development. It was useful during organizing meetings to demonstrate to coalition members the strength of the group as a whole. Members needed to be more aware of each other and of the specific sub-areas in the neighborhood which they served.

An assets map was requested that would help the group visualize the assets in its community. The overall message of the map was to be that organizations were coming together to address issues in the community and that together they covered the neighborhood. The coalition organizer sketched out the framework for the map. The addresses of the member organizations were address matched so that they could be located as symbols on the map.

On another map, a major economic development project—work on the Fond du Lac Avenue retail corridor—was sketched. Project areas were also shaded for emphasis. Each location on the map was numbered and labeled.

### ***14. Using Information to Train Emerging Community Leaders*** (Denver)

The Westside Neighborhood Leadership Program is a grassroots leadership effort housed in five of Denver's poorest, largely Latino, neighborhoods. With a long history of activism and a strong sense of community, program founders believed that among their residents were latent leaders, the next generation of activists who had the motivation but lacked some of the skills to assert their place in local leadership. They developed a curriculum, negotiated approvals, and obtained the funding they needed to move ahead. By 1995 they were their own 501(c)(3), with 59 graduates, most of whom had gone on to assume key leadership roles within the community. Seventeen graduates were serving as parent representatives on their local school's collaborative decisionmaking teams. Many serve as board members for various nonprofit organizations.

Initially, the Piton Foundation Data Initiative assisted the program only by providing data to help them prepare grant applications. However, struck with the frustration residents felt when they found their neighborhood again and again the topic of disparaging news reports and the difficulty they faced when attempting to gain access to more complete information, the program board asked

Piton to develop a component of the leadership curriculum to teach people how to obtain and use neighborhood data effectively. The Piton Initiative now trains each new class as a whole on what data are available about their neighborhood, how to obtain and interpret geographic data, how to develop their own geographic data, and how to use those data in specific policy initiatives. In addition, all participants are given an individual consultation in which they select the issue or issues to which they plan to devote their energies once they graduate, and the Initiative helps them explore both the information available relevant to the topic and possible links between information and action.

This program has yielded many concrete results. One parent used school-specific special education data provided by Piton to successfully argue for more effective screening for behavioral and emotional disabilities to avoid the disproportionate tracking of children of color into special education programs. Another parent, concerned about extremely high mobility rates among children in her local school, used Piton data to create special programs to identify children at risk of high mobility, work with the parents to stabilize them, and work with the children to ensure continuity of education when they did have to change schools. Another graduate used geographic data to motivate the expansion of recreational and sporting activities in evening hours at the local recreation center. Yet another founded a youth arts recognition program and used the data to encourage local businesses to support their efforts by making donations and opening up business facilities to display artwork. Still others used geographic data on the community and its problems as a basis for encouraging neighborhood residents to vote and to help explain some of the key issues facing the community.

### ***15. Establishing the Identity of a Neighborhood Split by Census Tracts*** (Milwaukee)

Metcalfe Park is a small neighborhood on the west side of Milwaukee facing severe stress. The area has been the object of a variety of targeted programs by the city government, the local community action program, and several other agencies. It has become a recognized entity, but it has been difficult to assess or plan for (by its own residents as well as by outside agencies) because data have not been available on characteristics of the neighborhood as it is now defined. For many neighborhoods, relevant planning data can be assembled easily by obtaining, and adding up as needed, information for one or a few census tracts. But Metcalfe Park is not composed of whole census tracts. In fact, the recognized area of Metcalfe Park covers the intersection of six census tracts and includes parts of each of them.

The Nonprofit Center was asked to prepare a meaningful set of maps and planning statistics for the neighborhood consistent with its real boundaries, as accepted by both the residents and the city. The first step was to aggregate the limited amount of census population and housing data that is available at the block level—and this could be done for the neighborhood with full accuracy. However, much more useful information is available for block groups defined by the census.<sup>8</sup> Thus

the next step entailed assembling data for all block groups that were wholly or partially within the boundaries of Metcalfe Park, and then finding a reasonable way to split the data for those block groups that overlap those boundaries.

The usual procedure for splitting block-group data is to use a map program function that divides total counts (population, housing units, etc.) in proportion to the physical area in both pieces. But this often leads to distortion since block-group areas are seldom uniformly populated. This is clearly the case in Metcalfe Park, where an industrial area cuts through the community from north to south. Also, a cleared corridor one block wide runs east to west, where homes and businesses were removed for a freeway that was never built.

The alternative method employed by the Nonprofit Center was to allocate characteristics to individual blocks using each block's share of total block-group population. For example, if census block-level counts showed that a particular block had 15 percent of the total population, it was implicitly assumed that the block also had 15 percent of the block group's poor population, elderly population, and so on. In some cases, where other information was available on differing block characters (e.g., housing style and value), it would be possible to make reasonable adjustments to these allocations to reduce the probability of error.

This method is far from perfect. Users must be fully informed about the imperfections and cautioned about their use of these data. Nonetheless, the method did permit adding up and mapping key characteristics of Metcalfe Park in a way that was generally regarded as considerably more accurate than would have been the case if the proportionate area method had been used.

