Working Smarter in Community Development
Knowledge-in-Action Brief 07-2

Stocks, Flows, and Dreams: Shaping and Measuring Neighborhood Change in Community Development

by Xavier de Souza Briggs

June 2007

Ideas in brief

Whatever their specific priorities, community developers—and those who teach, write about, study, regulate, fund, and otherwise support the work—share an interest in shaping neighborhood change in positive ways. And many agree that change should include multiple dimensions, some *tangible* (such as the physical stock of homes, businesses, and community facilities) and some *intangible* (such as social ties, feelings of trust, and positive perceptions that encourage new investment and commitment). But much of the change happening in neighborhoods is not driven by intentional community development activity ("interventions") but instead by what happens outside the neighborhood—in the wider city, metropolitan region, and beyond. Also, change meant to benefit individuals and families must grapple with the fact that households and businesses are continually moving in and out of neighborhoods, bringing resources and challenges with them and carrying benefits or losses away ("flows"). So snapshots of community conditions ("stocks") and trends are limited as guides to action or indicators of impact. Based on a workshop that gathered practitioners, researchers, and others, and drawing on key readings and other resources, this brief brings together cutting-edge practice and theory to identify key choices and strategies for (a) understanding neighborhood change, (b) shaping it more effectively, and (c) determining the impacts of community development in the process. That is, the brief addresses the how-to-do-it-better question for each of those three. Whatever role you play in the field, the advice in this brief is for you—designed to help you make better choices *and* work more effectively with others to tackle these tricky issues.

This project was made possible by a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to the Department of Urban Studies + Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where the author is a faculty member.

Ideas in Practice

Guiding principle	Examples and caveats
1. Track multiple dimensions of change, and use stories to make indicators meaningful. Changes are often mixed, making narrow indicators risky. And while change stories are not necessarily indicators of community development activity, understanding change well is the place to start: Simple labels and measures can be misleading, and indicators don't mean much without stories to make sense of them.	A neighborhood may be adding vital resources *and* becoming home to more disadvantaged families at the same time. A new park is not an asset unless people feel safe using it. The proliferation of *neighborhood indicator systems* and other information-age tools in recent years makes accurate and balanced stories (so what's), and linking "local knowledge" possessed by residents and other insiders to official data sources, more important than ever.
2. Benchmark neighborhood trends against trends in the city and region. Stories of decline or rebound matter most in the context of change in the wider region. Ask, "How is the neighborhood changing *relative* to the trends shaping our region? What roles does our neighborhood play in the area: low-rent gateway, shopping district, bedroom community of starter homes, other roles?"	Community developers in a rapidly growing region must pay attention to strains of growth (competition for housing, overcrowded facilities, labor shortages) while those working in a shrinking city or region, or a region with uneven growth, typically face different challenges (disinvestment, abandonment, job shortage, pockets of deep distress) and should benchmark differently.
3. For action planning, question assumptions, and develop a model (or "theory") of change that's practical and well informed. Many strong assumptions about cause and effect don't pan out, and myopic planning can ignore how the changes and "leverage points" in a community are tied to one another—creating the risk that solving one problem only exacerbates other problems.	Targeting matters: The growing evidence is that general measures of *neighborhood* improvement have only limited, indirect effects on economic self-sufficiency, child health and education, and other aspects of *individual* and *family* well-being. Community initiatives need focused strategies for affecting those outcomes too, grounded in the best-available knowledge of how causes and effects actually add up (or don't).

continues …

4. Shape and track perceptions, not just conditions, inside and outside the target neighborhood. It's tempting to think of community development as pouring resources into a vessel (adding "stock"). But strengthening places is, in large part, about *building confidence and positive perceptions* that encourage a wide variety of players—households, merchants, public officials, financial institutions, realtors, and others—to take reasonable risks, counting on each other to *co-invest*.	Simple efforts can shape and track the *reputation* a place has with its insiders (residents, merchants, civic institutions, service providers, others) and with outsiders (investors, policymakers, and more) too. And constituents inside and outside the neighborhood may need to be educated about what others are up to. In lieu of trustworthy and clear info on others' commitments, the incentives to play it safe, back out, and disinvest are often high.
5. Track "flows" of people and investment, including the fortunes of (some) people who leave the target neighborhood. People are mobile: every five years, half the American population has moved, and each year, a third of renters move to a new neighborhood, town, or region. Tracking such *flows* is a key to understanding what is driving change and also what its impacts will be. Community development can't count on creating stable "urban villages" everywhere, nor can the results of community development be tallied from simple before-and-after snapshots of places, obscuring the fortunes of the people passing through those places.	Even small samples of family histories (before, during, after they live "here") can be revealing. And new national studies are teaching us a great deal about what kinds of households live, for how long, in particular kinds of neighborhoods. Many low-income black families who rent aren't "trapped" in poor and segregated neighborhoods for long periods of time, for example. Instead, they "bounce" constantly from poor place to poor place, dealing with unstable and unaffordable housing. And new evaluation research is highlighting the importance of tracking people and places (as both experience change) with creative strategies.

Stocks, Flows, and Dreams: Shaping and Measuring Neighborhood Change in Community Development

by Xavier de Souza Briggs

Community developers work to strengthen places in order to benefit people. And "strengthen" implies change. But what does it mean, exactly, to change a place, and how do you know when you are making meaningful progress?

As Tony Proscio notes in *Measuring Community Development*, a report prepared for the nonprofit Local Initiative Support Corporation's Chicago affiliate (LISC-Chicago):

> In concept, the objectives measures that would indicate the health of a redeveloping neighborhood are many, and not especially controversial. The problem is that most of the data for these variables are scarce, infrequently produced, poorly maintained, expensive to obtain, inconsistent with one another, available only for a few years, or some combination.

A related problem is that even where useful measures are available and reliable, it can be very tricky to *connect* changes in those measures to community development activity—as opposed to the other things driving constant change. As Howell Baum of the University of Maryland observes of community initiatives generally, "Often, diverse actors bring disparate interests, ambiguous goals, and fuzzy theories of change into loose alliances to design and implement interventions" (See Baum, "How Should We Evaluate Community Initiatives?" 2001) And as Baum adds, all of these—the actors, goals, and strategies—typically shift over time, making it hard to say what the intervention consisted of and how exactly it propelled certain kinds of change.

