

SAVI ONLINE Magazine

what's trending in your community

2016 BASIC NEEDS EDITION

IN THIS ISSUE:

HOW INDYVITALS HELPS INDY BE A BETTER PLACE

FEATURE: PAGE 4

WHAT IS A 'NEIGHBORHOOD?'

PAGE 8

HOW INDYVITALS DEFINES A NEIGHBORHOOD

PAGE 9

THE POWER OF USING DATA & MAPS IN PLANNING

CASE STUDY: PAGE 10





Communities are continually seeking ways to improve the quality of life of its residents. Addressing the basic needs of shelter, food, safety, and belonging must come first on the road to helping residents thrive. Data helps service providers and community organizers better identify the needs of residents and track progress toward established goals.

In Central Indiana, SAVI (Social Assets and Vulnerabilities Indicators) – the nation’s largest and most comprehensive community information system – plays a significant part in helping various organizations tackle these concerns.

SAVI helps its audiences understand a community’s social, economic, and demographic realities. It helps service providers make more targeted decisions, increase their capacity, solve problems, and offer programs that will have a real impact. SAVI puts data into context, targets areas of concern, supports funding requests, and helps plan and evaluate programs in more than 2,000 Central Indiana communities.

Organizations that have experienced success in using SAVI to make a major difference in meeting the basic needs of Greater Indianapolis citizens include the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) and the United Way of Central Indiana.

“Utilizing data from SAVI, we have been able to enhance and direct police resources to address problems within our community,” notes IMPD Chief Troy Riggs.

“We are grateful for the partnership between IMPD and SAVI.”

Ann Murtlow, CEO of United Way of Central Indiana, added, “SAVI helps United Way partner agencies identify client populations, target their outreach efforts, and better understand the communities they serve. SAVI is an essential tool in our effort to be a strategic, data-driven organization. United Way of Central Indiana and its agencies are partners in a plan to add more information to SAVI about the services that we collectively provide and the outcomes that we collectively achieve. This information will help us invest more strategically in our community and maximize our impact. In essence, when we know more about our neighbors and their needs, we can better deliver the programs and services they deserve.”

SAVI can help your organization have greater impact, too. We encourage you to check it out at savi.org, sign up for one of our free training workshops, and get started. SAVI has a lot of merit, but the best part is, it’s FREE!

SAVI INDEX: BASIC NEEDS

15%

of people in Central Indiana are in **Poverty**; in Marion County the rate is **21%**, in Madison County it is **17.6%**¹

1 out of 3 people spend more than the recommended thirty percent of their income on housing, putting them at risk for not having funds to meet other basic needs or unforeseen emergencies.¹

294,880 Population in Indianapolis metro area that is food insecure³

Food Insecurity

Not always knowing where your next meal will come from³

94,419 Food insecure population not eligible for federal food or nutrition programs such as free/reduced school lunch³

What are the greatest needs in Central Indiana?²

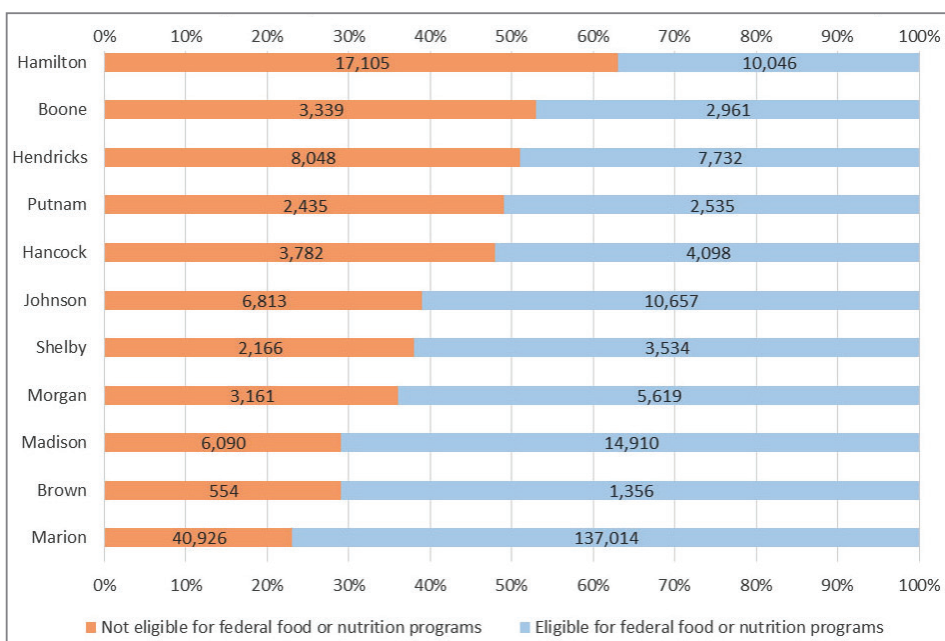
THE TOP 3 NEEDS IN EVERY COUNTY IN 2015 INCLUDED