The need for explicit data profiles became more apparent as a process of neighborhood strategic planning was initiated in Milwaukee. The city had divided the area of the city served by Community Development Block Grant agencies into 17 neighborhood planning areas. Each of the 17 planning areas so defined was charged with developing a neighborhood planning document by the spring of 1996. As preliminary material was being developed, the city expressed concern that data on each neighborhood be presented in a more consistent fashion. The Nonprofit Center was asked to prepare a standard set of demographics for all of the 17 neighborhoods using the same method it had used for Metcalfe Park—that is, reflecting the exact boundaries of each neighborhood, even when allocation of data across split block groups was required.

## **16. Getting Realistic Stories About Neighborhoods into the News** (Denver)

One of the most difficult issues low-income neighborhoods face is getting others outside their community to look at both their assets and their problems realistically. Not only is there not a place to share the stories of a neighborhood's successes and struggles, but people outside assume "facts" about low-income neighborhoods regardless of their truth or context. The only time news about Denver neighborhoods routinely made it into the newspapers was once a year when the police department released neighborhood crime statistics showing, of course, disproportionately high rates in low-income neighborhoods. Everyone outside those neighborhoods thought the story said it all. What else was there to say? The residents of those neighborhoods knew there was a great deal more to say but had no venue in which they could speak.

In late 1991, the Piton Foundation entered into a partnership with the *Rocky Mountain News*, the largest newspaper serving Colorado. The staff of the newspaper and the Piton Data Initiative meet and decide on issues that portray the realities of Denver neighborhoods. The Data Initiative then develops a data profile (maps, charts, and tables) for Denver neighborhoods, the *Rocky Mountain News* provides headline and detailed coverage of the data in the newspaper, and the Data Initiative follows with a newsletter on the issues being covered (called *Another Generation*), which is sent to key local and state leaders. In addition, the Data Initiative issues well-timed press releases on neighborhood issues as data become available and follows up with a fact sheet entitled "Neighborhood Facts," sent to the same mailing list.

The coverage normally focuses around a map displaying key features of the issue at hand. The newspapers feel that maps are a high-impact form of communication. One story provided a map of the locations of Denver area elementary schools that had experienced the highest student mobility, with accompanying text and data on the damaging relationship between frequent school-changing and academic achievement and dropout rates. Another was oriented around a map showing the growth of pockets of child poverty throughout the metropolitan area and discussed forces behind the trends and their implications.

Both major Colorado newspapers, the *Rocky Mountain News* and the *Denver Post*, are now accustomed to reporting on neighborhood issues. While they still routinely report the latest crime rates, they also now know enough to contact local residents for their views. But more important, neighborhood news gets headlines and the newspapers cry for more.

## **17. Creating a Community Management Information System** (Milwaukee)

Several years ago, a small community-based organization in Milwaukee, the Mid-Town Neighborhood Association, received a United Way grant to fund the development of computer software tailored to its program and reporting needs. Joe Cayen, then Mid-Town's Executive

Director, had been working for several years to establish a new system of managing and reporting on Mid-Town's neighborhood program activity along these lines.

Rather than design a computer system just to create reports for funding agencies, the software aimed to assist staff in planning and managing the implementation of their program service and organizing work. The Nonprofit Center provided assistance in the design phase. To complement the management information system, new modules were developed that recognized that Mid-Town was rooted in a single neighborhood. Files were added that described all addresses and all property characteristics in the neighborhood.

In 1997, Mid-Town approached other neighborhood organizations to join in the further development of the software, and in the spring of 1998, seven neighborhood-based groups implemented a new version of it. Environmental Systems Research Institute—the publisher of the geographic information system (GIS) program ArcView—donated copies of ArcView to the effort, making it possible for the organizations to map neighborhood program activity and other community data. A University of Wisconsin Milwaukee GIS class worked to build parcel maps for each organization. The Nonprofit Center provided additional data and support. The new system is only beginning to be used as a management tool. However, the fact that it can inexpensively maintain up-to-date information on program activity by location should help its users achieve more appropriate scaling of program activities in relation to needs, avert redundancies, and generally promote program efficiency.

## **CITYWIDE INITIATIVES AND POLICY CHANGE**

### ***18. Citywide Strategic Planning Based on Neighborhood Characteristics*** (Cleveland)

In 1990, Case Western Reserve University's Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change (CUPSC) issued its first full analysis of trends in Cleveland's neighborhoods. The report used the Center's expanding system of neighborhood-level administrative indicators, but also relied on census data back to 1970. The report was widely disseminated and discussed, and it raised the consciousness of local leaders about the growth of concentrated poverty and its impact on poor people and poor communities.

The report uncovered, however, substantial diversity of conditions and circumstances, even among poor neighborhoods. Maps showing the ways the area's distressed neighborhoods differed along a number of dimensions were particularly striking. They clearly suggested that improvement strategies would have to be designed to respond to these variations in conditions neighborhood by neighborhood. The "one-size-fits-all" approach of many past city initiatives was never likely to be workable.

This report motivated the Cleveland Foundation to support the creation of the Cleveland Poverty Commission. The Commission worked to devise a new strategy to revitalize poor communities, and the Center's geographic data were drawn upon frequently in the process. Several special analyses were performed to focus on pertinent topics such as education, health, housing, and investment.