In the early years of "modern" community development in America, in the 1960s, community developers and those who invested in the work typically tracked and reported units of service, facilities created or expanded, jobs and businesses generated, housing units built and occupied, and other tangible *outputs*. Measures of community conditions indicated need, in ubiquitous "need statements" prepared to justify funding, but not performance. And as for the outputs, it quickly became apparent that tracking change over time was crucial: In the high-risk arena of small business development, for example, a majority of new businesses fail within the first few years, while others may operate with little growth or growth potential over long periods.

So tracking business survival and performance, for example, or job retention and other trends, and not just new businesses launched by a given point in time, is crucial.

Sometimes, beyond the outputs, community developers also tracked and reported before-and-after measures of client well-being as a way of gauging the impact of local interventions. But these measures have many problems, and the aims of community development typically outrun client-by-client service enrichment. In addition, observers noted that other measures of well-being and opportunity, such as new ties of trust and cooperation among neighbors (social capital, including what scholars have labeled "collective efficacy" among neighbors), the willingness of banks and other investors to commit resources, and a psychological "sense of community" were also central to community development and its success—and either more difficult to capture or less likely to get noticed or both. Finally, as the national intermediary NeighborWorks notes in "Community Development Evaluation" (2006), the keys to achieving an impact on neighborhood outcomes may lie upstream—in assessment of organizational capacity and performance—and those may not be effectively measured, or the information on them effectively used, by a given local effort.

Views on measurement, and on the tools for getting it done, have both evolved in significant ways since the early decades of community development. The rise of a "community building" movement, in particular, has emphasized the importance of multi-dimensional "community capacity," beyond narrow measures of employment, income, or distress in families or neighborhoods. Market models and new demands for accountability in the public and nonprofit sectors have brought new pressure to pick the best-possible investments and to show results. And in recent years, a proliferation of new tools, such as digital media, sensing equipment, mobile phones and instant messaging, low-cost computers (including hand-held ones), and powerful geographic information systems that operate on those computers, have multiplied the ways in which we can conceive of, measure, and try to shape change—not only in neighborhoods but in schools, workplaces, natural ecosystems, and many other kinds of systems.

But typically, the tools themselves do not resolve old dilemmas and puzzles in neighborhood-based work, such as: Which kinds of change are most important? What trade-offs are entailed if we gain one thing we value (such as shopping choices or other amenities) and lose another (such as a diversity of family types and backgrounds)? How do we know what change *our* efforts, as opposed to myriad other forces, are producing? And how do we leverage significant, and hopefully lasting, change with the limited resources we control?

Preview and background. This brief addresses the old puzzles as well as some promising new tools and the opportunities they offer. Part of a series on working *smarter*, not just harder, in community development, the aim of this brief is to bridge theory and practice in ways that diffuse innovative ideas along with the caveats and “so what’s” that are essential to effective practice. This document is based in part on a day-long gathering organized, in December 2004, at Harvard University, where veteran community developers and organizers, evaluators and other researchers, educators and trainers, and funders and technical assistance experts, some with extensive international experience, gathered to discuss neighborhood change as a focal point of community development. We discussed a range of local experiences, including the ambitious, multi-year New Communities Program coordinated by LISC-Chicago and backed by the MacArthur Foundation, which also sponsored this project.

An earlier workshop focused on what values and success definitions should guide community development (see Brief 07-01 in this series). So the December ’04 workshop focused mainly on two follow-on questions. First, how can neighborhood change be *measured and tracked* most effectively, in light of the core values and aims of community development and the information and communication technology (ICT) and other tools now available? And second, how can we gauge the *impacts* of community development activity more effectively? (Put differently, how do we get better at *attributing* change to community development versus the other forces that reshape neighborhoods over time, such as demographic and market forces that operate on a much larger scale than “intentional” development work “on the ground”?) It is noteworthy that much of the innovative new work by practitioners and researchers, which is not yet widely known in the field, addresses either the first or second question but not both.

At the workshop, different participants voiced different priorities and approaches, which was the main reason to gather such a diverse group of thinkers, doers, and “straddlers.” Front-line practitioners obviously care deeply about results, for example, but work under different constraints and with different constituents than the practitioners who invest in community development work, evaluate it, act as coaches, or—increasingly—blend these roles.

This brief is for all of them, both those who need better strategies for assessing their own work and those who assess interventions or fund those assessments. The brief highlights points of consensus, as well as divergent views and unanswered questions posed by a number of participants (see full list of workshop participants at the rear of this brief, along with key readings and other resources for learning). The brief also draws on the rich experience of NeighborWorks “Success Measures” program, painstakingly developed and pilot tested over the past decade and now in use in dozens of communities and hundreds of community development organizations nationwide.

The brief is organized around the five (5) guiding principles outlined under "Ideas in Practice" (pp.2-3) above. The principles reflect my own conclusions plus consensus points in the workshop group *but not yet common practices in the field*.

1. Track multiple dimensions of change, and use stories to make indicators meaningful.

In the 1946 Frank Capra film "It's a Wonderful Life," it's an angel who shows the main character, a despondent George, played by Jimmy Stewart, what life would have been like in the small town where George was born and raised *had George never lived*. This is the most direct measure of George's *impact* on the world because it is, at once, a portrait of *how* the world would be different as well as *why*. That view is an incredible gift, of course, and exactly the kind of gift every community developer, funder, or evaluator would love to receive. But lacking an angel to fly in with the impact story, our task is to *understand* neighborhood change effectively and also to make clear, convincing *connections* between change and the varied activities that define community development. Principle #1 outlines the first step to understanding change well.

Some groups or collaboratives make the mistake of being "focused" on everything—and so not focused at all ...
The failure to be conscious and deliberate about why particular indicators are appropriate can lead to an unfocused approach or a tense stand-off between those who favor different emphases (and perhaps different types of neighborhood change).

Community development has always been an ambitious and multi-dimensional enterprise. Along with its placed-based character and the goal of remaining accountable to local stakeholders, community development is *defined* by the aim of changing places in multiple dimensions, ideally in ways that reinforce one another. Yet the field has also been shaped by more narrowly focused stakeholder agendas: A public or private funder might be focused on an acute shortage of housing supply or a "skills mismatch" in the local economy, while an advocacy group might focus on neighborhood residents' isolation and lack of political influence.

Some groups or collaboratives make the mistake of being "focused" on everything—and so not focused at all. As Spruiell White of the MacArthur Foundation emphasizes, different indicators are appropriate for "different audiences with a stake in community development." But the failure to be conscious and deliberate about why particular indicators are appropriate can lead to an unfocused approach or a tense stand-off between those who favor different emphases (and perhaps different types of neighborhood change).

