Community Indicators
A Study of the Application of Community Indicators in Greenville South Carolina
Christopher Clauson
May 2014

A Terminal Project
Presented to the Faculty of the
Department of Planning, Development and Preservation
College of Architecture, Arts and Humanities
Clemson University
Master of City and Regional Planning
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of City and Regional Planning

May 2014

Christopher F. Clauson

Approved:

_____________________________
Dr. Cliff Ellis, Committee Chair

_____________________________
Timothy Green

_____________________________
Dr. Barry Nocks
COMMUNITY INDICATORS

A STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY INDICATORS IN GREENVILLE, SC

Christopher Clauson
2014 Master of City and Regional Planning Candidate
Chair: Professor Timothy Green
Committee Member: Dr. Barry Nocks, FAICP
OUTLINE

• Introduce the problem

• Purpose

• Theory and literature

• Methods for completion

• Findings

• Policy Recommendation
PROBLEM

HOW CAN WE BEST MONITOR THE COMMUNITY AND PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS?
PROBLEM

- Needs of the communities can go unnoticed by leaders without collecting and monitoring data
- Desire of elected officials to understand problems being faced
PROBLEM
SPECIAL EMPHASIS

“Special emphasis neighborhoods are identified by the Community Development (CD) division based on Census data and other socio-economic indicators.” (2010-2015 Consolidated Plan, City of Greenville, SC)

- Use HUD’s definition of low-to-moderate income levels
- Section 8 Housing Income Limits
GREENVILLE CD GOALS

• Community Development projects are based on three major goals, to provide:
  • Decent, safe, and affordable housing
  • A suitable living environment
  • Expanded economic opportunities
PROBLEM

- Monitor the community health and evaluate the progress toward community development goals at the same time
PURPOSE

TO DEVELOP USEFUL INDICATORS WORKING OFF OF SOME PRELIMINARY WORK
PURPOSE

• Develop a set of indicators that will bridge the gap between the two main stakeholders
  • Community
    • Reflective of the concerns
    • Incorporate local context
  • Community Development division
    • Related to policy measures
    • Monitor performance
PURPOSE

- Studio Project from Fall 2011 Clemson MCRP
  - Developed entire indicators system
  - Supporting documentation in grant application
  - No vetting with neighborhood leaders or community development staff involved
  - Very effective in what it was intended to do (supporting a successful grant application)

- Vetting is important for responsive policies, empowered local populace
LITERATURE

HOW CAN WE BRIDGE THE GAP?
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Early efforts focused on physical environment (1930’s)
  - No consideration on factors creating the poverty
  - Disregard for racial and ethnic problems
  - Social Security Act and Housing Act (1935)
- Housing Act of 1949
  - Slum clearance/urban renewal
  - New construction of public housing units
- Housing Act of 1954
  - Allowed for more rehabilitation
- Establishment of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (1965)
  - Community Development Block Grants (1974)

Source: O’Connor, 1999
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Progression from large sweeping to local collaborative initiatives

Scott Tower

Homes for Hope
INDICATORS

- Indicators are “…simply a set of rules for gathering and organizing data so they can be assigned meaning.” (Innes, 1990)
HISTORY

• Earliest US Example (1910)
  • SAGE Foundation investigates Pittsburgh industrial areas
  • Conducts numerous surveys

• Social Indicators Movement (1960’s)
  • Economic indicators like GDP were not enough
  • Objective and quantitative data

• Revival in Indicator Use (1990)
  • Bottom up development reminiscent of 1910
    • Quality of Life
    • Sustainability

Source: Cobb & Rixford, 1998
# Top Down vs. Bottom Up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Down</th>
<th>Bottom Up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>Contextualized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily Comparable</td>
<td>Unique to Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Maker Driven</td>
<td>Local Populace Driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform Decision Makers</td>
<td>Active and Engaged Community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
METHODS FOR COMPLETION

DEVELOPING INDICATORS THAT BRIDGE THE GAP
METHODS FOR COMPLETION

- Initial Indicator Selection
- Focus Group with Neighborhood Leaders
- Focus Group with Community Development Staff
INDICATOR SELECTION

Established measurements from other projects

Sources: Boston Indicators, CTDataHaven, Communities Count: King County, WA
INDICATOR SELECTION

• Created entire system
• Due to limitations of time and resources only selected one category
• Focused on 1st Goal of CD division
  • Safe, Decent and Affordable Housing
  • Found measurements being used in other projects
    • Collected data, found what was available
    • Presented to focus groups
      • Neighborhood Leaders
      • Community Development Staff
DATA SOURCES

• US Census
  - Summary File 1
  - American Community Survey (2005-2009)

• City of Greenville
  - Housing Supply
  - Address

• Various Organizations
  - RAIDS Crime Tracker
  - Zillow.com
  - Salary.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Houses (Total)</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arcadia Hills</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brutontown</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Sullivan</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Avenue</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenline Spartanburg</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haynie-Sirrine</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholtown</td>
<td>1303</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payne Logan</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Valley</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southemside</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sterling</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viola Street</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Greenville</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Housing Safety (Green Avenue)