The Commission's conclusions called for a framework of comprehensive community building: improvement strategies for individual neighborhoods (or "urban villages"), designed and managed by resident groups, based on community assets, spurring integrated priority-setting across traditional programs, and with public agencies in supporting roles. A Cleveland Community Building Initiative (CCBI) was created to spearhead implementation, and CUPSC data were again relied upon extensively in the process of selecting the initial neighborhoods to participate, and by the selected Village Councils as they developed their strategies. Maps, trend graphs, and profiles have been prepared by CUPSC, CCBI, and Village Council representatives, working collaboratively. CUPSC is also working with CCBI on plans for evaluating the process which, given the nature of the strategy, would of course be impossible without recurrently updated geographic information on outcomes at the neighborhood level.

This approach was later used as the basis for Cleveland's successful application for funding under the federal Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Program. In short, Cleveland's entire strategy for urban improvement was motivated by neighborhood data, and such data continue to be instrumental to its implementation.

### ***19. Ensuring a Neighborhood-Sensitive Allocation of Job Tax Credits*** (Atlanta)

In 1989, the Georgia General Assembly created the Georgia Job Tax Credit Program (GJTCP) to encourage job creation in the least developed areas of the state. Initially, the state's 159 counties were ranked according to their comparative economic strength, based on four indicators: (1) unemployment, (2) per capita income, (3) percentage of persons in poverty, and (4) average manufacturing wage. Of the total, 40 counties were selected as the "least developed." Under GJTCP, firms in qualifying industries operating in these counties would be eligible to claim a job tax credit (initially \$1,000, later increased to \$2,000) for each new full-time job they created.

A number of observers saw that this scheme created serious inequities. Several counties that were not qualified for the program (i.e., whose average conditions did not meet the "least developed" criteria) had within them pockets of poverty (mostly clusters of inner-city neighborhoods) that represented some of the most economically distressed areas in the state. The Data and Policy Analysis Group (DAPA) was asked to analyze the same indicators, statewide, on a census-tract basis. It identified 236 tracts in these other counties whose economic conditions were worse (sometimes by a substantial margin) than those in the qualified counties. Maps comparing spatial

patterns of conditions seen at the tract level and at the county level highlighted the stark contrast between the two approaches.

In 1993, legislation was passed to extend the tax credit to residents of these concentrated poverty zones in urban areas, defined on the basis of DAPA statistics, in addition to those in the counties already qualified. DAPA has since provided information assistance to businesses (scans to determine which of their job applicants live within the specified zone) to help them take advantage of the program in Atlanta.

## ***20. Preparing for Welfare Reform: The Spatial Pattern of Welfare Recipients, Jobs, and Services*** (Cleveland)

Over the past two years, Case Western Reserve University's Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change (CUPSC) has conducted additional analyses that are beginning to have a profound impact on local policies. The work was done at the request of, and in collaboration with, the Cuyahoga County Departments of Entitlements and Employment Services, which were concerned about the possible local impacts of welfare reform.

Because of their prior work with welfare data in their ongoing neighborhood information system, CUPSC analysts had advantages that enabled them to rapidly conduct a more thorough analysis of those files than had been undertaken before. They examined the characteristics of different cohorts of county AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) recipients based on the period of time since they began receiving benefits under the program. In so doing, they were able to sort out those recipients who would be imminently vulnerable to losing benefits under welfare-reform time limits and, via address-matching capabilities, estimate and map the number of these vulnerable recipients living in each Cleveland-area census tract.

In a separate study, CUPSC used ES202 data files to analyze spatial patterns of recent entry-level job openings in the Cleveland metropolitan area. These files, the basis for unemployment insurance determinations, contain records on employment in all parts of the nation, updated quarterly. Using their geographic information system (GIS) capabilities, CUPSC staff were able to examine past changes in employment in the metropolis at the zip code level and then to project and map the volume of new entry-level job openings to be expected in the next few years in each zip code area.

They found that the residential locations of vulnerable AFDC recipients were tightly concentrated in space, mostly in a few inner-Cleveland neighborhoods—more concentrated spatially than even the overall AFDC population. In contrast, the entry-level employment opportunities likely to be relevant for these prospective job seekers were largely in metropolitan fringe areas. CUPSC estimated tract-level income losses likely to occur because of welfare reform (many of which were

substantial) and calculated commute times that would be required for AFDC recipients to access various shares of new entry-level jobs. The latter analysis showed, for example, that accessing just 43 percent of the expected entry-level openings by public transportation from a location at the heart of the area where vulnerable AFDC recipients are concentrated would require a one-way commute time of 80 minutes.

Their basic finding—that there were major disparities between where the poor live and where the jobs are—was not surprising to many policymakers in the area. But the contrasts were striking, and the fact that CUPSC had been able to actually quantify this “spatial mismatch” made a critical difference. The maps they produced (with associated hard numbers by neighborhood) showing these disparities cast powerfully memorable images. They captured the attention of the local media and then of policymakers. In response, the state of Ohio has since allocated \$10 million for transportation assistance in Cleveland’s welfare-to-work efforts, and local transportation planners are working with the CUPSC team to test alternative strategies for getting vulnerable recipients to jobs more rapidly.

The analysis team has since begun assembling related neighborhood data (e.g., on the locations and capacities of day-care centers and job-linkage services and the pattern of rental housing affordability). Again, preliminary indications are that the production of solid data that can serve as a basis for sensible response strategies may well prove to be the critical step in motivating local actors to actually develop such strategies.