**Housing
Utility Assistance
Food/Meals**

FOOD INSECURE WITHOUT GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

1 out of 3 people who are food insecure are not eligible for federal program such as food stamps or free/reduced school lunch. The rate is 2 out of 3 in Hamilton County.³



Safety

How many violent crimes are committed per year in your county for every 10,000 people?⁴

Marion	112.4
Madison	25.8
Johnson	23.0
Shelby	7.7
Putnam	6.1
Hancock	4.9
Hamilton	4.4
Boone	2.8
Brown	1.8

¹www.SAVI.org, ²Connect2Help County Reports, ³Feeding America, 2014, ⁴County Health Rankings/UCR FBI Reports (2010-2012)



HELPING INDIANAPOLIS BE A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, AND VISIT

“Plan 2020 wanted to be able to measure if neighborhoods across the city were improving as a result [of its efforts]. IndyVitals is intended to help answer that question, while also improving the coordination of all those in the private, public, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors [who are] working at the neighborhood level to make investments that are most relevant to the diverse needs of neighborhoods across our city.”

— **BROOKE THOMAS**

*Deputy Director and Plan 2020 Co-Manager,
the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee*

Throughout its history, Indianapolis has valued planning. The practice began with Alexander Ralston’s design for Indiana’s capital city in the early 1820s. It continues today with Plan 2020, the most recent of a long series of community efforts to ensure that the city remains vital and vibrant as it enters its third century.

In anticipation of the 200th anniversary of Indianapolis’ founding, Plan 2020 organizers sought a different format for the planning effort, one that sought to include voices from all parts of the community to ensure that Indianapolis remains relevant, appealing, and a destination of choice.

To make the planning process more relevant and inclusive—and to break down the siloes that kept zoning, land use, transportation, parks, and neighborhood planning separated—plan collaborators used a “quality of life” model as their guide. The result was the Plan 2020 initiative, a collaboration between the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee, the Department of Metropolitan Development, the Department of Public Works, the Indy Chamber, and community leaders.

“Plan 2020 is the name of the Bicentennial Planning process for Indianapolis and Marion County that involves the creation of a broad, values-

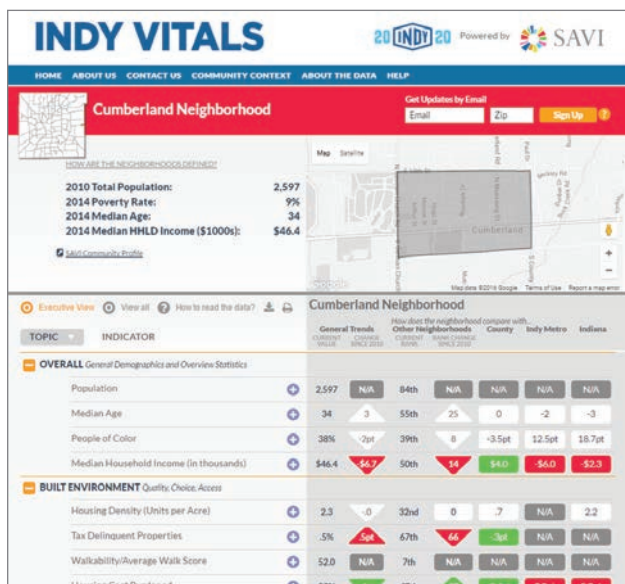
based vision, a set of action steps that partners have committed to completing by the city's Bicentennial in 2020, and updates to six technical city plans," said Brad Beaubien, Administrator for Long Range Planning, Department of Metropolitan Development, City of Indianapolis-Marion County. "The vision lays out how Indy can be a healthier, more resilient, more inclusive, and more competitive city, and the action steps are intended to implement that vision."