### 2012 vs 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Type</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery - Individual</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary - Residential</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: RAIDS Online 2012-2013)

### 2013 Data

- **Aggravated Assault:** 8%
- **Robbery - Individual:** 14%
- **Burglary - Residential:** 78%

(Source: RAIDS Online 2012-2013)
FOCUS GROUPS

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE TOP DOWN AND BOTTOM UP APPROACH. GAINING LOCAL CONTEXTUALIZED KNOWLEDGE.
FOCUS GROUP

- **Indicators**
  - Present benefits of indicator system at neighborhood level
  - What is possible currently
  - What could be developed

- **Local knowledge**
  - Perceptions of indicators
  - Bring into local context

- **Usefulness**
  - Tying to policy of Community Development Division
  - Capture conditions
STRUCTURE

• Two Groups
  • Neighborhood Leaders
    • Gain local knowledge
    • Reveal any shortcomings
  • Community Development Staff

• Participants
  • 3 to 5 for each group
  • Like minded
  • Promote conversation and feedback

• Moderator
  • Kept conversation going
  • Stimulated discussion

Source: Krueger, 2002
QUESTIONS

Neighborhood Leaders
• What does housing safety (decent housing, housing affordability) mean to you?
• What measurements show a lack of housing safety (decent housing, housing affordability)?
• Are there other ways it could/should be measured?

Community Development Staff
• How well would this track progress toward goals?
• What issues do you see in collecting this data?
• What measurements are you currently capturing?
# HOUSING SAFETY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Green Avenue</th>
<th>Haynie-Sirrine</th>
<th>Nicholtown</th>
<th>Pleasant Valley</th>
<th>Viola Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery-Individual</td>
<td>9 5</td>
<td>2 4</td>
<td>8 4</td>
<td>4 4</td>
<td>7 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
<td>5 3</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>4 3</td>
<td>3 4</td>
<td>2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary-Residential</td>
<td>46 29</td>
<td>17 26</td>
<td>50 28</td>
<td>46 37</td>
<td>29 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>1 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RAIDS Online 2012-2013
## DECENT HOUSING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Green Avenue</th>
<th>Haynie-Sirine</th>
<th>Nicholtown</th>
<th>Pleasant Valley</th>
<th>Viola Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bedrooms</strong></td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Zillow.com 01/2014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bathrooms</strong></td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Zillow.com 01/2014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Square Footage</strong></td>
<td>1267</td>
<td>1360</td>
<td>1358</td>
<td>1084</td>
<td>1518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Zillow.com 01/2014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year Built-Median</strong></td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Zillow.com 01/2014)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Age</strong></td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>1951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ACS Data 2005-2009)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zillow.com and American Community Survey (2005-2009 Est.)
YEAR BUILT BY DECADE (PERCENTAGE)
ARCADIA HILLS

Source: (Zillow.com)  Median Age: 2006
YEAR BUILT BY DECADE (PERCENTAGE)
GREENLINE SPARTANBURG

Source: (Zillow.com)  Median Age: 1950
YEAR BUILT BY DECADE (PERCENTAGE) GREEN AVENUE

Source: (Zillow.com)  Median Age: 1986
# HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Green Avenue</th>
<th>Haynie-Sirine</th>
<th>Nicholtown</th>
<th>Pleasant Valley</th>
<th>Viola Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Home Price</strong></td>
<td>$ 91,765</td>
<td>$ 95,000</td>
<td>$ 86,146</td>
<td>$ 60,385</td>
<td>$ 207,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Zillow.com 01/2014)</td>
<td>$ 102,925</td>
<td>$ 102,752</td>
<td>$ 83,577</td>
<td>$ 77,780</td>
<td>$ 137,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Rent</strong></td>
<td>$ 309</td>
<td>$ 285</td>
<td>$ 376</td>
<td>$ 449</td>
<td>$ 523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ACS Data 2005-2009)</td>
<td>$ 920</td>
<td>$ 952</td>
<td>$ 865</td>
<td>$ 798</td>
<td>$ 1,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Zillow.com 01/2014)</td>
<td>$ 559</td>
<td>$ 586</td>
<td>$ 497</td>
<td>$ 442</td>
<td>$ 762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Mortgage</strong></td>
<td>$ 22,779</td>
<td>$ 22,586</td>
<td>$ 19,136</td>
<td>$ 17,957</td>
<td>$ 29,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Zillow.com 01/2014)</td>
<td>$ 34,040</td>
<td>$ 35,520</td>
<td>$ 33,000</td>
<td>$ 30,560</td>
<td>$ 43,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salary Needed to Buy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 22,779</td>
<td>$ 22,586</td>
<td>$ 19,136</td>
<td>$ 17,957</td>
<td>$ 29,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salary Needed to Rent</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 34,040</td>
<td>$ 35,520</td>
<td>$ 33,000</td>
<td>$ 30,560</td>
<td>$ 43,440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Principal and Interest: 30 Yr Fixed, 4.2% APR, 20% Down, 760+ Credit Score
Source: Zillow.com and American Community Survey (2005-2009 Est.)
Paycheck to Paycheck: Green Avenue
First Quarter 2014 Homeownership Market