### ***21. Implementing the Family Preservation and Support Act (Denver)***

This 1993 federal legislation requires that states engage in a community assessment and planning process to determine community characteristics that influence risks of child maltreatment. The Colorado Department of Human Services asked the Piton Foundation Data Initiative to provide information to help assess community need as a basis for program planning and resource targeting.

The Initiative performed a literature search; identified 16 indicators of economic, family, stress, and violence risks as well as 10 indicators of children and family service capacity; and provided risk profiles using these indicators for all Colorado counties and for neighborhoods in Denver. These profiles formed the basis for decisions to target federal resources to 10 Colorado communities, 3 of them in Denver inner-city neighborhoods. The decision to pass funds through to inner-city neighborhood organizations represented a major departure from previous state practice, which had relied solely on county government for implementation.

The profiles are now being used within the targeted communities to help inform organizations, prepare plans, and benchmark improvements that resident groups intend to demonstrate as a result of their efforts. Staff of the Piton Data Initiative continues to provide guidance and data updates, working directly with community organizations. Copies of updated

community profiles are sent to legislators, county commissioners, mayors, chiefs of police, and interested citizens.

## **22. Assessing Recent Neighborhood Population Change (Milwaukee)**

By 1996, agencies and concerned citizens in Milwaukee were fully aware of neighborhood patterns revealed by 1990 U.S. Census data. But there was increasing concern about the value of using data that were so old, because it was evident that considerable change had taken place in many neighborhoods since the decade began. Even where some more up-to-date information is available, it is difficult to construct the ratios most useful for monitoring and planning. Calculating the ratio of assaults per 10,000 residents, for example, involves dividing a recent assault statistic by an old population statistic. This creates substantial distortion if a neighborhood's population has either increased or decreased markedly since 1990.

All of the data needed to make reliable estimates of neighborhood-level population change between censuses are not available. However, some sources can be used to glean at least rough approximations of directions and magnitudes of change. Prominent among these are data on school enrollment. Although the school attendance patterns in Milwaukee are complicated by the substantial effects of school choice, the school system does report data on where its students reside. Printed reports list the number of students by residence within one of 89 home districts. The lists are detailed by race and grade for all students enrolled in the Milwaukee Public Schools.

The Nonprofit Center was asked to analyze and map these data. As the first step, the printed reports from 1990 and 1995 were re-entered into a spreadsheet—one page for each school district. Summary data across all of the schools were printed showing the population change by race for each school over the five years. The data included both actual numbers and percentage change, because each of these statistics provided a different insight.

A map layer for Milwaukee School Districts was used to display the spatial patterns in several forms. Dot maps were prepared that showed the number of student increases and decreases in each district. Also, a shaded map was prepared to show the percentage changes since 1990. For those districts where change was substantial, more detailed graphics were prepared. Three-dimensional graphics were used to display the pattern for each racial group by grade. Comparison of the 1990 and 1995 charts allowed a snapshot of an area that proved especially useful for visualizing more substantial population shifts.

The public school data can be limiting in several respects. Many students attend private schools. This may be especially true in transitional neighborhoods. Assessment of the U.S. Census data on public and private school attendance, however, suggests that this is not such a severe data problem in Milwaukee. Another problem is that high school dropouts are not counted. However,

observers suggested that the enrollment patterns are suggestive of dropout patterns, especially in central city neighborhoods. There is little evidence that either private school enrollments or dropout patterns have changed very much over the past several years. Indicators of relative change are still useful. Indicators of racial change are even more useful, especially where they demonstrate increasing diversity in neighborhoods.

In all reports on this analysis, the caveats were given emphasis, and time was devoted to educating key users about the limitations. Nonetheless, the data have proven useful for a variety of purposes.

Organizations working in neighborhoods experiencing substantial change have been particularly interested in these data. For example, Journey House—a comprehensive neighborhood center on the near South Side of Milwaukee—became aware of the increasing diversity among families in its community. This was illustrated by graphics showing changes in the Mitchell Elementary School District, which is the core of the area served by Journey House. The documentation helped in its program planning and in making a convincing case when seeking funds for its programs.

Also, a number of organizations on the South Side of Milwaukee have referred to the school population change data in a policy debate over the “equitable” distribution of Community Development Block Grant dollars. They have claimed that the data, which indicate an increasing number of minority children in some neighborhoods, are also useful indicators of growth in the number of “at risk” families in the community. A more direct indicator for this purpose would be changes in the number of children in the public school system eligible for the free lunch program. Discussions are under way to access those data for further analysis.

### **23. Integrating Social Services Around Schools (Oakland)**

In 1990, the Urban Strategies Council (USC) and the superintendent of the Oakland Unified School District recognized a common challenge. The school system and the city's array of social service agencies were not dealing with children holistically. Students' difficulties at school often emanated from problems at home, but the efforts of the schools and other agencies to help were fragmented and sometimes contradictory. Agencies normally become involved only at times of crisis, rather than working coherently to address root causes so as to prevent crises.

Because of the recognition of its advanced data-processing capabilities, and the fact that it already had some of the relevant information on hand, USC was able to secure, process, and link school and social agency data files for the students of one elementary school and their families. The results were presented to agency representatives in a 1991 meeting called “The Same Client.” The results on the overlap of service provision were striking, and they motivated agreement to conduct

a similar study for a much larger population (students at eight schools). In 1992, USC published the results in the report, "Partnership for Change." It showed that almost two out of three students used public services, and more than a third used at least two different services. It also documented that the system was investing much more in crisis services than in prevention and that there were important differences in the nature of service needs and provision for different racial groups.