Because of the multi-pronged planning effort, Plan 2020 needed a single way to monitor its impact on communities and neighborhoods in Marion County to

determine if the results match the desired outcome. Plan 2020 stitched as many existing initiatives together into a broad and cohesive storyline. It turned to The Polis Center to leverage the data and reporting capabilities of its SAVI Community Information System to create IndyVitals, a new online neighborhood monitoring tool.

"Plan 2020 isn't just about action. It's about impact," continued Brooke Thomas, Deputy Director, the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee, and Plan 2020 Co-Manager. "Even if every single action step was completed, Plan 2020 wanted to be able to measure if neighborhoods across the city were

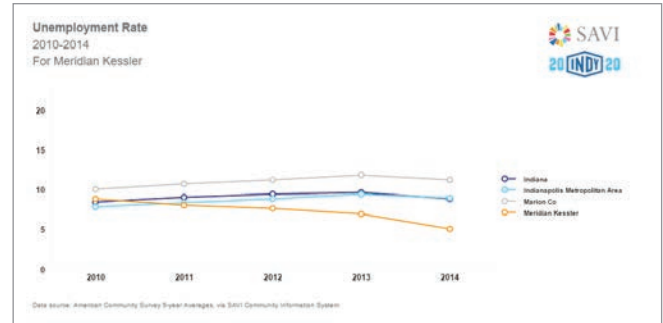
improving as a result. IndyVitals is intended to help answer that question while also improving the coordination of all those in the private, public, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors working at the neighborhood level to make investments that are most relevant to the diverse needs of neighborhoods across our city. Measuring the impact of Plan 2020 and coordinating collective impact investments are the two drivers of IndyVitals.”



Neighborhood Dashboard

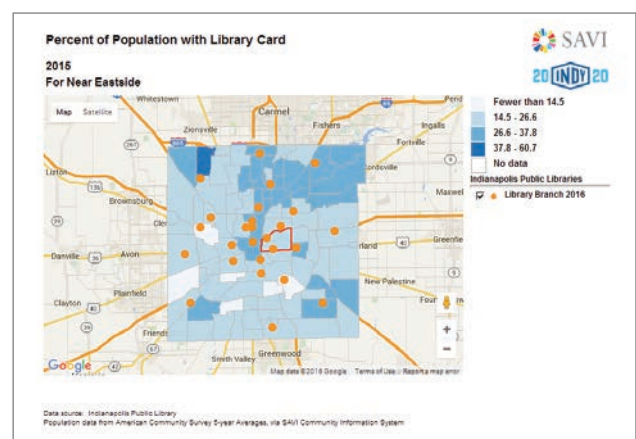
IndyVitals captures information within various categories such as built environment, education, economy & jobs, health & safety, and equity & empowerment for areas within Marion County. This information is coupled with SAVI’s existing community profiles, providing a breadth of information about needs and resources in these communities. Viewers can access high-level metrics and detailed data about specific neighborhoods and can explore patterns and trends. The dashboard is user-friendly, and, at a glance, gives the viewer a thumbnail sketch of what is going on in the neighborhood, how it has changed in

the past five years, and how it compares to other neighborhoods.



Trend Chart Shows Five-Year Change

With reliable data as a guide, IndyVitals will help planners, nonprofits, and neighborhood representatives make better informed decisions and be more effective in their efforts. As Leigh Evans, Chief Executive Officer, Mapleton-Fall Creek Development Corporation, points out, “Reviewing the community-based indicators will allow me to be better equipped to tell [our] place-making story and to strategically plan how to be a sustainable and driving force for positive change in the neighborhood, and the City [of Indianapolis] going forward.”

