

St. Louis Metropolitan Research Exchange (STLMRE)

Newsletter, April 2006

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STLMRE Board

Managing Editor

Todd Swanstrom, Ph.D. (scope and methods, housing policy)
Professor
Department of Public Policy
College of Public Service
Saint Louis University (SLU)
swansttf@slu.edu

Institutional Editors

Mark Abbott, Ph.D. (planning history, neighborhood history)
Professor
Department of Urban Specializations/Center for Neighborhood Affairs
Harris-Stowe State College (HS)
abbottm@hssu.edu

Elizabeth Baker, Ph.D. (social and community factors related to health, community-based participatory action research)
Professor
School of Public Health
Saint Louis University
baker@slu.edu

Jim Brasfield, Ph.D.
Professor
Department of Business and Management
Webster University
brasfjm@webster.edu

Joseph Heathcote, Ph.D. (American urban history, metropolitan studies, architecture and the built environment, urban theory)
Professor
Department of American Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Saint Louis University (SLU)
heathcje@slu.edu

STLMRE Board (continued)

Terry Jones, Ph.D. (metropolitan politics/policy, public opinion)
Professor
Department of Political Science and Public Policy Administration Program
University of Missouri--St. Louis (UMSL)
terry.jones@umsl.edu

Jacqueline Tatom, Ph.D. (urban design theory, urban theory, metropolitan development and landscape infrastructure)
Professor, School of Architecture
Washington University in St. Louis (WUSTL)
tatom@architecture.wustl.edu

Andrew Theising, Ph.D.
Department of Political Science
Southern Illinois University--Edwardsville (SIUE)
atheisi@siue.edu

Welcome to the St. Louis Metropolitan Research Exchange (STLMRE)!

STLMRE is an effort to put researchers on St. Louis in touch with one another. We have no desire to institutionalize ourselves. Our mission is to exchange information about past, present, and future research on the St. Louis region that is of interest to urban scholars and concerned citizens.

We trust that, like us, you will be impressed with the breadth and depth of the research being conducted on the St. Louis region. We think we have only scratched the surface, however. There is even more research out there that we have not heard about. We need your help. Tell us about your research, reports, and conferences. And give us your reaction to our website. We welcome your criticisms and suggestions for making it better.

Where Are We Going?

By Todd Swanstrom, Managing Editor

The St. Louis Metropolitan Research Exchange (STLMRE) has been active since the last newsletter. First, Jim Brasfield of Webster University joined us on the Board. Jim's membership brings the number of area universities represented on the Board to six. Jim has an MA from Saint Louis University and a PhD from Case Western Reserve University. Director of the Health Services Management Program at Webster University, Jim has extensive practical experience in politics. He is a former mayor of the city of Crestwood and presently serves on the St. Louis County committee that hears appeals on tax assessments. He is a good person to have as your friend.

Unfortunately, we had to say goodbye to John Welford of the Missouri Historical Society who had to leave the Board after years of loyal service. We will miss John's expert knowledge of St. Louis history and commitment to sound scholarship.

The major activity that STLMRE sponsored last year was the young faculty brown-bag lunch series at Harris Stowe State University. The six participants in the series were:

Andy Theising, SIUE
Sarah Coffin, Saint Louis University
Beth Baker, Saint Louis University
Joseph Heathcott, Saint Louis University
Brady Baybeck, UMSL
Jacqueline Tatom, Washington University

Attendance at the series was good and discussion lively. The Board feels such activities are central to the function of STLMRE -- to help build a community of scholars who share insights about St. Louis from different disciplinary perspectives.

We plan to continue the brown-bag lunch series next year. The first event scheduled for the Fall will be September 28 (Thursday): 12:15-1:30: "Rethinking Regionalism:" With Terry Jones and Don Pares of UMSL and Todd Swanstrom of SLU leading the discussion. The planned location is the Harris Stowe Library Seminar Room. Reserve this date on your calendar. We plan to sponsor four brown-bag lunch talks next year, so stay tuned for time and place.

We are also planning two forums, one in the fall and one in the spring, which will bring together scholars and practitioners on significant issues facing St. Louis. The first one is scheduled for October 28 and entitled "Historic Innovation." It will be held from 5-7 pm at a place yet to be decided. Mark Abbott and Jacqueline Tatom are organizing this event. If you would like to help out, contact them at their email addresses above in the list of Board members.

We also hoping to put on a similar forum in the spring entitled "Rediscovering the Rivers." Andy Theising is taking main responsibility for organizing this. If you are interested in getting involved, contact Andy at the email address above.

