



FURMAN CENTER
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Welcome to the Neighborhood: How Can Regional Science Contribute to Study of Neighborhoods?

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Why Should a Regional Scientist Study Neighborhoods?

- Neighborhoods are mini-regions that shape outcomes of residents and businesses
- Studying neighborhoods and neighborhood change will enrich understanding of regional issues
- Studying neighborhoods raises important policy questions

Why do Neighborhoods Matter?

- Neighborhood Conditions and Local Services Shape Residents' Quality of Life
 - Peer effects and social networks
 - Crime
 - Local public services
- Neighborhoods Provide Access to Broader Region, Which Affects Travel Behavior, having Environmental Implications
- Sorting Across Neighborhoods Affects Household Interactions and Outcomes

Three Issues Areas with Unanswered Questions

- Neighborhood Change/Gentrification
- Environmental Implications of Neighborhood Design
- Neighborhood Sorting

Neighborhood Change/Gentrification

- Significant economic change in urban neighborhoods, especially during 1990s
- Unanswered questions
 - Causes of change
 - Which public investments further change?
 - How does change in one neighborhood affect neighboring areas?
 - Consequences of change
 - How do local public services and quality of life change as neighborhoods change?
 - Can place-based neighborhood investments benefit residents?

Neighborhoods and Environmental Sustainability

- Transportation is a key component in decreasing the urban footprint
- Unanswered questions
 - Causation
 - Is the association between land use/urban form and travel behavior causal?
 - Other endogenous features, property values and wages.
 - How important, relative to what alternatives?
 - How does this vary across groups?

Segregation and Sorting

- Persistently high segregation by race/income, with increasing evidence this may be harmful
- Unanswered questions
 - Improved measures of segregation
 - Spatial, multi group
 - Causes
 - Does the spatial distribution of affordable housing matter?
 - Consequences
 - For non black minorities?
 - When segregation is not concentrated in CC?

Incentives...New Data

- RDC data matching micro data to location
 - Example, Bayer, Ross and Topa (2005), census data linked to block of residence and of employment
- Administrative Data with geographic identifiers
 - Richer neighborhood data, more timely
 - Parcel level (Property value, Crime)
- Individual-level administrative data on students
 - Window on community demographic change
 - More sophisticated measures of school quality