The fact that some dimensions of change are challenging to capture—in consistent ways, using widely accepted standards—also means that those aspects may get shortchanged, especially if they compete with more quantifiable kinds of change. And short-term changes, including what analysts call "spikes" (rapid fluctuations) in particular measures, are generally less reliable than multi-indicator measures that show robust changes over time, for example in local crime, business activity, or some other important domain. That's why the Metro Chicago Information Center (MCIC) has developed multi-indicator "challenge scores" to help community developers track changes in neighborhoods, subparts of neighborhoods, and larger areas of the Chicago city and region. The challenge scores are premised on the notion that change should be assessed relative to a community's starting point. Ingrid Ellen of New York University cautions that some simple indicators, such as the number of assaults in a neighborhood, can be more directly relevant to people's lives, than broad indexes, however. Garth Taylor of MCIC adds that indexes or scores also may not reflect community development work in changing very specific outcomes.

Also, "there is a fairness issue lurking behind every numerator," Taylor says. For example, one might track the "number of business start-ups per square mile of commercially zoned space in the neighborhood," and not just "number of business start-ups in the neighborhood," in order to be fair to places that have less useable space. Being fair means choosing the right *denominator* (per unit of area zoned appropriately) to go with the *numerator* of interest (number of business start-ups).

These are additional reasons why it's important to be flexible in *tracking neighborhood change* and to think of that tracking as distinct from *making claims about the impacts of initiatives to shape change in particular ways.*

The proliferation of *neighborhood indicator systems* and other information-age tools makes accurate and balanced stories (so what's), and linking "local knowledge" possessed by residents and other insiders to official data sources, more important than ever. Having more powerful, low-cost ways to track indicators, then—in the form of computerized neighborhood indictor systems or what European analysts more often refer to as *community informatics*—helps solve only part of our problem. We can track more indicators, in more flexible ways, to be sure. But as the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership and other leading institutions point out, local data remain patchy in many cases, and we still run the risk of learning the wrong lessons, or drawing misleading conclusions, from them.

Local data remain patchy in many cases, and we still run the risk of learning the wrong lessons, or drawing misleading conclusions, from them.

As systems become more complete, says Joe Ferreira of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, users will not only gain access to new indicators from "read-only" administrative sources, such as public agencies, but have more flexible ways of adding "local knowledge" to supplement the official sources. A new corner park is hardly a community asset, for example, if it is unsafe or inappropriately equipped to serve area residents. The fact that the park *is* green space may not be arguable, says Ferreira, but the *value* of that space is. The raw data, by themselves, do not convey *meanings* (so what's) until some meaning is convincingly projected onto the data.

In time, different sources of knowledge will be combined to resolve inconsistencies and holes in the data. The current model of local "data centers" (or clearinghouses or indicator reporting projects) at local universities, foundations, or other institutions may evolve into a "smart intermediary" alternative like the one Ferreira and his team are developing. This would help end users, from local planners and journalists to prospective employers and resident advocates, work with data that have been corrected, merged, transformed, and otherwise processed in multiple labor-saving ways.

See the free tools and advice available online via KnowledgePlex's "Data Place" and the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership.

There are several reasons, then, to track multiple dimensions of change and connect them to stories:

- Not only is change a constant, but most neighborhoods are changing, in a variety of ways, at the same time. A neighborhood may be adding vital resources *and* becoming home to more disadvantaged families at the same time. And perceptions of change—of what change *means* for those who would shape it—are not just about what's looked at but who's doing the looking.
- Single-item measures, such as neighborhood poverty rate or number of new business starts, may be less reliable, as indicators of meaningful change, than multi-indicator measures, such as indexes or "scores," because the latter are less prone to erratic fluctuations. As Proscio notes by way of example, pointing to a "doubling" of business failures per year in a given neighborhood—from 1 to 2 per year!—not only exaggerates the level of change but may simply reflect the normal operation of a dynamic economy. Challenge scores can also factor in a neighborhood's starting points, an important reference for any discussion of progress. But single-item measures can still convey important quality-of-life indicators, and the measures should be as fair as possible (with the numerator and denominator chosen appropriately).
- Local indicator systems are incomplete, in terms of official data sources, and only beginning to incorporate more informal local knowledge—the things residents, managers, merchants and others know through their direct experience of a place. Balanced stories, grounded in the data but compensating for its gaps, offer the best way to reveal *what change actually encompasses* and *why it matters* to residents, merchants, local government, or other stakeholders. For example, a map of recreation spaces and housing may need a story about where families with children are concentrated versus where the safe places to play are (or aren't) to be found. As Andy Mooney of LISC-Chicago puts it, many community-based organizations "instinctively" see these links and should be encouraged to make them and report them beyond the neighborhood. The experience of NeighborWorks' Success Measures strongly supports this idea of developing (qualitative but systematic) stories and linking those stories thoughtfully to quantitative indicators of change.

2. Benchmark neighborhood trends against trends in the city and region.

The past decade has brought a sea change in how we look at the trends reshaping neighborhoods in cities, suburbs, and even rural America. Though the idea that the fortunes of revitalizing or struggling places are linked to those of the wider region is quite old, much community development strategy and study proceeded for years as though one could strengthen a small area in isolation from the whole. This leads to a kind of navel-gazing, or to mix the metaphor a bit, a tendency to focus on the ball bouncing right in front of you while losing track of what makes it bounce.

One implication a region-savvy view of change is that much important work *affecting* the neighborhood needs to take place *outside* it.

Investments by households, businesses, and government are the big drivers of change between metropolitan regions and within them too: Regions compete with each other for these investments—a process in which many metro areas in the cold and wet Northeast and Midwest (the Rust Belt) has been losing out, in terms of where households and firms are going, to the warmer parts of the country (Sun Belt) for more than a generation now. And within regions, neighborhoods compete with each other for these investments, too. So trying to isolate a neighborhood from regional change and prospects is not practical or wise.

One implication of the alternative—a region-savvy view of change—is that much important work affecting the neighborhood needs to take place outside it, a point I explore below in the discussion of how the perceptions and decisions of outsiders are linked to change. But for now, the lesson for understanding neighborhood change is that benchmarking the change in a small area (neighborhood or other unit) against change in the wider context is crucial. Doing so thoughtfully is hardly a mechanical exercise, however.