Study findings were presented to the County Board of Supervisors and other high-level officials, but their most important use was in the work of Oakland's Interagency Group (convened and facilitated by USC). The process established new working relationships among representatives of different agencies and forced them to recognize their common challenge. They had to "acquaint themselves with agencies outside of their normal scope of work" in defining the questions they hoped the data-match would answer, and then, after the results were in, "discuss the kinds of joint action they might undertake, patterns of service use, relationships among agencies, and the ultimate effectiveness of existing programs." (Casey, 1995)

The process resulted in the idea of redeploying staff from different agencies to form a Family Support Team around individual schools. The team would "develop new collaborative strategies for working with troubled families, taking on the crisis situations most taxing for schools, and leaving school resources to be focused on prevention, on establishing more positive activities, and on outreach to parents." This concept has since been tested in several schools, and wider-scale implementation is under way. USC continues to be involved in monitoring performance and providing ongoing guidance and support.

#### **24. Spreading Understanding of Real Crime Risk Trends (Milwaukee)**

The *perceptions* of residents about the level of crime in a neighborhood are often not very well matched with the *actual* level of crime. High *levels* of crime are perceived most in neighborhoods experiencing an *increase* in crime somewhat independently of what the previous *level* of crime may have been. Review of actual statistics can help a neighborhood get a more realistic perspective on this issue.

The Milwaukee Police Department annually reports levels of crime at the neighborhood level, consistent with the specifications of the national Uniform Crime Report. The tables show the total number of reported crimes in each of eight standard categories by year for each census tract. The Nonprofit Center reorganized the annual crime reports to create materials that would depict trends in neighborhoods in a more understandable form. The results were used as a part of the Neighborhood Strategic Planning Process sponsored by the city of Milwaukee.

Data sets from 1981 through 1996 were first entered into a three-dimensional spreadsheet. Data for individual types of crime could then easily be summed to create a vector indicating total

crime incidence by census tract by year. Many people find it difficult to get a good sense of patterns of change by scanning tables. An obvious next step was to use a graphics package to prepare a series of bar charts showing trends in crime over time in each tract, by category and across categories.

Using absolute numbers, however, it is impossible to gain a meaningful understanding of how crime patterns in one neighborhood compare with those of another. For this purpose, data on tract populations and areas were added so that it was possible to construct key indicators: crime rates (crimes per 10,000 population) and crime densities (crimes per square mile). These data also could be displayed in bar chart form and in maps, to facilitate interneighborhood comparisons of trends.

A number of the results were not anticipated. Neighborhoods with general reputations for high crime risks were shown to be in a pattern of decreasing crime. One neighborhood with a previously bad reputation appeared to have experienced substantial reductions in criminal activity as a number of taverns were closed as part of long-term redevelopment on the primary street. A neighborhood generally perceived as a “better” upper-middle-class community was shown to have experienced among the city’s highest levels of theft. Patterns of theft, burglary, and assaults were distinctly different from one another.

The interest in crime information increases substantially when a neighborhood is organized to begin working on the issue. Several community organizations have created Mobile Watch programs, in which resident volunteers patrol the neighborhood, supplementing police efforts to identify and reduce crimes. One Mobile Watch group—organized by the Midtown Neighborhood Association—has been especially active in using the data to monitor change.

### **25. Facilitating Neighborhood-Based Service Delivery** (Cleveland)

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in Cuyahoga County has recently reformed its organizational structure and service strategies to be community-focused. The neighborhood information system operated by Case Western Reserve University’s Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change (CUPSC) assisted the DCFS in several phases of this process.

CUPSC had already been comparing neighborhoods on their child abuse and neglect rates when Cuyahoga County was chosen as a site for the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Family to Family Initiative. Using a variety of neighborhood indicators, CUPSC had documented that child maltreatment rates were high in areas that were economically deprived, that were residentially unstable, and that had high ratios of children to adults and few elderly residents.<sup>9</sup> To assist in planning for the Family to Family Initiative, CUPSC created maps that plotted the location of foster homes on a series of thematic maps that displayed child maltreatment rates and poverty rates. These maps demonstrated that most foster homes were located outside the neighborhoods of

greatest need. The Family to Family Initiative addressed this gap by making more foster homes available in selected neighborhoods for the purpose of placing children in or near their home communities.

The success of the neighborhood approach used in the Family to Family Initiative led the Cuyahoga County DFCS to commit to a geographically based delivery system. Planning began in 1996, and the CUPSC was asked to assist. The first step was to determine the geographic distribution of the DCFS caseload. The CUPSC was given an address file, which it geocoded. It then aggregated the cases to the neighborhood level in Cuyahoga County.

CUPSC developed different scenarios for different service districts based on criteria agreed upon by DCFS staff. The criteria included caseload equity per caseworker, contiguous districts, consistency with Neighborhood Centers Association<sup>10</sup> (NCA) agency service areas (which are geographically based), and racial balance within the caseload. All four of these criteria were important to DCFS staff, but they could not be achieved in one scenario. This is because the population in Cleveland is very segregated, with the west side predominantly white and the east side predominantly African-American, and a majority of the caseload reside in Cleveland and on the east side. Nonetheless, the Center designed four scenarios based on the four criteria, showing the trade-offs of choosing one scenario over another. Each of the scenarios was mapped to illustrate the geographic districts. By going through the alternatives, staff were informed about the reasons why it was impossible to develop districts that could simultaneously meet all the proposed criteria. The maps helped them to appreciate the choices and their consequences.