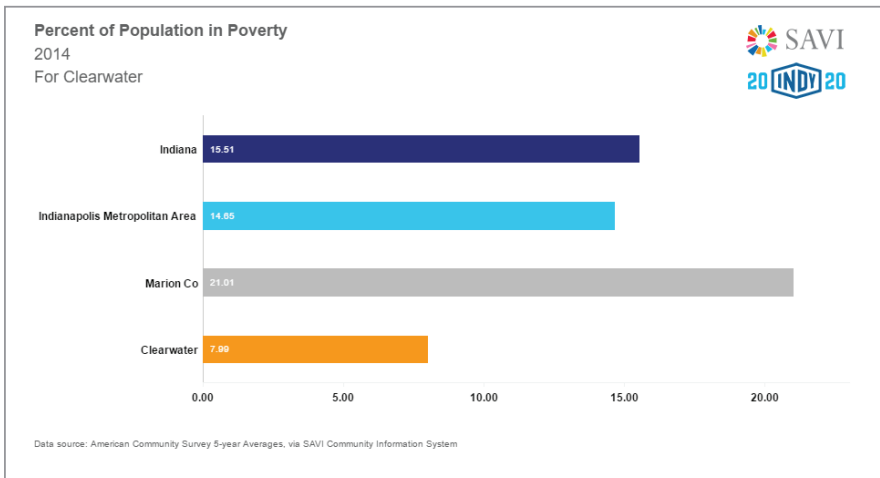


Map Feature

“We are working to make SAVI more easily accessible,” said Sharon Kandris, Director of SAVI. “We designed IndyVitals to draw only the relevant data from SAVI’s thousands of options and display it in meaningful ways to meet the data needs of Plan 2020 and

its partners. To ensure we hit the mark, we invited an advisory committee of organizations such as Mapleton Fall Creek Community Development Corporation (CDC), King Park CDC, United Way, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and Plan 2020 staff to guide the development of the tool.”

“SAVI has always allowed you to look at data through the lens of geography and place” said Kandris. “IndyVitals makes it much easier to look at the data through other lenses as well without having to mine through SAVI’s expansive database. It allows you to easily explore disparities across race groups, genders, education levels, income levels, and geography. You also get simpler views of the data, such as bar charts and trend lines.”



Bar Graph Compares Neighborhood to County, Metro Area, and State


“As our community development system evolves from a peanut-butter approach, where we spread limited resources evenly everywhere, to the point it’s too thin to taste, IndyVitals will allow all community development partners to look at a neighborhood, see the same story, and respond to the specific needs of each neighborhood in a way that is much more targeted and more relevant to the needs of residents,” Co-Manager of Plan 2020 Beaubien commented. “It’s not only a way to measure the progress of our collective impact partnership, it’s a way to coordinate the actions of the collective partners through data.”

Join Us as SAVI Talks! IndyVitals

Mark your calendar for **Thursday, June 30**, from **7:45-10:00 a.m.** at WFYI, 1630 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202 when The Polis Center and members of the Plan 2020 initiative demonstrate the new web-based neighborhood monitoring tool, IndyVitals.

The first SAVI Talks event of the year features Brad Beaubien, Long Range Planning Administrator City of Indianapolis; Brooke Thomas, Deputy Director, the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee; Sharon Kandris, Director of Community Informatics, The Polis Center at IUPUI; and Leigh Evans, CEO, Mapleton-Fall Creek Development Corporation.

The audience will participate in a simulated exercise so they can experience how IndyVitals reveals neighborhood assets and issues of concern and learn how it can be used to improve their neighborhood.

TO REGISTER, [CLICK HERE](#).
SEATING IS LIMITED, SO
SIGN UP NOW! 

WHAT IS A “NEIGHBORHOOD?”