Median Home Price: $102,925

Housing Cost Burden- Buy: 28%

Source: Zillow.com and Salary.com
Paycheck to Paycheck: Green Avenue
First Quarter 2014 Rental Market

Median Monthly Rent Estimate: $851

Housing Cost Burden - Rent: 30%

Source: Zillow.com and Salary.com
FINDINGS

HOW WELL DID THE PROPOSED INDICATORS BRIDGE THE GAP?
HOUSING SAFETY (RESIDENT THOUGHTS)

• The factors presented are external to the home
• “Housing Safety” makes them think of internal conditions:
  • Alarms (Smoke, Security, Carbon Monoxide)
  • Safe Heating Source
  • New Electrical Wiring
  • No Structural Damage
• Impediments
  • Unwilling landlords
  • Lack of education
  • Selfish children playing off fears
  • Homeowners insurance requirement
• Measurements
  • Surveys e.g. “Paint the Town”
  • Percentage of homes without insurance

“So if you are looking at housing safety that’s an external effect and we think of internal effect when you say housing safety.”
HOUSING SAFETY (CD STAFF THOUGHTS)

• Echoed neighborhood leaders
  • Except safety should involve crime
  • Feeling safe sitting on front porch

• Opportunities
  • Properties rehabilitated by neighborhood
  • Applicants turned down with reason

• Measurement
  • Homes with overgrown shrubs
  • External lighting requirements
  • Ramps for seniors

“...I think also safety is whether or not you are able to sit on your front porch and feel safe in your own home.”

“I like the idea of tracking the number of applicants that we have to turn down and for what reason. That helps us and that will help us.”
DECENT HOUSING (RESIDENT THOUGHTS)

• Decent housing is relative
  • Safe, affordable, clean (inside and out)
  • Adequate amenities

• Not decent:
  • Roof falling in, broken windows
  • No air or heat

• Impediments:
  • Absentee landlords

• Measurements:
  • Window surveys

“...landlords and rental property that doesn’t have the proper mechanisms in them to make them internally safe.”
DECENT HOUSING (CD STAFF THOUGHTS)

- Decent housing is a standard
  - Meets code standards
  - Clean and safe inside and out
  - Contributes to beauty of neighborhood
  - Moderately energy efficient
- Opportunities
  - Target rehabilitation
  - Break out existing data
- Measurements
  - Building permits
  - Housing age and program participants

“…a modern amount of energy efficiency… more modern standards of living. It needs to be something I would want to live in.”

“…if we saw a discrepancy like …(a) neighborhood has housing of this age and no one has rehabbed their home from building permits it might help narrow it down who we need to assist or contact.”
AFFORDABILITY (RESIDENT THOUGHTS)

- 30% of income is adequate
  - Housing Authority
  - HUD
- Unaffordable:
  - Rent increases due to the market
  - New larger homes
  - House “Flippers”

- Impediments:
  - Poor Budgeting
  - Lack of education
  - Unstable employment

- Measurements:
  - Homes of Hope (Lease-jobs)
  - Income based
AFFORDABILITY (CD STAFF THOUGHTS)

- Affordability
  - HUD definitions
  - Sustainability factor
- Opportunities
  - Supplement anecdotal
  - Follow market trends
- Measurements
  - Foreclosures
  - Craigslist

“...it’s not just getting into the house and buying the house its actually being able to stay in the house long term.”
## Suggested Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Safety</th>
<th>Decent Housing</th>
<th>Housing Affordability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety code violations</td>
<td>Home with central heating/cooling</td>
<td>Affordability (hourly salary/part time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External lighting violations</td>
<td>Renter occupied</td>
<td>Foreclosures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condemned buildings</td>
<td>Homes demolished</td>
<td>Transportation + Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes rehabilitated</td>
<td>Energy usage</td>
<td>Affordable homes built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior ramps installed</td>
<td>Building permits</td>
<td>Section 8 Homes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

HOW MIGHT MEANINGFUL AND USEFUL INDICATORS BE DEVELOPED?
NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS

• Drive demand for monitoring
  • Character preservation
  • Generate conversation among residents

• Promote neighborhood participation
  • Participate in data collection
    • Paint the Town survey
    • Street light inspections
  • Information sharing among residents
    • MyEnergy
      • Tracks household energy usage and allows for comparison

https://www.myenergy.com/
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Educate and promote
  - Reach out to other neighborhood leaders
  - Reorganize reporting procedures to include efforts by neighborhood

- Network and partnership
  - Other City Offices
  - Duke Energy

- Smaller initiatives
  - Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
  - Wire inspections
COLLECTIVE ACTIONS

• Collaborate to increase demand
  • Grant opportunities exist to fund a Community Indicators Organization (dataZoa Grants program)
  • Zillow Real Estate Research
References

QUESTIONS?