



Issue 3—July 30, 2004

## Mapping Made Easy

Welcome to SAVI Connections, the bi-monthly electronic newsletter regarding the SAVI system! If this message does not look like a web page in your email reader, you can read the latest edition at <http://www.savi.org>. SAVI Connections provides news about SAVI, demonstrates various ways in which SAVI can benefit your organization, announces release of new data, showcases new tools, highlights a variety of SAVI users, and broadcasts user support and training options. The Polis staff encourages your ideas and feedback. Please address comments to: [skandris@iupui.edu](mailto:skandris@iupui.edu).

### What's New?

SAVI Interactive has new Data & Mapping tools! Check them out at [www.savi.org](http://www.savi.org).

#### New Data!

- 2003 Welfare data for 9 counties
- 2003 Birth and Death data for Marion County
- 2003 Uniform Crime Report data for Marion County
- Places of Worship, Libraries, United Way Agencies, and Community Centers

"SAVI is great—we love the maps—but can't you make it easier to use?" The question was common not only to SAVI but also to community information systems that developed in Denver, Boston, Baltimore, and other cities during the 1990s. The GIS software used to manage these systems was powerful but cumbersome, especially for non-technical users.

Thanks to valuable suggestions from hundreds of users, SAVI now offers a much easier way to get data and create maps. [Quick Maps](#) is a new tool that uses a simple checkbox to select and map data. It takes the user through five simple steps, from choosing a data item to creating a map. Another new tool, [Quick Queries](#), allows users to ask questions about the data in a simple, straightforward way. Say, for example, you want to find your child's school on a map or locate a target neighborhood or find areas with high concentrations of Hispanic population. Go to Quick Queries, follow the easy steps, and you'll have an answer. A third new tool, Quick Charts, due for release soon, follows the same steps to create a chart from the data. To view these tools, go to [www.savi.org](http://www.savi.org) and click *Data & Mapping*.

These new tools will simplify the process of getting results from SAVI, but it took careful planning, innovative solutions, and plain hard work to create easy-to-use tools. The SAVI team follows an industry standard practice of establishing requirements and developing specifications before it begins to create an application. In this case, the team met with users to learn what SAVI needed to do—what functions it had to perform—to be a valuable tool. The answer was simple—easy mapping—but it begged another question: what would make it easier? There were a variety of solutions, depending on the experience of the user. What emerged was a careful, step-by-step development process (click [here](#) for a diagram). Users tested each version of Quick Maps and Quick Queries, which led to improvements and more tests until it met the minimum needs of a wide audience.

Over the next few months, the SAVI team will monitor these new tools and learn from users how they may be improved. This cycle of continuous development keeps SAVI responsive to the experiences of users and helps it serve the expanding data and planning needs of Central Indiana. Check into [www.savi.org](http://www.savi.org) periodically to see how these improvements will benefit you.

## SAVI People

### *Ali Jafari and the Mystery of Usability Testing*



Quick! What connection does Ali Jafari have to Indiana Jones? None, but this intrepid computer scientist has a big connection to Indiana—and SAVI is a beneficiary of his expertise.

Jafari is widely recognized for his knowledge in human-computer interaction. His research on intelligent interface design wins plaudits from experts around the world. Over the past five months he has worked closely with SAVI to ensure that its interface, the way users access the system, is as simple and intuitive as possible.

An IUPUI professor of computer and information technology and director of the university's CyberLab, Jafari consults with SAVI web designers and programmers, providing suggestions for improvements and usability based on his research. He helps to outline the usability requirements and observes user testing of the developing system. His goal is to ensure that SAVI, above all, is a usable tool.

What makes SAVI challenging to the interface designer is both its complexity and the diversity of its audience. It has a tremendous amount of data and its users range from very experienced to first-time visitors. Jafari works with the SAVI team on issues of presentation and communication and then checks with users to see whether the system is user friendly.