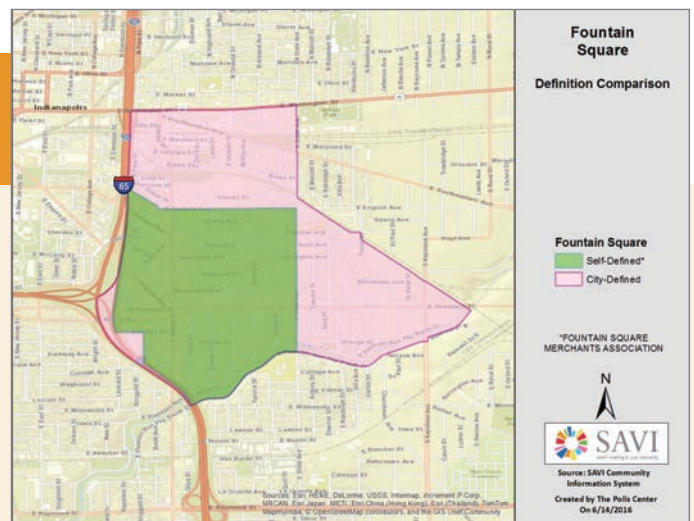
“Neighborhood” means different things to different people, particularly in the Indianapolis area where neighborhoods usually do not have obvious boundaries based on natural environments or ethnic density. Defining what constitutes a neighborhood often results in passionate debate.

Commonly, a neighborhood refers to a residential community in a specific geographic area, e.g., the Meridian-Kessler neighborhood means the district with large, historic homes and green spaces bounded by 38th Street, Meridian Street, Kessler Blvd., and the Monon Trail.

A neighborhood may describe the vicinity surrounding a church, school, community center, or shopping environment. Case in point: “I live in Nora” or “Let’s have lunch in Broad Ripple.”

The growing number of place-based initiatives in Indianapolis using quality of life planning bring together multiple contiguous neighborhoods. They use a comprehensive community development framework that considers education, jobs, amenities, built environment, health, safety, walkability, and land use.

Government definitions often differ from the mental image most residents have of their community. City and federal administrations often define neighborhoods along arbitrary boundaries for strategic planning and



Fountain Square

policy-making purposes. Plan 2020 defines neighborhood in a deliberate manner for statistical reporting reasons. When government uses similar names yet different boundaries than residents, it can be confusing and frustrating. In the map of Fountain Square above, this difference plays out. The area in green is the residents’ interpretation, and the pink area is the city version.

Neighborhood is a highly-nuanced word, embodying a host of definitions. As different as each description is, they share a common element...that of community. The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, published by The Polis Center in 1994, notes, “Neighborhood represents one kind of community, but there are many others available in Indianapolis. Communities of association – based on friendship, kinship, professional affiliation, or common interests and lifestyles – provide the sense of belonging sought by many citizens.” And, isn’t that basic need– a sense of belonging– what we ultimately all want?

HOW DOES **INDYVITALS** DEFINE NEIGHBORHOODS?

IndyVitals measures the health and stability of 99 communities in Marion County. The city has far more neighborhoods. How were the 99 boundaries drawn?

First, the why: the City of Indianapolis needed to:

- Have distinct geographic areas for statistical reporting purposes.
- Encourage better coordination of public and private initiatives in those areas through a common set of indicators in order to align diverse planning partners toward a common goal.
- Better organize municipal government using common “building blocks” of neighborhood geographies.

Next, the how: When drawing the boundaries, the City of Indianapolis gave consideration to historical maps; excluded city and included town boundaries; parcel and land use development patterns; major barriers like rivers, railroads, and interstates; and self-defined boundaries of community organizations. Boundaries follow parcel borders or street centerlines.

The boundaries do not necessarily correspond to the way community organizers typically define a neighborhood with the same name, and in many cases these geographic areas are home to multiple community and neighborhood organizations.

How the Data are Calculated

The data for IndyVitals comes from multiple data sources, with the SAVI Community Information System (savi.org) being the primary source. Multiple methods are used to calculate data for the neighborhood boundaries:

- When possible, address-level data are used to obtain an exact count or value of the item being measured.
- For other data, the statistics were obtained by assigning census tracts and parcel boundaries to approximate each neighborhood boundary.
- When counts are used (e.g., population), the block boundaries are used to approximate the neighborhood boundary.