A community may "stay poor," for example, because its low housing costs attract an exceptionally high (for the region) share of low-income households, because people who live in the neighborhood are becoming poorer over time, and/or because families who gain income move on (i.e., the neighborhood may be a stepping stone to success elsewhere). *Are such trends a sign of community development success or not?*

Tracking indicators will not provide an easy answer to that question, which calls for dialogue about a local effort's priorities and values. But indicators are a place to start.

In Chicago, for example, MCIC's work on "challenge scores" is benchmarking neighborhoods against the city and region. The analysts and their constituents in the neighborhoods, city planning, and the nonprofit funder community can discuss how and why neighborhoods targeted for special community development initiatives are diverging, or not, from citywide or region-wide trends—whether diverging up or diverging down. But no statistical analysis or map can dictate what an *acceptable* score is. This must be deliberated by the stakeholders involved.

… it would be important to know whether the neighborhood's poverty rate is diverging from that of the city or region because more poor households are migrating in or because people who have lived in the neighborhood for some time are getting poorer.

Going back to the staying-poor example above, it would be important to know whether the neighborhood's poverty rate is diverging from that of the city or region because more poor households are migrating in or because people who have lived in the neighborhood for some time are getting poorer. These are different components of change in the poverty rate. And they look different when benchmarked: Being above the median on the first component points to a neighborhood's role as a *magnet* for families of modest means, whether because rents are low, social services are concentrated there, precious transit is available for those who don't own cars, or for some other reason. But being above average on the second component, that of economic decline for an in-place population, suggests that decline in the wider city or region is concentrated in particular "pockets" of distress. It may be that residents there are concentrated in the hardest-hit occupations or job sectors, for example, or that they have low skill levels and are losing out in a job market demanding higher skills. In either case, it's not just pinpointing the divergence between neighborhood fortunes and regional ones, but understanding the character of that divergence, that matters.

For starters, community developers can ask, How is the region doing? How is the neighborhood changing *relative* to the trends shaping our region? What role(s) does our neighborhood play in the area: low-rent gateway, shopping district, bedroom community of starter homes, some other role? Local experts, from foundation staff to urban planners and others, have important insights, and a good profile of regional trends can serve many neighborhoods at once (at least with the broad outlines).

And finally, in terms of linking change to community development investments, new techniques are emerging to assess statistical changes and what may be driving them over time. In "Measuring the impacts of community development initiatives," George Galster and collaborators outline a method for detecting divergent trends in small areas. The logic is that community development tends to focus on subareas of larger units, the other parts of which are broadly similar to the subareas. If trends, say in property investment, for the target area *diverge* from those of the surrounding context, and if concerted community development activity represents the one clear change factor—for example, the only major new source of housing or business investment—for a given time period, then a plausible case can be made that that focused activity is associated *somehow* with the observed change in that time period.

This approach cannot, by itself, explain the mechanism of change, and it is limited to measures that are reported reliably and relatively frequently for small geographic areas. For now, this probably works best to sharpen what we understand about the impacts of "bricks-and-mortar" elements of community development, such as the subsidized housing investments that Ingrid Ellen and collaborators have examined in New York City, highlighting "spillover effects" of public and nonprofit development.

3. For action planning, question assumptions, and develop a model (or "theory") of change that's practical and well informed.

So far, with the exception of the "difference-in-difference" analysis outlined above, I have focused mainly on the importance of understanding neighborhood change well, not on shaping it strategically or connecting measured change to community development activity. While a comprehensive look at community development strategy—the substance of how to intentionally change places to benefit people in them—is beyond my scope here, the discussion above suggests some words to the wise:

Because neighborhood change is multi-dimensional, efforts to shape it always run the risk of unintended consequences. Good, self-critical models of how to induce change are worth the time and debate it takes to build such models or frameworks.

In the simplest terms, as experts have observed, community developers have three "levers": affecting who *moves into* the neighborhood (by shaping its assets and reputation), affecting who *exits* (according to the range of preferences that can or cannot be met in the area), and affecting how people in the neighborhood *invest* their time and energy while there—in activities, relationships, and tangible assets too.

Some general rules apply to all of these levers.

First, you only get what you invest in and focus on intensively. Imperfect as they are, the most careful assessments of local initiatives tend to find that doing "a little of everything" affects nothing much. Sustained, high-quality interventions focused on changing particular outcomes and the forces that drive them—these are most promising.

Second, in terms of gaining *leverage* on big challenges, look for ways to piggy-back regionwide trends, *or* be very deliberate about confronting them to mitigate their effects. Both are important for resource reasons. Larger trends are a fabulous source of leverage over neighborhood-level change, for example if new housing demand from more affluent households is pushing investment into formerly depressed areas of the region. But conversely, mitigating the negatives in regional trends—by confronting them head on—is *so* uphill, given the resources available to most community developers, that one must be very choosy, deliberate, and smart about doing so. A spike in housing demand can generate powerful gentrification pressures, for example.

Imperfect as they are, the most careful assessments of local initiatives tend to find that doing "a little of everything" affects nothing much. Sustained, high-quality interventions focused on changing particular outcomes and the forces that drive them—these are most promising.

Third, determined change agents need to question their own assumptions. The Aspen Roundtable on Community Change led a concerted, multi-year effort to develop toolkits (available online) to enable practitioners and evaluators to build action-friendly "theories of change." A theory of change, also known as a logic model, is a well-articulated pathway of causes and effects leading up to change in an important target outcome, whether it's the share of children in the neighborhood who are vaccinated by a certain age, the share of working-poor parents eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit who actually claim it, or some other outcome. Yet the informal evidence so far is that users of these kinds of tools struggle mightily when the best-available evidence clashes with their strongly held assumptions about how to produce needed change. That is, logic models offer an important discipline, *but they probably don't reflect the way most people think about the world or how to change it*. NeighborWorks' Success Measures initiatives has found this again and again, and pilot tests of its planning-and-measurement model led to simplified language and a three-step "benefits picture" approach, which helps local players identifying what exactly they want to change in the way of conditions (at the individual, organization, and neighborhood levels); get clear about why; and then map out how the change is supposed to happen, step by step toward the outcomes (the equivalent of a logic model).