Finally, the Board has been discussing for several years how to improve data collection about St. Louis and make sure this data is archived so that it is available for scholars. We begin this newsletter for an article by Barb Holmes of RegionWise about efforts she has begun, with the Public Policy Research Center, to systematize neighborhood data collection in the region. We think the potential for neighborhood data to improve scholarship and public policies is great.

Finally, if you know someone who would like to subscribe to STLMRE's biannual newsletter and announcements of talks, send an email to our webmaster, Chris Luebbert: luebbeca@slu.edu.

Access to Data in the City Neighborhoods

By
Dr. Barbara Holmes
RegionWise at Saint Louis University

Background

The idea of local community groups using data to inform their economic development work has its roots in The National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP), which was formed in the late 1990's by the Urban Institute. The project began with six cities that developed computer-based information systems to support collection and accessibility of indicators to track changing neighborhood conditions. Now there are 22 cities in the partnership with 18 more in conversation with the Urban Institute.

The local NNIP partners function as information intermediaries. Community groups and service providers, as well as city agencies, generally recognize the need for cross-topic neighborhood level data. Typically the data are used for planning, grant-writing, marketing, and project evaluation. It is time consuming and costly for each individual data user to collect information. More importantly, an informal and decentralized approach is subject to data error in both collection and interpretation.

Fifteen years ago several national foundations provided financial support to develop community statistical systems. Today, national foundations are no longer providing 'start-up' financial assistance. However, NNIP partners with established local statistical systems are positioned to attract grants that use existing local statistical systems to implement information-based products/services in the neighborhoods. The most recent example is the Brookings Institution's Urban Markets Initiative. Five NNIP partners (Baltimore, Providence, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and Washington D. C.) received funding to develop and apply new decision support tools that will enhance local capacity to guide and manage urban land markets. While these funds do not cover basic operations they do enable participants to expand their products. Generally basic operational support comes from local donors.

St. Louis Data Community

In 2005 RegionWise at Saint Louis University conducted interviews and a focus group with people from nonprofit organizations and municipal government who are working in the neighborhoods of St. Louis. The group sought anecdotal information about grass root access and use of data. They found that within the economic and community development sector there are a myriad of access points to data: volunteers gather sales information by reading daily public notices; a volunteer with access to MLS data shares it; or people simply know a city worker who facilitates access to information. Access to data is informal and ad-hoc. The community lacks standards for data aggregation and sources. Regarding uses of data the group found that people speak about wanting data for marketing and evaluation purposes. No one discussed using data for strategic planning or tracking implementation progress. Few people have access to mapping resources. Even the most sophisticated data user thought that his use of data could be improved. Because of the significant differences in data sophistication, 'one size fits all' data products will not be effective.

The Metro Data Alliance

Though St. Louis has not been part of the national NNIP discussion, it is possible that the City and region could benefit from their agenda. RegionWise at Saint Louis University and the Public Policy Research Center at the University of Missouri St. Louis have formed the Metro Data Alliance to explore goals that are similar to the NNIP goals.

They are:

- 1) To standardize the data access system, including archiving key data files;
- 2) To develop a range of data training and data products; and
- 3) To increase data informed decision making and thereby increase the productivity of the people working to improve the city neighborhoods.

To fulfill these goals the two university centers have begun collecting and archiving parcel level data. One of their first joint projects, funded by a small grant from the AT&T Foundation (formerly the SBC Foundation), has involved the Metro Data Alliance in a partnership with RHCDA, the St. Louis Metropolitan Brownfield Coalition, and four local Community Development Corporations to provide three services:

- 1) Analysis of the housing submarkets in the City;
- 2) Development of an infrastructure and a systematic process to collect neighborhood specific data and link it to broader data sources; and
- 3) Support the effective marketing of Brownfield properties.

This project was begun in November of 2005 and will continue through the Fall of 2006.

Conferences, Meetings, Talks, and Exhibits

The Annual Awards Dinner of the Department of Public Policy Studies at Saint Louis University will be held on **Tuesday May 16th** at 6 pm at Queen's Daughter's Hall on the main campus of SLU. The dinner will honor Mary Wendel, the wife of George Wendel, who has worked with Saint Louis University on urban issues for more than 40 years. For more information, contact the Department at: 314-977-3934.