GEORGE OKANTEY

declares the SAVI tool one of the most amazing resources in Greater Indianapolis. He has worked with The Polis Center on numerous occasions since the tool's inception in 1995 to create information to help planners.

George Okantey, Marion County Extension Educator-Community Development, Purdue Extension

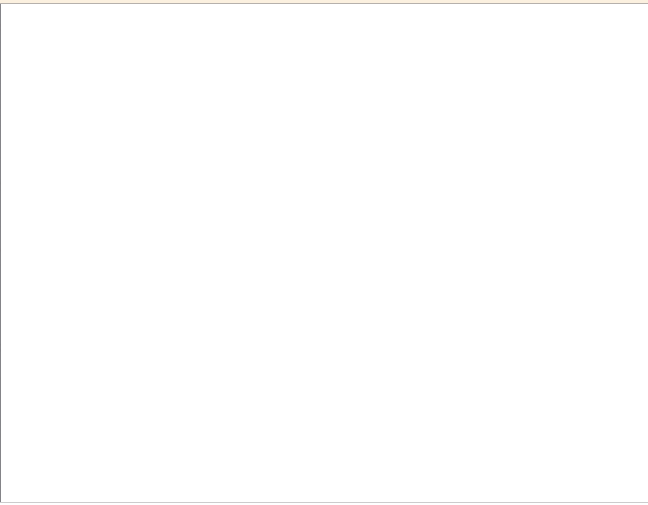
In his role with Purdue Extension, now going on more than 16 years, Okantey addresses community needs by providing decision-making resources and expertise on planning and visioning. His focus is offering science-based and systematic learning approaches that identify enterprising opportunities. He helps assess needs, collaborates with other agencies, and implements intervention strategies. He also delivers learning experiences on leadership and civic engagement, talent development, and organizational learning and collaborates with principal decision-makers, organizations, businesses, and schools to develop, implement, and sustain these programs.

“So few cities and states have this type of research-based resource available to them right in their backyard,” said Okantey about SAVI. “The Polis Center is the first place I think of when I’m approached by someone needing specific information within a geographic area. SAVI has the most comprehensive, up-to-date, place-based information available. The tool not only pulls together important information that helps people see what is going on in

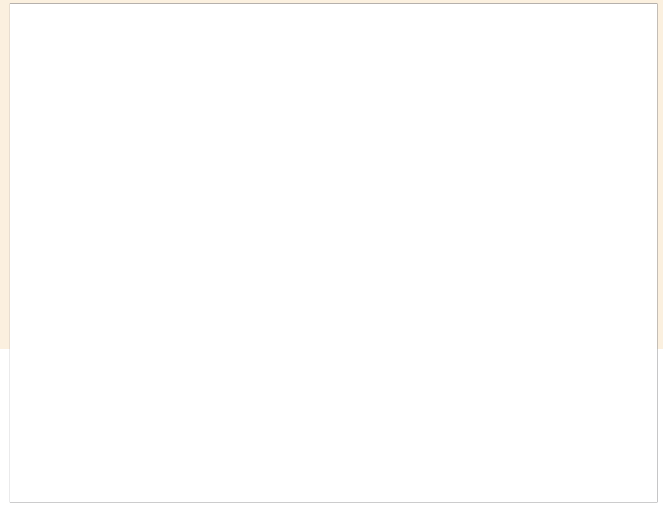
a broader perspective, but it creates great maps, charts, and tables that show the story. It’s a no-brainer.”

Okantey has used SAVI data and visualizations to show the assets of the Southeast Indianapolis community, Mid-North and presently, Maple Crossing. He finds that the data from SAVI provides critical intelligence that helps focus training programs that meet community needs. The Southeast Leadership Development Program and Mid-North Leadership Program – both supported by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) – encompass topics including meeting management, team dynamics, and managing conflict effectively.