Fourth, be specific about who change is likely to benefit. It's important to distinguish changes in outcomes for subgroups of people in a place from more general, area-wide kinds of change. Neighborhoods can serve one group well and another poorly—affluent "empty nesters" versus low-income families or young singles, for example—or everyone well in one dimension and everyone poorly in another. But broad rhetoric about "strengthening the community" often obscures the ways in which change trends create winners and losers, and granted, this broad and inclusive rhetoric may be deliberate, offered with the aim of forging solidarity. Many homeowners benefit from rising housing prices in a neighborhood, for example, while renters, and the lowest-income owners (whose tax bills are rising faster than their incomes), generally struggle more. Solidarity aside for the moment, at some point, one will have to get specific about what kinds of change to pursue in such a context: Is it ok if strong measures to preserve and expand affordable rental housing happen alongside activities that protect amenities that are attracting new homebuyers?

Broad rhetoric about "strengthening the community" often obscures the ways in which change trends create winners and losers.

---

4. Shape and track *perceptions*, inside and outside the target neighborhood.

It's tempting to think of the community development process as pouring resources into a vessel: adding "stock" to the place as a container. But strengthening places is, to a significant degree, about building confidence and positive perceptions that encourage a wide variety of players—households, merchants, public officials, financial institutions, realtors, and others—to take reasonable risks, counting on each other to *co-invest*. Constituents inside and outside the neighborhood may need to be educated about what others are up to and what alternative futures (or scenarios) are possible. In lieu of trustworthy and clear info on others' commitments, the incentives to play it safe, back out, and *dis*invest are often high.

Above, I noted that regions compete with each other for investments both public and private. So do neighborhoods within regions, and one way to compete is by shaping perceptions.

Perceptions aren't everything, of course. Natural assets such as being on the water or close to the waterfront, and durable man-made assets such as quick access to a key regional highway, shape public and private investment in important ways. But perceptions inside and outside a neighborhood *about its future* also help shape both important audiences that drive change: what prospective investors—whether households, businesses, government, and philanthropic foundations *outside* the area—decide about investing, or not, in a place; and what those *inside* the area decide, too.

Traditionally, efforts to evaluate community development have not tracked perceptions, or efforts to influence them, carefully or consistently. Perhaps it is because targeting perceptions sounds like a game of "smoke and mirrors," an effort to "spin" what others believe rather than to change the tangible conditions that concern them.

By "investment," I mean everything from creating new facilities and expanding or establishing a business to volunteering to staff a youth program on the corner or organize a block club. All of these are investment decisions, and the perception that the effort is worthwhile is less a matter of having good intentions than of believing that the act of investing will make a difference, whether in a child's healthy development, a profit margin, a better job, beautified surroundings, a safer street, or something else of value.

Yet traditionally, efforts to evaluate community development have not tracked perceptions, or efforts to influence them, carefully or consistently. Perhaps it is because targeting perceptions sounds like a game of "smoke and mirrors," an effort to "spin" what others believe rather than to change the tangible conditions that concern them.

Changing conditions themselves is obviously important, but there are two problems with the view that discounts the power of perception. One, it assumes that the observers who count most will *recognize* important changes (whether positive, negative, or mixed). A popular movie in the 1990s gave pop culture a mantra for this: "If we build it, they will come." But we know that people in a neighborhood are often ill-informed about the changes taking place around them (especially the less visible kinds) and that outsiders are far less informed, on average. The mental model of the neighborhood as an open screen providing complete and reliable information is simply wrong: Change and the forces that drive it are far more hidden from view than that. Everyone's "information set" is partial and colored by past perceptions and personal priorities. What we each notice is filtered as well as incomplete in many ways.

The second problem with discounting perceptions is that most decisions people make to invest in a place, even when they are well informed, are *decisions made under uncertainty*. That is, information is incomplete, and investing involves some educated guesses about the future and about events beyond the control of any one person or institution—for example, about how other homebuyers will view a place, how much a new elected official will support an already developed neighborhood plan, and so on.

As Garth Taylor observes, moreover, perceptions can change must faster than neighborhood conditions. The "vicious cycle" version of this is especially problematic for community developers. Perceptions of place may go negative so fast that they become a part of what sociologist Robert Merton taught us to call "self-fulfilling prophecies": We act on what we expect to be true, and our actions help to realize our expectations. A rapid shift in perceptions, even if based on irrational fears or rumors, drives conditions downward faster than would otherwise be the case.

Most decisions people make to invest in a place, even when they are well informed, are *decisions made under uncertainty*. That is, information is incomplete, and investing involves some educated guesses about the future and about events beyond the control of any one person or institution.

On the flip side, who should one target, given limited time and other resources, as part of a campaign to favorably *shape* perceptions that encourage positive investments? Several players merit extra attention, (a) given their roles and (b) given how likely they are to be persuaded by new information that you or your champions can provide:

- *Influentials, including opinion leaders,* outside *the neighborhood*, including those who are persuadable about investment decisions ahead. These might include key elected officials, appointed officials and civil servants in government; key realtors, developers, and lenders; other business leaders and influentials in business organizations (such as area chambers of commerce or leading business networks); journalists; and key decisionmakers or opinion leaders in the nonprofit sector, including citywide service providers and advocacy groups, as well as philanthropies.

- *Influentials, including opinion leaders,* inside *the neighborhood:* lead service providers who allocate service and facility budgets and other vital resources, landlords, heads of tenant organizations, lead volunteers in local associations, youth leaders, elders with a reputation for integrity and vision, key businesses facing decisions about expanding, downsizing, or relocating, and others.
- *Everyday investors* who act as the backbone of community life: Homeowners making property investment (or disinvestment) decisions and residents (whether owners or renters) with special potential as volunteers and role models for others.

Citywide organizations, such as community development intermediaries and funders, often recognize the power of perceptions instinctively, since their work is not limited to any one neighborhood. In our workshop discussion, as we discussed shaping perceptions in the context of neighborhood revitalization, LISC-Chicago's Amanda Carney, whose work focuses on real estate development, affirmed that simple things such as the organization's *Renew* newsletter have made a difference in the New Communities Program (NCP). "It places the neighborhoods we serve 'on the screen' of city influentials," said Amanda. Andy Mooney, who directs LISC-Chicago, agreed, and highlighted informal conversations with local influentials about key investment deals as another mechanism for shaping perceptions.

These mechanisms helped define the ambitious Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program (CCRP), a South Bronx initiative in the 1990s that served as a forerunner and template for NCP in Chicago.