The final scenario chosen by DCFS met three of the four criteria it was hoping to achieve: caseload equality, contiguous districts, and consistency with NCA boundaries. Overall, racial balance was not achieved but some of the districts within the final scenario were more racially balanced than others. The intention of moving toward a geographically based service delivery is to allow caseworkers to learn more about the communities they serve. By having cases assigned within a specific geographic area rather than all over the county, the caseworkers will become more knowledgeable about their assigned community and become acquainted with key leaders and agency personnel in the community.

In order to assist the caseworkers in becoming more knowledgeable about their communities, CUPSC also prepared community data books for each of the service districts. The data books included tables and basic reference maps to help the caseworkers identify the city's neighborhoods that fall within their assigned districts. The caseworkers were also offered training on using the CUPSC neighborhood indicators database, which includes all of the data provided in the data books.

In order to assist the DCFS in implementing the geographically based service delivery system, CUPSC provided training on the use of MapInfo<sup>11</sup> in geocoding and assigning the cases by

district. It also provided the DCFS with the necessary boundary files to be used in the new system, so that cases can be assigned to the correct district once the address is entered into the database.<sup>12</sup> In addition to the district, the neighborhood or municipality is displayed along with the census tract. Knowing the specific neighborhoods and census tracts where their caseload resides allows caseworkers to make use of the data books as well as other data sources that may be organized geographically. Once identified, the locations of community assets can also be geocoded and mapped to assist the caseworkers in locating services that are in close proximity to their clients.

**26. Developing a New Spatial Service Delivery Concept for the YMCA: “Y Without Walls” (Indianapolis)**

The board of directors of the YMCA in Indianapolis wanted to relocate YMCA headquarters and needed to find an appropriate community to move into. The YMCA building was built in 1958 in a neighborhood that was then in the heart of the inner city. Over time the community had changed, and it was increasingly dominated by the growing downtown business district and a sprawling university campus. By the mid-1990s the YMCA had become more geographically distant from the communities it most wanted to serve.

The YMCA board contacted the United Way, which had collaborated with the Polis Center at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis to build and operate a sophisticated and recurrently updated neighborhood indicators system for Indianapolis: the Social Assets and Vulnerability Indicators system (SAVI). The YMCA asked for help in applying SAVI's economic, demographic, public safety, and program information to the process of selecting a new neighborhood to be the site of YMCA's new building.

YMCA program sites (schools with before- and after-school care) were plotted geographically and laid over demographic information on poverty in Indianapolis, crime data indicating victims and perpetrators, and transportation data illustrating where significant numbers of residents had difficulty getting access to transportation. SAVI's analysis offered a block-by-block illustration of poverty density for the entire city. Participants say that mapping software was instrumental in the analysis. Examining maps with a host of data indicative of service needs, in conjunction with overlays showing the interplay of multiple factors influencing quality of life in Indianapolis neighborhoods, helped the YMCA board analyze the challenges before it more clearly.

On the basis of the SAVI mapping data, which showed a crying need for greater youth programming in virtually every part of the city, the board completely shifted its paradigm for what a YMCA ought to be and moved the organization in a completely new strategic direction. As an urban mission branch, the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis decided that it would be most effective if it did not expect people to come to it, but if it went to the people. The result is a "YMCA Without Walls" that will offer services in churches, schools, community centers, or wherever the need is greatest. One

year after this program direction had been in operation, the YMCA programs had six programs under way in middle schools. Analysis of SAVI maps had, of course, been a key determinant in deciding the spatial pattern of services to be offered.

### **27. Disseminating Neighborhood Data via the World Wide Web** (Denver)

The Piton Foundation has operated its data initiative since 1991 and, since its inception, it has operated as an on-call clearinghouse. Residents, organizations, media, and others call with specific data questions about Denver's neighborhoods, and staff of the Foundation answer those questions. Through the years, foundation staff have learned key lessons that now guide their work. First, very few of those who call with data questions have any experience in analyzing, understanding, communicating, or using data to its best advantage. Thus, far more work over the years has gone into providing technical assistance and support to people's use of data than into the actual delivery of data. Second, data, particularly data provided at a neighborhood level, has the propensity to be used as a weapon amongst those who disagree rather than as a tool for forging agreement. People need a common floor of data that is easily available and commonly understood in order to turn data into the tool it can be. Third, almost all data used in this initiative come from public sources, but there is little avenue available to the public agencies that provide the data to use the data internally to form their own opinions and shape their own actions. Public agencies may "own" the data, but they have no ownership in the data.

In response to these lessons, the foundation embarked on a new effort. In the spring of 1998, Piton launched a new website called *Neighborhood Facts*, with a direct link from its home page. *Neighborhood Facts* was developed in partnership with the City Planning Office. The site contains data in multiple formats—neighborhood summary tables of 80 key indicators programmed to retrieve the most recent data available; an interactive database of well over 100 indicators searchable by year (1990 forward), by indicator, and by neighborhood; asset maps for each neighborhood that picture common assets within neighborhoods, such as schools, churches, public agencies, and arts and culture centers; a selection of substantive maps displaying various indicators for the entire city; a series of charts and graphs depicting key indicators and programmed to retrieve the most recent data available; and a brief history for Denver neighborhoods (currently, histories are available for about half of all Denver neighborhoods). The website is updated annually.