Recently, Okantey used SAVI to support efforts by committee members for the Mid-North and Midtown Quality of Life Plans, LISC, and the Great Places 2020 initiative. “There are several quality of life neighborhood plans in the works across Indianapolis,” he said. “The Purdue Extension of Marion County is collaborating with LISC and the Mid-North and Midtown plans by providing vital information the organizers need as they consider the



Southeast Neighborhood



Map of Mid-North Businesses, 2015

area’s business environment.” The plans also look at aesthetics, issues related to basic needs, crime and safety, education, health, housing, senior advocacy, and youth engagement elements. The Mid-North plan includes six neighborhoods: Crown Hill, Highland Vicinity, Historic Meridian Park, Mapleton Fall Creek, Meridian Highland, and Historic Watson Park. Mid-North is part of Midtown which also includes the neighborhoods of Broad Ripple, Butler-Tarkington, Canterbury, Clifton on the River, Forest Hills, Golden Hill, Keystone-Monon, Meridian-Kessler, Meridian Street Historic District, Rocky Ripple, and Warfleigh.

“The business development component is a very important factor in forming the plans as it contributes to an improved economic situation for local residents and local businesses,” Okantey noted. “Specifically, the planners are focusing on encouraging entrepreneurship within the Mid-North area, creating an environment that supports and grows area businesses, and identifying and growing specific neighborhood-serving commercial centers.”

The current trend in quality of life planning is improving mixed zones of

residential space and businesses in an appealing way so people can live and work close enough that they can walk or bike. The Great Places 2020 committee is concentrating revitalization efforts on three distinct sections of town: Englewood Village (E. Washington St. & Oxford), Maple Crossing (38th & Illinois Streets), and River West (W. Michigan & MLK).

“I worked with The Polis Center and SAVI to create maps of current businesses in the Mid-North and Midtown districts and a table showing crime trends in the neighborhoods so that the committee knows the lay of the land as they consider improvements,” said Okantey. “It’s important to understand where you are now so you can create a realistic plan to get where you want to go. SAVI can help you get there. I encourage anybody working on place-based projects to use SAVI. There’s power in using data and maps to make a difference in planning. People recognize the geography of their neighborhood. That has a huge impact on the outcome.”

SAVI's Newest Tool in Development

The Online Community Assessment & Planning Tool

Surveys have shown repeatedly that SAVI is most commonly used for community assessments and grant applications, and it takes a lot of mining to gather and analyze the data needed from SAVI. The SAVI team is hard at work designing a new tool to make it that process much easier.

This easy-to-use tool will walk users through a basic community assessment framework, providing data to support each step: assess needs, identify assets, and define gaps and opportunities. It will allow

users to define a custom geographic area, view dashboards, and drill into interactive data visualizations. The data format will make it easy for nonprofits to understand needs, socio-economic and geographic disparities, existing programming, and gaps in their service area.

After completing a step-by-step online assessment, users will be able to download a custom report in an editable MS Word format.



SAVI communityassessment&planningtool



[create SAVI account](#) [Login](#)

[HOME](#)

[ABOUT THIS TOOL](#)

[HOW TO USE THIS TOOL](#)

[START YOUR ASSESSMENT](#)

[RESOURCES](#)