Government vs. Governance in Metro North America: Where Is It? Where Is It Going? Just over a decade ago the Public Policy Research Center at the University of Missouri–St. Louis hosted a conference on campus. The title of this conference was “Metropolitan Governance without Metropolitan Government?” The focus of the conference was how metropolitan regions deal with the governance versus government trade off. At this meeting papers were presented on seven cities in the US, Vancouver in Canada, and Mexico City. To revisit the theme of governance in metropolitan regions versus the formal structure of government, a follow-up conference chaired by Don Phares will be held **June 15-17, 2006**. Panels of national experts will update what has taken place in the cities originally examined plus the addition of some recent changes that have important bearing on this governance/government trade off. Sponsored by the Public Policy Research Center. [>>More information](#)

June 25 - 28: Community Development Society's 38th Annual International Conference in St. Louis: The Community Development Society will have their 38th

Annual International Conference in St. Louis at the Sheraton St. Louis Hotel. This year's theme is "Communities that Click: Individuals, Families and Organizations Working Together." The conference will feature paper and project presentations, learning workshops, outstanding keynote and plenary session speakers, 18 conference tracks, and mobile learning workshops. For details and registration information, go to <http://www.comm-dev.org>.

Book signing and discussion on **June 1 at 7:00 pm** of **Hidden Assets: Connecting the Past to the Future of St. Louis**, a new book on St. Louis edited by Richard Rosenfeld, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (see bibliography below). Rosenfeld and several of the book's contributors will be on hand to discuss and sign copies of the book, at the Missouri History Museum in the Southwestern Bell Multipurpose Education Center (lower level of the museum).

Research Projects (in alphabetical order by principal investigator)

Effects of "No Child Left Behind" Legislation on Urban Educational Systems

Michael Afolayan, Assistant Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education
Marie Byrd-Blake, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership, School of Education
John W. Hunt, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership, School of Education
Robert LeAnder, Assistant Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering, School of Engineering; Team Liaison: Marie Byrd-Blake; IUR Staff Coordinator: Kelly Faust

For more information contact the SIUE Institute for Urban Research:

<http://www.siue.edu/IUR/>

Development of Effective Community-Based Organizations

Mary Ann Boyd, Professor, Office of the Dean, School of Nursing
T. R. Carr, Professor, Public Administration and Policy Analysis, College of Arts and Sciences; Ann Dirks-Linhorst, Assistant Professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice, College of Arts and Sciences; Emily Krohn, Professor, Psychology, School of Education; Morris Taylor, Assistant Professor, Public Administration and Policy Analysis, College of Arts and Sciences; Jeannie Theis, Principal Researcher, St. Louis County Courts; Anne Valk, Assistant Professor, Historical Studies, College of Arts and Sciences; Team Liaison: T. R. Carr
IUR Staff Coordinator: Rhonda Penelton.

For more information contact the SIUE Institute for Urban Research:

<http://www.siue.edu/IUR/>

The sources and distribution of lead contamination in the St. Louis Region and the relationships between blood lead levels and the diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorders

Venessa Brown, Associate Professor, Social Work, College of Arts and Sciences; Richard Brugam, Professor, Biological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences; Luci Cohn, Assistant Professor, Biological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences; Shunfu Hu, Assistant Professor, Geography, College of Arts and Sciences; Zhiqing Lin, Assistant Professor, Biological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, William Retzlaff, Associate Professor, Biological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences Kim White, Assistant

Professor, Family Health/Community Health, School of Nursing; Team Liaison: William Retzlaff; IUR Staff Coordinator: Hugh Pavitt

For more information contact the SIUE Institute for Urban Research:

www.siue.edu/IUR

Exploring Regional Network Governance:

The Case of the Great Rivers Greenway District in St. Louis

W. Scott Krummenacher, M.P.A., Public Policy Studies, Saint Louis University

This study explores the development and operation of the Great Rivers Greenway District (GRGD) in relation to the emerging literature on network governance, collaborative policy-making and citizen participation. Established in November 2000 through the passage of the Clean Water, Safe Parks and Community Trails Initiative ("Proposition C") GRGD represents a large-scale, collaborative effort in a region often characterized by parochial interests and governmental fragmentation. This regional effort has included citizens in the planning process and the creation of the "River Ring" greenways, parks and trails system was the product of a 10 month long participatory planning effort. Using a case study method, this work explores how the institutional design features of GRGD constitute collaborative policy-making/network governance on a regional scale in a manner that involves citizens in the process. Of particular interest are instances where GRGD overcomes or fails to overcome longstanding disputes between business, environmental, and development interests. This research also explores the impact of these processes on fair and effective policy outcomes for the region.