"Developing an effective interface," Jafari notes, "requires skill and patience. Each time you solve one problem, you might inadvertently make the experience more difficult for another user. But over time you learn what works and what doesn't—

## Alpha, Beta, and Other Greek Letters

SAVI follows a common practice of releasing versions of new tools and data, with each one reflecting improvements and fixes suggested by users. Working from a detailed set of requirements established by a formal needs assessment, SAVI developers create the first working version of a tool or function, often called the Alpha version, for external testing. This initial release is published on a non-public website and groups of users are invited to use it and note problems.

Usually thirty days later SAVI releases a Beta version of the now-revised tool. This tool also undergoes testing, with the goal to achieve an acceptable level of accuracy and stability. The goal is always to create a reliable and easy-to-use product that works on a wide variety of computers and with all major browsers. At this stage, users also are invited to participate in formal testing of the Beta version to ensure that the system is easy to use.

One month after the Beta release, SAVI posts the final ("production") version on its website. The development team continues to monitor use and fix bugs, always collecting information that will lead to improvements. Major revisions occur when users require more functionality or when new technology makes it possible to achieve greater flexibility or efficiency. Changes are noted by version numbers: incremental changes will be noted as Version 1.1, etc., while significant revisions receive new numbers, e.g., Version 2.0.

SAVI will always note the latest version number on its web site. When you see it, you will know two important things: you always are working with the latest version; and more important, SAVI is working to keep its tools and data up-to-date, assuring you of a state-of-the-art community information system.

## Did You Know?

Indianapolis is the home to Indiana Black Expo, the nation's largest and longest exposition focused on African American culture, art, history, and economics. Here are several facts about the African American population in the Indianapolis metropolitan area.

- Metropolitan counties with *highest* growth of African Americans from 1990 to 2000: Morgan, 455%; Hamilton, 315%; Boone, 96%; *lowest*: Madison, 6%, Johnson, 8%. Click [here](#) for a SAVI table.
- Growth rate of African American population in Marion County from 1990 to 2000: 23% (*Highest* townships: Pike, 160%; Franklin, 133%; *lowest*: Center, -9%; Washington, 6%).
- Marion County townships with the *highest* African American population in 2000: Center, 68,113; Washington, 35,840; *lowest*: Franklin, 236; Decatur, 304.
- Percent increase in public school enrollment by African Americans within Indianapolis Public Schools boundary from 1996-2000: 11%; Private schools: 5% decrease.

and the result is a system that makes the Web experience enjoyable. That is our goal for SAVI.”

Thanks to this world-class computer scientist, SAVI is developing the tools and interfaces it needs to serve you better.



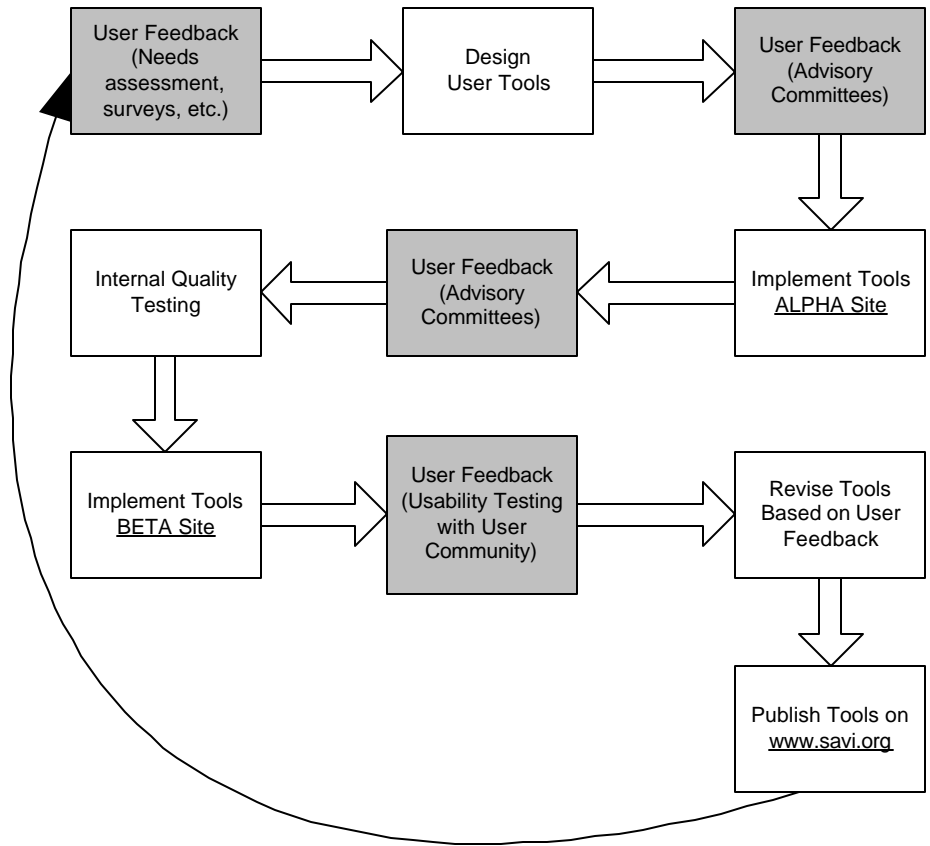
- Maps are valuable tools that visually portray trends, and allow users to analyze information about our communities. Click [here](#) to view two maps showing areas of African American Owner Occupied and Renter Occupied households. What observations do you make from the data presented?