Evaluators found that CCRP's role as a broker of attention, directed by city agencies and private funders to the target neighborhoods, was a key component of what CCRP offered, beyond direct funding. That is, CCRP functioned as what one might call a *place advocate*—in a highly competitive and dynamic mega-city (New York), where many low-income neighborhoods are left to fend for themselves. Like CCRP, NCP uses "quality-of-life" neighborhood plans, developed with local residents and organizations and with significant technical contributions by professional planners as well, as tools to focus attention and investment, by neighborhood insiders and outsiders alike.

Spruiell White of the MacArthur Foundation, sticking with the NCP example, added major public events to the list of ways to shape perceptions. He also argued that the very act of selecting particular neighborhoods for participation in such an initiative, and the decision by community development organizations in those areas to partner with LISC and the Foundation, sent a powerful signal and helped shift the perceptions of citywide players who make important decisions about the target neighborhoods in Chicago. LISC-Chicago's Susana Vasquez, whose work focuses on community organizing and supporting neighborhood-level institutions, affirmed that this signal reverberated *inside* the neighborhoods as well, shifting expectations.

If investors gather *many* types of information before making a decision, how do you know *your work* had an influence?

Gayle Epp of Abt Associates added that studies of HOPE VI—an effort to revitalize distressed public housing in the context of wider community development—has likewise turned up evidence that school principals, community leaders and others take note of positive neighborhood change and, more to the point, report that their revised perceptions "changed how they themselves dealt with the neighborhood." Epp added, "Perceptions are often *harder* to change than the neighborhoods themselves."

Susan Lloyd of the MacArthur Foundation wondered, though, how one would link investments by those who are not directly involved in a community initiative to assessments of that initiative's impact—and how, further up the chain, one would link the initiative to those investments. If investors gather *many* types of information before making a decision, how do you know *your work* had an influence?

If carefully conducted, interviews with influential figures can help to answer that question. But over time, it may be important for community developers and evaluators to distinguish core activities from a more extensive set of efforts, tied to the work, that influence change more indirectly. The baseline objective might be to determine whether the account of change grounded in these more indirect levers or mechanisms is consistent or inconsistent with the account derived from more traditional sources, such as measures of outputs and outcomes in the neighborhoods.

These comments, and the history of local development work, suggest some straightforward ways to *track* perceptions, though understanding what shapes them, as well as their full impact, may remain challenging:

- Formally or informally survey prospective homebuyers in the region, to gauge neighborhood images and reputations. Even non-representative samples of respondents, such as those recruited along word-of-mouth networks ("Do you know someone who's thinking of buying a home over the next 6-12 months?") can yield valuable, real-time information.

- Survey area realtors, lenders, and developers: professionals who invest in understanding the preferences and perceptions of their customers.
- Survey citywide influentials in the public and nonprofit sectors, such as those listed above. Even small samples, say of a dozen officials, can be revealing.

NeighborWorks' Success Measures tools provide field-tested questions for tapping the perceptions of a variety of these groups.

Whomever you talk to, candor is key, so promise your sources confidentiality (except for statements that may already be on the public record). Also, distinguish what people believe to be true now, about a place and its trajectory of change, from statements they may make about what a place *can* or *should* be. Reputation surveys run the risk of gathering what your sources think you want to hear, or think it polite or politic (read: "safe") to say, rather than what your sources really believe. That is, it can be difficult to get candid assessments, but it's important to try. If a source will not "grade" a place themselves, ask how they think *others* would assess it and why.

Reputation surveys run the risk of gathering what your sources think you want to hear, or think it polite or politic (read: "safe") to say, rather than what your sources really believe.

In sum, perceptions matter. The word "development" in "community development" is one give-away: Whether for-profit, nonprofit, or public in origin, development is not only the craft of reshaping places but of creating confidence so that others will co-invest. This fact, and the fact that many important decisions are made with incomplete information and a certain amount of risk, suggest that community developers and those who support them should be more strategic about how they shape perceptions and track those perceptions over time.

And that over-time view leads to the final principle.

5. Track "flows" of people and investment, including the fortunes of (some) people who leave the neighborhood.

Some of the most important impacts of place-based improvement may not be captured at all in the typical community development study, even the most systematic and well-funded ones—that is, the impacts on people no longer living or working in that place. It all depends, as noted above, on who community development specifically targets and where they are to be found over time.

Focusing on people *only* while they live or work in a given place is not so problematic for places that see little turnover among residents, merchants, or others. But this is not the typical place. Every five years, fully half the American population—that's about 150 million people—has changed place of residence. Most leave their neighborhoods, and some leave the region altogether, moving across the state or even across the country. Every year, one third of all renter households move, a rate that is about four times greater than that of homeowners. Some neighborhoods served by community developers can see as much as one-third to two-thirds of their population turn over in five years or less, and this "sorting" of people into places is not at all random.

Every five years, fully half the American population—that's about 150 million people—has changed place of residence.
Most leave their neighborhoods.

As Ingrid Ellen finds in *Sharing America's Neighborhoods* (2000), race and class define very distinct patterns of neighborhood residence, in part because different types of households are focused on different kinds of risk. Young single renters without kids, for example, will make choices that parents of young children will not. And the mobility patterns driven by such choices, multiplied over millions of movers every year, have profound implications for building and sustaining useful relationships and commitments within a neighborhood, as well as for "touching" a wide array of residents with the services or other supports offered by community development. Neighborhoods with very high turnover rates will always struggle to become cohesive communities.

Because the Census Bureau asks about moving, it's straightforward to figure out how much turnover is taking place in most neighborhoods, especially in urban and suburban parts of the country, and also what kind of turnover it is (what types of households, by race, income, family make-up, or other traits, are moving in). The key constraint is that the census is conducted only once per decade, so school enrollments and other more regularly collected and reported data can serve as "leading indicators" of change before the census data confirm them.

Some national studies, while they can tell us little about the effects of particular community initiatives, are revealing a great deal about patterns of moving and what kinds of neighborhoods different types of households are exposed to over time.

As Lincoln Quillian of Northwestern University found, for example, black families are not uniquely "trapped" in the same poor neighborhoods (places with 20% or more of the families below the poverty line) over time, at least based on evidence for the 1980s. Using the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, Quillian found that blacks are as likely as whites to exit poor neighborhoods, usually by moving and less often because a neighborhood that was poor became nonpoor (the poverty rate dropped). Yet blacks are much more exposed to poor neighborhoods, and by extension the crime and other risks they tend to pose, over time. How can this be? The answer is that black families, while they exit about as often as whites, fall back into poor neighborhoods again and again, while white families, once they exit, tend to stay out of such neighborhoods.