*Neighborhood Facts* is a direct response to the realization that people need data in multiple forms—numeric and pictorial—in order to reach a broader audience with limited data skills. Moreover, it frees up critical staff time once devoted to responding to routine data requests to now provide targeted technical assistance and support within key neighborhoods—for Piton, the 20 or so poorest neighborhoods in Denver. This website has gone far in achieving the common data floor needed. Large numbers of residents have the data, use the data, and know that everyone else has the data. Among this data set, there are no trumps available to some but not to all. And the

partnership with the City Planning Office was very strategic. This is now *the* data set used by the Planning Office, made available to public officials, employed in public conversation about public issues. The City Planning Office has gone the extra step by providing the data on CD-ROM to all city agencies, elected officials, and others at a census-tract level, by neighborhood, and by council district.

Complementary efforts are under way to expand access to the site in Piton's targeted neighborhoods. Portable Internet access is available through the use of a fully equipped notebook computer that enables staff to take the Internet to wherever people have a data need regardless of whether they have a computer or even a phone. Staff have made presentations and served as a data intermediary to neighborhood associations and groups in as unlikely places as church basements, neighborhood living rooms and kitchens, and public parks. A separate effort to create home pages for neighborhood associations is under way, and those associations are provided with direct links to the summary page for their neighborhood on *Neighborhood Facts*. Additional efforts are under way and more will be attempted in the months to come, but in just five months' time, the results are astounding.

In the first year *Neighborhood Facts* was in operation (March 1998 through February 1999), a total of 4,704 visits to the site were recorded (an average 13 visits per day), and a total of 47,085 pages were transmitted (an average of 10 per visit).

**28. Improving the Effectiveness of Child Care Services** (Boston)

Project Equip (Early Education Quality Improvement Project) in Boston is a child care assessment and planning initiative of Associated Day Care Services, funded by AT&T. It has adopted an information-intensive approach in all of its work. It regularly collaborates with the National Neighborhood Indicators Project's Boston partner (the Boston Foundation) in applications of the Foundation's Boston Children and Families Database (BCFD), and it has relied on a number of other data assembly and analysis strategies, including surveying providers, mapping the distribution of child care services across Boston against demand, obtaining parents' views through parent interviews, and developing a facilities assessment index. The BCFD has helped inform the group's work in four key ways.

First, using both BCFD data and data on child care, Project Equip explored the location of child care facilities in relation to where children live, particularly the children of low-income families, families receiving AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) benefits, and single-parent families, all of whom tend to have high child care need and use rates. The project mapped child care facilities and examined relationships by wards and precincts as well as by conventional city planning district areas—in each case highlighting variations in service levels in relation to need. These analyses were developed for use by state legislators as they made decisions about child care funding levels and proposed new state regulations.

Second, Project Equip is part of the "0-8 Coalition," a broad-based coalition seeking to coordinate plans and services for the city's young children. The coalition was asked by Boston Mayor Thomas Menino to review the findings of a task force report on services to four-year-olds and assess the impact of the task force's plan to make whole-day kindergarten available to all five-year-olds, thereby eliminating or severely restricting access for four-year-olds. To assess the impact of the new policy, Project Equip prepared profiles by the Boston Redevelopment Authority Planning District based on spreadsheets showing the number of four-year-olds currently served and the number of hours service was provided. This information was used to develop the Coalition's response to the Mayor's request.

Third, the state Department of Education recently requested proposals for using \$4 million in child care funds directed at neighborhoods and communities of greatest need. Many providers of child care in Boston began to compete for the scarce funds. Project Equip used neighborhood-level data on children and child care data in the BCFD to create a data-driven policy, rather than one allowing funds to flow to those groups with the most political clout. It mapped the children's residences at the neighborhood and block-group levels as well as child care availability, and found insufficient infant care in all targeted neighborhoods. This approach enabled providers to work together in a collaborative mode, setting the stage for future joint efforts to improve the quantity and quality of child care in Boston's neighborhoods. The group went on to map child care centers by

state representative and senate districts and to create graphs showing concentrations of children by age. These have been used by child care advocates to inform advocacy efforts at the state level.

Finally, Project Equip has creatively used neighborhood-level data on violent crime in combination with data showing the location of child care centers and a survey of child care providers about where they take their children to play and how safe and well-maintained the parks and playgrounds are perceived to be. The purpose is to make mapped versions of this information available to the Boston Police Department and to community action groups to stimulate more attention to those parks and playgrounds that are deemed unsafe for children's use, in a concentrated effort to increase public safety where children play.