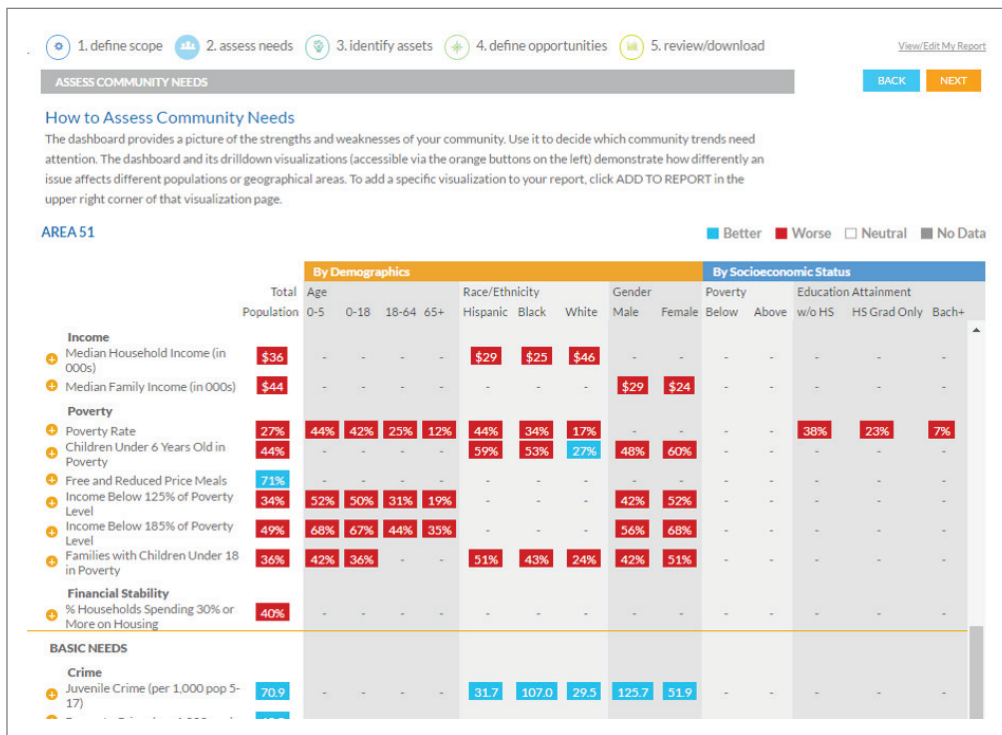


Welcome to our Beta Site!

The new SAVI community assessment & planning tool is designed to help you learn more about your community's overall conditions and resources. Assessing your community's needs and assets is an important first step in planning community improvement. We hope you will spend some time perusing the beta site and provide us [feedback](#) on how we can make this tool more useful to you.

Thank you!

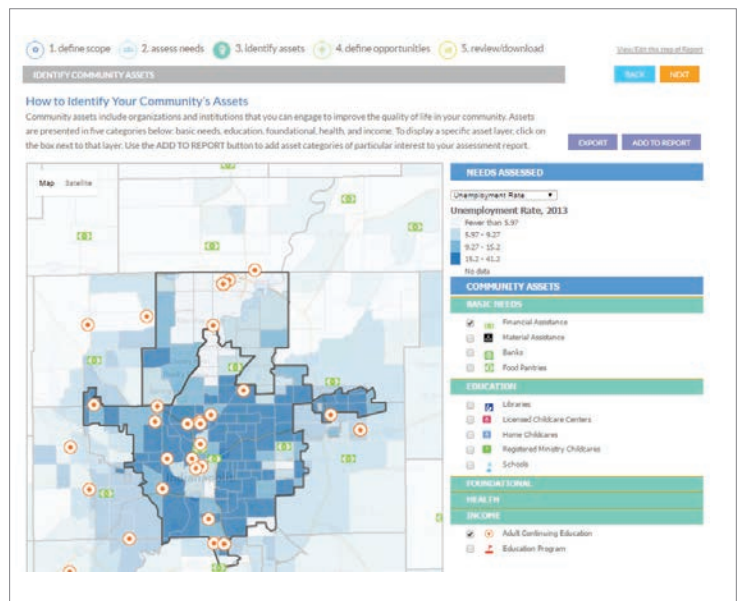




Assess Needs with a Community Dashboard



Visualize Trends and Disparities



Identify Community Assets with an Interactive Map

This tool will a big improvement for SAVI, making the data easy to access and explore. Here's what early testers have to say:

"This would have saved me HOURS of time in collecting and analyzing data for past community assessments."

KAREN GENTLEMAN
CONSULTANT AND
UNITED WAY BOARD MEMBER

"The user friendly report is phenomenal!"

DENISE LUSTER
UNITED WAY DIRECTOR OF
RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Coming Fall 2016!

CHECK OUT
IndyVitals.org

REGISTER NOW
FOR JUNE 30 SAVI TALKS!
INDYVITALS

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT ISSUE!

SUBSCRIBE NOW →



Contact SAVI
317.274.2455 (Help Desk)
savi@iupui.edu

1200 Waterway Blvd, Suite 100
Indianapolis, IN 46202
savi.org

Stay Connected with SAVI