Residential mobility has risen among low-income households in recent decades, and this is especially problematic among low-income renters, who struggle, in many local markets, to find decent and safe affordable housing that *stays* affordable over time.

In a follow-on study focused on the 1990s, Ben Keys and I find the same and suggest that some of the greatest risks are faced by a population of low-income black renters who move frequently (often because of high housing costs, death and illness, or other life shocks) and mostly from poor place to poor place.

It is not yet clear how much other racial or ethnic groups fit this profile, or some other profile, defined by where and how often they move. But residential mobility has risen among low-income households in recent decades, and this is especially problematic among low-income renters, who struggle, in many local markets, to find decent and safe affordable housing that *stays* affordable over time.

On one hand, these are some of the urgent motivations for local community development—to create safe, stable, affordable places to live in the context of meaningful community connections. But the other key point for now is that that challenge appears to have grown more serious over time, and this makes it important to focus carefully on just who the beneficiaries of place-based improvements are likely to be: The longer-term, more stable owner-occupants and renters who live in the neighborhood? Others who are in a position to gain that stable foothold (but may need different kinds of support)? Merchants who benefit from security and consumer demand in the neighborhood? The business investors and property owners who are not local residents or workers but who benefit from new economic activity or higher land prices?

The Jobs-Plus case illustrates the power of linking careful documentation of *how* and *when* an intervention unfolded in a specific place with an *impact study* of people targeted by the intervention, regardless of whether they continued to live where the intervention was delivered.

At our workshop on neighborhood change and the tricky problem of attributing change to community development work, Jim Riccio of MDRC, a nonprofit research organization that carefully sets up demonstration programs and then evaluates them, shared lessons about how to evaluate local change efforts. Riccio acknowledged that community initiatives offer substantial challenges to evaluators that more individually focused interventions, say in education or employment and training, traditionally have not offered. But he highlighted lessons from MDRC's evaluation of Jobs-Plus, a place-based workforce program. These are lessons about why and how to focus on *people* versus *places* in the way change is induced and tracked over time. In particular, the Jobs-Plus case illustrates the power of linking (a) careful documentation of *how* and *when* an intervention unfolded in a specific place (in the form of an *implementation study*) with (b) an *impact study* of people targeted by the intervention, regardless of whether they continued to live where the intervention was delivered.

Jobs-Plus operated in public housing developments in several cities, bringing to bear: *on-site assistance* finding jobs, dealing with problems on the job, and accessing education and training programs; *rent-based work incentives* to encourage getting and keeping a job (in the form of income policies that let workers retain more of their wages rather than pay it to public housing agencies in the form of higher rent); and a social capital component called *community supports for work*, which engaged residents to function like program extension agents to help infuse neighborhood social networks within the housing developments with information about work, training, and other opportunities. Each Jobs-Plus site was paired with a comparison public housing development in the same city that was home to similar households but that did not receive the three-part program "treatment."

MDRC researchers have been able to show significant and sustained improvements in residents' earnings, and to confidently assert that these gains represent real program impacts, for Jobs-Plus sites. But that's the case only in some cities (where the intervention was implemented completely and effectively) and only because the outcome study used official data sources to track outcomes over time *for everyone who was targeted by the program*, including those who moved out of the targeted public housing developments.

Community development can't count on creating stable "urban villages" everywhere. Nor can the results of community development be tallied from simple before-and-after snapshots of places, obscuring the fortunes of people passing through.

The researchers recognized that moving out might be one sign of the program's success (since families with new economic opportunities might pursue attractive new housing options). But simple before-and-after snapshots of public housing would have obscured these or other effects on households as they *passed through* the place of intervention. The snapshots approach would also have confounded the experiences of newcomer families to public housing, who had not received significant program attention, with the experiences of those who had. Though many community development initiatives are more complex, fluid, and multi-dimensional than Jobs-Plus, the same core principle—track people, not just place, because people move about—applies.

Community development can't count on creating stable "urban villages" everywhere. Nor can the results of community development be tallied from simple before-and-after snapshots of places, obscuring the fortunes of people passing through. Yet most local development initiatives cannot afford the intensive data collection that national demonstrations include. Moreover, many initiatives lack the technical research capacity required to collect and report on change in ways that will persuade key outside stakeholders. Yet even small samples of mover families, followed over time and interviewed about key life decisions and outcomes so far, can be revealing. So can low-cost implementation studies that clarify what was operating where and how intensively. The idea is to find out whether something about living in a target area, and specifically *being exposed* to elements of the local initiative while living there, plausibly made a difference in someone's life.

Though tracking large groups of people for long periods of time can become very expensive and challenging, NeighborWorks' Success Measures program finds more and more of its participants using software to track program clients (including some who leave the target neighborhoods). What's more, says Success Measures director Maggie Grieve, helping community developers focus on a few carefully developed and well-measured outcomes at a time has spurred many problem-solving conversations about implementation—*How did we get these results? What explains this, and how can we do better? How should we shift our budgeting, staffing, or other resources?*—even where no formal implementation study is in place and only basic data on staffing and other implementation parameters are available, as is typically the case.

Summary

Working smarter in community development includes smarter evaluation in a central role, and more and more tools are available to make evaluation do-able as well as rewarding.

Tracking certain kinds of neighborhood change in America is increasingly simple and cost effective as a mechanical or technical matter, thanks to new technologies and more data provision by official sources, including public agencies. But having the data analyzed and *understanding* change are not the same thing. So stories and deliberation—having a meaningful exchange about the so what's of particular measures of change and incorporating more local knowledge to complement official data—matter enormously.

Beyond understanding change, of course, community development seeks to *shape* it, and so I reviewed the importance of being strategic and choosy about what to affect and how (through what pathways). I also outlined the importance of shaping and tracking *perceptions* of a place, not just underlying conditions, as a way of shaping decisions, by a wider array of players, to co-invest in the future of that place.

Finally, since a key aim of community development is to benefit people, not just change a place for its own sake, it's important to focus very directly on how to benefit people and how to track their fortunes over time (above and beyond the fortunes of any given place). The enormous mobility in urban and suburban America, and the particular ways in which low-income and minority renters move about frequently—and often from one poor neighborhood to another—show why these "flows" of households matter, in addition to flows of financial investment, businesses, ideas, and more.