## ENDNOTES

1. See *1996-97 Progress: National Neighborhood Indicators Project* (1997).
2. This monograph is a wide-ranging collection that is intended to grow over time. Several of the cases were originally published in *The Urban Institute*, 1996. Almost all of them also appear in G.T. Kingsley, et al. 1997. Full citations on authors and other source materials are provided in Annex A.
3. This was not an easy task. The city maintained the data on a mainframe computer in a form that could not be translated directly into a personal computer data file. The city had to redirect the data in a printed report format to a computer disk. The resulting text file could then be imported into a personal computer database in which each line of text was represented as a record occupying one field. Title and blank lines were deleted. The relevant data were next organized into two lines for each license in the original report. Finally, a very short database program was devised to extract the relevant data fields from their locations on either of the two lines and then to append the results to a file with one record per license.
4. Block-level data are limited compared with those available at the block-group level. Only data from the “short form” sent to all households are reported by block. Block-level information on households—including households headed by single parents—is available on the U.S. Census CD-ROM at many libraries. The more interesting statistic on children was available only on a distribution computer tape, made available by the U.S. Census State Clearinghouse in Madison, WI.
5. For most people, aggregate income statistics in the millions or billions of dollars are difficult to comprehend. The numbers generally are used to impress others that “BIG” numbers of dollars exist in a neighborhood. This can be an important antidote to the perception that a neighborhood has no wealth.
6. A program was written by the Nonprofit Center that parsed an address—that is, broke the line into its component parts. The street name was isolated and looked up by this program. Most basic errors in spelling of streets could be caught by this pass. When street directions were missing, they needed to be supplied.
7. The appropriate chart was somewhat problematic. The use of circles of a naturally increasing radius is technically misleading. Each additional quarter of a mile incorporates a proportionally larger area. But this process was easier to communicate than some more appropriate statistical representation.

8. There are about three block groups per census tract in this part of Milwaukee, and each block group is composed of 6 to 10 blocks.
9. Some of these findings are summarized in C. Coulton, J. Korbin, M. Su, & J. Chow. "Community-Level Factors and Child Maltreatment Rates," *Child Development* 66 (1995), pp. 1262–1276.
10. The Neighborhood Centers Association is an association of 21 agencies within the city of Cleveland that provide a variety of family-based services, including early childhood education, elderly day care, mental health programs, and employment programs, with the goal of helping communities become self-sufficient and empowered.
11. The software package used was MapInfo Professional.<sup>TM</sup>
12. From a management information system standpoint, there is no good way to geocode records on the fly (as in case intake) and also enter data into a database. The best way to do this is to open a geocoding software package (such as MapInfo or Matchmaker), geocode the address, and then copy and paste the address into a database program such as MS access. However, most existing agency databases are not built to store geofields such as tract, block group, or latitude and longitude. Moreover, most databases do not track addresses over time.

## **ANNEX A**

### **AUTHORS AND SOURCES**

As noted earlier, several of these cases were originally published in The Urban Institute, *Democratizing Information: First Year Report of the National Neighborhood Indicators Project* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1996); these and the next dozen that were assembled also appear in G.T. Kingsley, C. Coulton, M. Barndt, D. Sawicki, and P. Tatian, *Mapping Your Community: Using Geographic Information to Strengthen Community Initiatives* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, October 1997). The overall monograph was edited by G. Thomas Kingsley.

#### **Atlanta, GA**

All of the Atlanta cases were originally written by David S. Sawicki, director of the Data and Policy Analysis Group (DAPA) of the Atlanta Project.

#### **Boston, MA**

The Boston case was drafted by Charlotte Kahn, director of the Boston Persistent Poverty Project at the Boston Foundation.

#### **Camden, NJ**

The Camden case was adapted from B. Schmitt, *Community Organizations and GIS Implementation: From Experience to Theory* (Piscataway, NJ: Center for Social and Community Development, Rutgers University, 1997).

#### **Cleveland, OH**

The case on Cleveland's Department of Children and Family Services Cleveland cases was adapted from a longer draft written by Lisa Nelson, Neil Bania, and Claudia Coulton of the Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change, Mandel School of Applied Social Services, Case Western University (CUPSC). All other Cleveland cases were written by G. Thomas Kingsley of the Urban Institute, based on CUPSC reports. These reports include C. J. Coulton, J. Chow, and S. Pandey, *Analysis of Poverty and Related Conditions in Cleveland Area Neighborhoods* (Cleveland: CUPSC, 1990); L. Leete and N. Bania, *Assessment of the Geographic Distribution and Skill Requirements of Jobs in the Cleveland-Akron Metropolitan Area* (Cleveland: CUPSC, August 1995); and C. Coulton, N. Verma, and S. Guo, *Time-Limited Welfare and the Employment Prospects of AFDC Recipients in Cuyahoga County* (Cleveland: CUPSC, December 1996).

***Denver, CO***

All of the Denver cases were written by Terri J. Bailey, director of Research, the Piton Foundation.

***Indianapolis, IN***

This case was drafted by David Kaufman, manager of the Social Assets and Vulnerability Indicators (SAVI) system for the United Way of Indianapolis.

***Milwaukee, WI***

All of the Milwaukee cases were drafted by Michael Barndt, director of the Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee.

***New York, NY***

The New York case was drafted by Eric Zachary of the New York University Institute for Education and Social Policy.

***Oakland, CA***

The Oakland case on “Integrating Social Services Around Schools” was drafted by G. Thomas Kingsley based on M. C. Casey, “Using Data as an Advocacy Tool: What it Takes,” *Georgia Academy Journal*, Summer 1995, 7–15). The case on “Starting a Comprehensive Teen Parenting Program” was drafted by Sonya Geis of the Urban Strategies Council.

***Providence, RI***

The Providence case was drafted by J. Vandermillen and A. DeLuca of the Providence Plan.