Source: [www.savi.org](http://www.savi.org) (US Census Bureau and Indiana Department of Education); Metropolitan Indianapolis is defined as Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Morgan, and Shelby Counties. Note: in 2000, the Census Bureau allowed selection of more than one race. The numbers here represent the participants who chose only African American as a single race.

**SAVI is a community information system** administered and maintained by The Polis Center at IUPUI. SAVI is supported financially by the following organizations: Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust; Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, Inc.; Health Foundation of Greater Indianapolis, Inc.; Annie E. Casey Foundation; Lilly Endowment, Inc.; United Way of Central Indiana; City of Indianapolis, Department of Metropolitan Development; Marion County Health and Hospital Corporation; Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI).

For more information about SAVI, please visit the website at [www.savi.org](http://www.savi.org).

## SAVI User Feedback Cycle

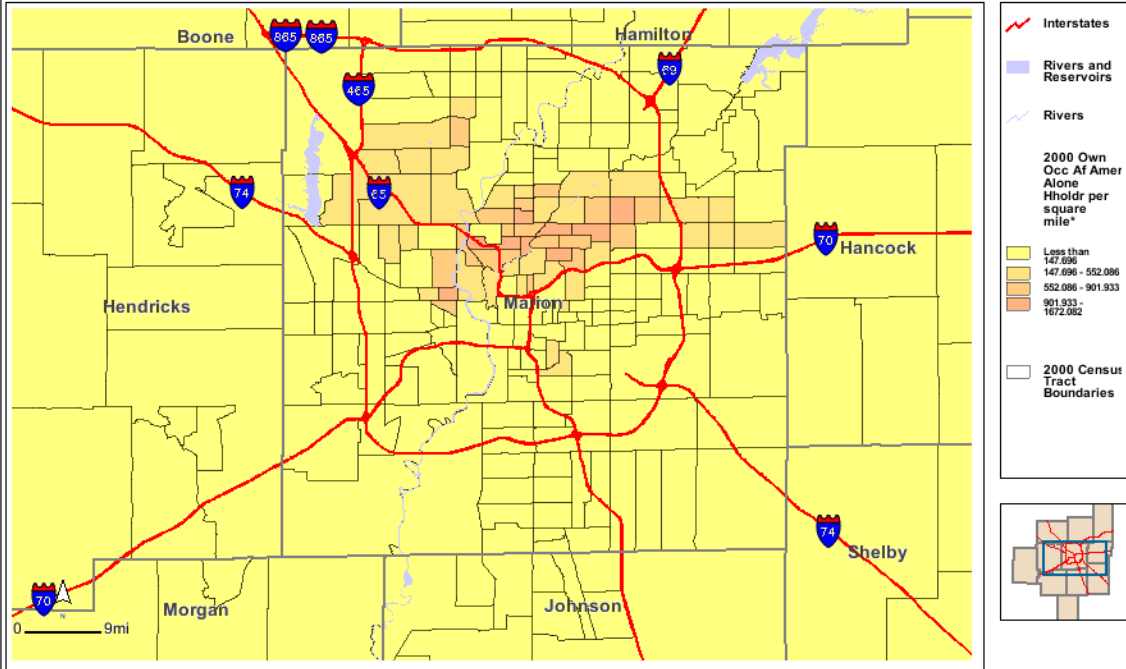


**Indianapolis Metropolitan Counties  
African American Population –1990 and 2000**

County ID	County	1990 African American Population People	2000 African American Population People
18011	Boone	83	163
18013	Brown		
18057	Hamilton	676	2806
18059	Hancock	44	74
18063	Hendricks	685	1162
18081	Johnson	845	914
18095	Madison	9870	10511
18097	Marion	169654	207964
18109	Morgan	9	50
18133	Putnam		
18145	Shelby	330	330

### African American Owner Occupied Households

Per Square Mile -2000-

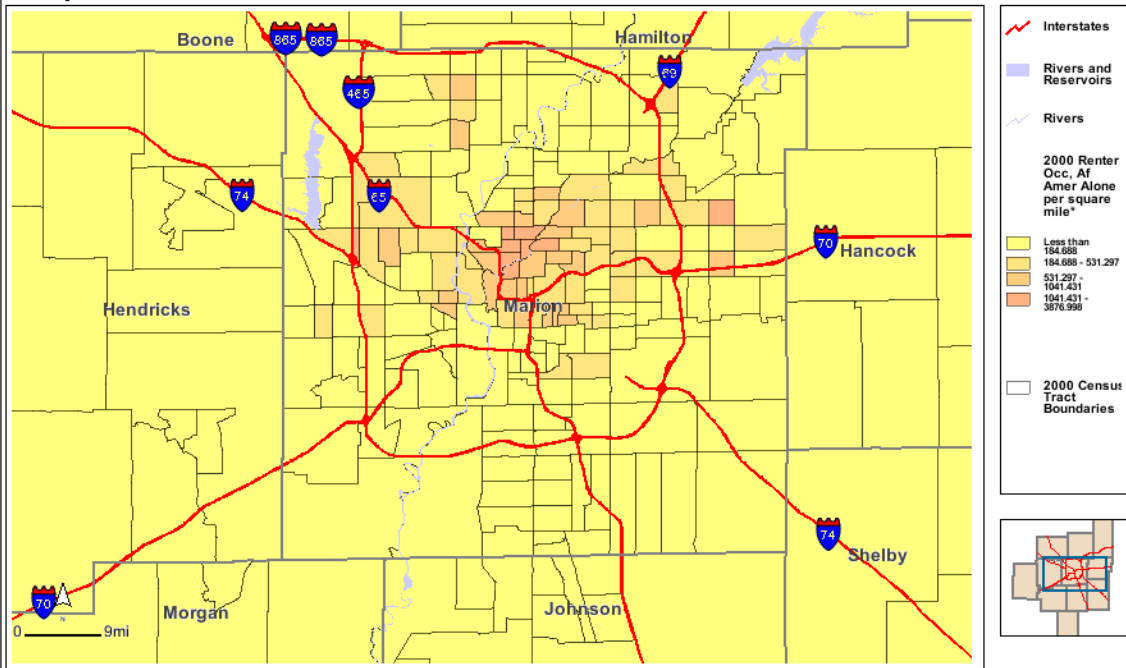


\*2000 Owner Occupied Householder African American Alone per square mile

Source: SAVI Community Information System - <http://www.savi.org>

### African American Renter Occupied Households

Per Square Mile



\*2000 Renter Occupied Householder African American Alone per square mile

Source: SAVI Community Information System - <http://www.savi.org>