Let's recap the bottom line: In the end, the effort to answer the question "was the effort worth it?" begins with (a) tracking neighborhood change in multiple dimensions. Next, it must include equally smart efforts to (b) track the effort to produce change (the intervention) and then to (c) determine whether the intervention was linked to changes in the neighborhood—whether the desired ones or other ones.

But some assessments fulfill their purpose if they simply guide action on behalf of pre-identified goals, indicating how to accomplish a *given* goal or set of goals more effectively. Such assessments answer the question "how do we do this better?" rather than "was it worth it?" (from the standpoint of alternative investments or efforts). Guidance for doing "it" better is one powerful way to use tracking and assessment information to work smarter.

But assessments can and sometimes do have a broader purpose, too: To shed light on *which* goals are appropriate, especially where different stakeholders in community development have different views on underlying goals and values (see Brief 07-01 in this series). That part of the conversation is never just a technical one, nor should it be. But working smarter, and applying ever-better information tools, can inform that conversation in vital ways.

Acknowledgments. My thanks go to the MacArthur Foundation, Susan Lloyd and Julia Stasch in particular, for funding to make the Working Smarter project and its workshop series possible, the LISC-Chicago team for keeping us focused on practice in the field, guest participants at our neighborhood change workshop, Rafael Lopez for co-organizing and recording our first two workshops so diligently, the Wiener Center for Social Policy at Harvard's University's John F. Kennedy School of Government for hosting the December 2004 workshop, Gretchen Weismann and Kiara Nagel for help with the workshop series, and Jennie Pakradooni, Lisa Mayer, and the Center for Reflective Community Practice at MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning for supporting the development of our project, beyond the workshops, as an online learning resource for the field. Andrew Boardman, Michael Barrish, and Rob Peagler were the hardworking wizards behind our website design and logo. Prue Brown, Cynthia Briggs, Christina Deady, Maggie Grieve, Jim Riccio, and Garth Taylor provided invaluable feedback on an earlier draft of this brief.

Workshop participants (December 2004)

Guest resourcepeople:

Prue Brown
Chapin Hall Center for Children
University of Chicago

Ingrid Gould Ellen
New York University

Gayle Epp
Abt Associates

Joseph Ferreira
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Jim Riccio
MDRC

Ellen Seidman
Metro Edge

Garth Taylor
Metro Chicago Information Center

Karen Walker
Public/Private Ventures

Michael Woolcock
The World Bank and
Harvard University

Project Staff/Discussants

LISC – Chicago:

Amanda Carney
Andy Mooney
Susana Vasquez

MacArthur Foundation:

Susan Lloyd
Craig Wacker
Spruiell White

Harvard University/MIT:

Organizer and Facilitator:

Xavier de Souza Briggs

Project Manager and Reporter:

Rafael Lopez

Further reading and other resources

Note: * Indicates: Available free online.

* Abt Associates, *Exploring the Impacts of the HOPE VI Program on Surrounding Neighborhoods*. Cambridge, MA: Author (2003).

* Aspen Roundtable on Community Change (formerly Aspen Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families), *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives*, vols.1 and 2. New York: Author (1999, 2002).

Baum, Howard, "How Should We Evaluate Community Initiatives?" *Journal of the American Planning Association* (2001).

* Bloom, Howard S. et al., *Promoting Work in Public Housing: The Effectiveness of Jobs-Plus*. New York: MDRC (2005).

* Briggs, Xavier de Souza, "Traps and Stepping Stones: Neighborhood Dynamics and Family Well-being," Faculty Research Working Paper RWP04-13, Harvard University (March 2004).

* Briggs, Xavier de Souza and Benjamin Keys, "Has Exposure to Poor Neighborhoods Changed in America?" Working Paper, *Social Science Research Network* (2007).

Briggs, Xavier de Souza and Elizabeth Mueller with Mercer Sullivan, *From Neighborhood to Community: Evidence on the Social Effects of Community Development*. New York: Community Development Research Center, New School for Social Research (1997).

* Brown, Prudence, Alvia Branch, and Jacalyn Lee, *The Neighborhood Partners Initiative: Report on the Start-Up Period*. Chicago: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago (1998).

Ellen, Ingrid Gould, *Sharing America's Neighborhoods*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (2000).

* Ellen, Ingrid Gould et al., "Building Homes, Reviving Neighborhoods," *Journal of Housing Research* (2001).

Ferguson, Ronald and William Dickens, editors. *Urban Problems and Community Development*. Washington, DC; Brookings Institution Press (1999).

* Ferreira, Joseph and Marc Draisen, "Intelligent Middleware for Understanding Neighborhood Markets," Brookings Urban Markets Initiative/MIT Urban Information Systems Group (see UIS website), with the collaboration of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Cambridge, MA.

Galster, George et al., “Measuring the Impacts of Community Development Initiatives,” *Evaluation Review* (2004).

* Higgins, Lindley R., “Gathering and Presenting Information about Your Neighborhood.” New York: LISC (2001).

* Kennedy, Maureen and Paul Leonard, “Dealing with Gentrification: A Primer on Neighborhood Change and Policy Choices,” Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution (2001).

Local Initiatives Support Corporation, “Mapping for Change: Using Geographic Information Systems for Community Development.” New York: Author (2002).

* Metropolitan Chicago Information Center (MCIC), “Community Development and Neighborhood Vitality.” Report prepared for LISC-Chicago. Chicago: Author (2004).

* National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership, *Neighborhood Change in Urban America*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute (series, various dates).

* ___________________, *Neighborhood Change Database (NCDB), 1970-2000*. The Urban Institute.

* NeighborWorks America, *Community Development Evaluation: Story Map and Legend*. Washington, DC: Author (2006).

* ___________________, *Success Measures Data System*. Washington, DC: Author (2005).

* *New Communities Program*, Chicago. Publications, maps, tools, and data at www.newcommunities.org

* PolicyLink, *Equitable Development Toolkit*, Oakland: Author (various dates).

* Proscio, Tony, “Measuring Community Development: An Emerging Approach to Quantifying Neighborhood Revitalization,” Report prepared for LISC-Chicago (no date).

Quillian, Lincoln, “How Long Are Exposures to Poor Neighborhoods? The Long-Term Dynamics of Entry and Exit from Poor Neighborhoods.” *Population Research and Policy Review* (2003).

Rohe, William and Kenneth Temkin, “Neighborhood Change and Urban Policy,” *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (1996).

See more resources, including reports, tools, and news stories, at www.knowledgeplex.org.