Contact: Scott Krummenacher at: krummews@slu.edu

Talking Cents: Public Discourse, State Oversight, and Democratic Education in East St. Louis, Illinois

Donyell L. Roseboro, Michael P. O'Malley, and John Hunt, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

This on-going, multi-method research study explores the relationship between state appointed financial oversight of the East St. Louis, Illinois School District (District 189) and issues of student learning and academic achievement. The State of Illinois appointed a financial oversight panel for the district with a ten-year mandate from 1994 to 2004. The first phase of the project involved analysis of print media over the decade of financial oversight, as well as budgetary, panel, school board, and other reports, in order to track media representations of the oversight process and its relation to student learning. Discrepancies between media assessments and observable influence on achievement are investigated, and recommendations are made for structuring future governance interventions. This phase of the study is currently in press in *Educational Studies*. The project is continuing into phase two as a mixed-methods study that looks for correlations between the state financial oversight and academic achievement, and attempts to understand the meaning that participants have constructed in relation to the oversight process.

Contact: Donyell L. Roseboro (drosebo@siue.edu), Michael P. O'Malley (miomall@siue.edu), and John Hunt (johhunt@siue.edu)

Civic Regionalism: The Challenge of Community Workforce Agreements Under Federal Transportation Law

Todd Swanstrom (Saint Louis University) and Brian Banks (Chicago)

A coalition of approximately 300 organizations succeeded in getting inserted into the 2005 SAFETEA-LU federal highway legislation a provision that allows for the first communities to negotiate community benefits agreements around jobs. Based on the Alameda Corridor Project in Los Angeles, community organizations can now negotiate with state departments of transportation to require that jobs on construction projects go to minorities, women, and low-income persons. The Gamaliel Foundation's faith-based national community organizing network has initiated efforts in regions around the country to implement such agreements. Funded by the MacArthur Foundation, this paper examines the success of this movement in the U.S. Congress and conducts case studies in three cities (St. Louis, Chicago, and Cincinnati) to examine the challenge of negotiating community workforce agreements.

Contact: Todd Swanstrom (swansttf@slu.edu)

Fair-Share Housing in St. Charles County

Tara Vansell - Graduate Student Urban Planning and Real Estate Development – Saint Louis University

Increasingly, municipalities within St. Charles County Missouri are realizing that rising home prices are making it difficult for service sector wage earners to afford homes within their boundaries. Cities are finding that their teachers, nurses, police officers, and young families are unable to purchase housing within the community in which they work. A task force created by *FOCUS St. Louis* and another created by St. Charles County overseen by *Dribin Consulting* have both identified a shortage of workforce housing as the source of the problem. Building upon this foundation, this study utilizes regional fair-share housing allocation formulas to determine St. Charles County's workforce housing need. This need is then allocated to each zip code within the county based on the presence of jobs paying a "workforce housing wage." For the St. Louis region this translates to households earning \$24,158 - \$56,844 dollars annually. Based on the affordability index of paying no more than 28 percent of income on housing, workforce households in the St. Louis Region should be able to purchase a home priced between \$67,642 and \$159,163 dollars

Contact Tara Vansell at vansellt@slu.edu.

Bibliography - Recent Publications with a St. Louis Connection

Hidden Assets: Connecting the Past to the Future of St. Louis edited by Richard Rosenfeld, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

The second book in the St. Louis Metromorphosis series addresses the challenges facing St. Louis

— segregation, crime, and stagnant growth — while focusing on the city's promising and often overlooked hidden assets. Each of the ten chapters in *Hidden Assets* contains an essay that highlights concrete attractions, such as the city's major medical complex, its excellent and diverse public and private schools, and its robust blues music tradition, as

well as more abstract features, such as its historic relationship with the mighty Mississippi. This volume explores the implications of St. Louis's idiosyncrasies for sustainable long-term growth in the St. Louis metropolitan area. The book is available at the UM-St. Louis bookstore and the Missouri History Museum's Louisiana Purchase gift shop (314-454-3172). You may also send a check for \$22.95, made payable to the Public Policy Research Center, to PPRC, University of Missouri-- St. Louis, 362 SSB, One University Boulevard, St. Louis, MO, 63121. Or email us at pprc@umsl.edu. For more information contact the Historical Society at 314.454.3150. And for more information about the book, [click here](#).

St. Louis Plans: St. Louis has a rich history of planning that heretofore has not been documented. Mark Tranel is the editor for this third volume in the Public Policy Research Center's *St. Louis Metromorphosis Series*. *St. Louis Plans* will record what planning has occurred at the regional, subregional, and neighborhood levels, as well as within specific sectors such as education, healthcare, and workforce development. The authors will not only review the history of various aspects of planning but also provide insight into planning successes and challenges that can provide lessons for current and future engaged citizens as well as professionals. Publication will be in mid-2007.