Facilitating Change with Community Indicator Programs

By

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1 Introduction

1.1 Community Indicator Programs and Relevance to Planning

Community indicators find their roots in social indicators, which were developed when local churches set out to fight poverty as part of the reform movement of the 1800s (Cobb and Rixford 2005). An indicator refers to a descriptive or diagnostic measure or index intended to help *indicate* something, and often is used to measure one aspect of community well-being. In the 1960s social indicators gained standing, followed by environmental indicators in the 1970s. Local communities now commonly collect a variety of information, such as unemployment rates, lake phosphorus levels, or high school graduation rates.

In the past few decades, *Community Indicator Programs (CIPs)* have grown as a movement in municipal performance and measurement. Occurring under a variety of names such as Quality-of-Life or Sustainability Indicator Programs, they often incorporate measures already in place in the local community. In an effort to better understand and effect change in their communities in the mid-1980s, organizations and local governments began more expansive measurement than standard socio-economic information, including environmental, quality-of-life, and broader social indicators – Community Indicator Programs. The 1990s brought another wave of indicator development with the sustainability movement, and many CIPs have a sustainability emphasis (Hart 1999; Hoernig and Seasons 2005; Phillips and Bridges 2005; Seasons 2005; Blair and Greene 2007). CIPs are essentially a collection of indicators across different areas of concern, such as economic, environmental, social, and cultural at the municipal or county level.

As such, they have expanded the convention of measurement. The purposes of the CIP or the assumptions regarding how the CIP achieves those purposes are not always made explicit. One potential function is to provide public information that serves as a decision-support system for residents, organizations, and elected officials in shaping investment in and development of their communities (Wong 2006), although there is debate as to whether that can happen at the scale at which the CIP operates (Innes and Booher 2010). Some CIPs are developed through participatory processes, and include formal or informal structures for organizing action on indicator information; consequently, they may have the capacity to change the way citizens bring about change in their communities.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The Community Indicator Consortium (CIC), a group of practitioners from a variety of types of Community Indicator Programs in the United States and Canada, produced the report Creating Stronger Linkages between Community Indicator Projects and Government Performance Measurement Efforts in 2007. The report resulted, with support of the Sloan Foundation, from a conference intended to foster dialogue on creating such linkages. The report notes that:

> A key assumption surrounding the dialogue was that if citizen-driven community indicators and government performance measurement were better linked, community indicators would have more influence on what government does to improve the community, and government performance measures would become more relevant to the community conditions of greatest concern to citizens (CIC 2007, p4).

The importance of community indicators being *citizen-driven* is underscored, thus identifying the citizen's role in CIPs as an important one. The CIC approach, however, also assumes that the citizenry is fully aware of community problems to drive the agenda. Public perception can sometimes lag reality, so data is necessary as a reality check; sometimes data is not measuring the real problems, so local knowledge (citizenry) is necessary. Furthermore, implicit in the CIC fostering this dialogue is an understanding that a fundamental purpose of many CIPs is to influence the process of community planning and improvement, in this case through local government. Linkages, such as those between community indicators and performance measures, are an *assumed* route to greater responsiveness to a citizen-driven agenda.

The purpose of my research is to parse such assumptions and contribute to the understanding of community change generally and CIPs in particular by focusing on factors that impact the ability of CIPs to facilitate change on an identified community issue; in doing so, I identify places where the public planning would fit into the system. While the extant literature begins to identify the "success factors" for CIPs (Dluhy and Swartz 2006), there is little empirical research regarding the way that factors are engaged in causal processes and their presence in different contexts. My research seeks to illuminate the complexity of these processes, as well as provide a model for assessing CIPs and a typology for understanding how they make linkages in the community.

1.3 Research Questions

For this research, I intend to identify and describe influential factors and causal paths in different contexts for promoting local community improvement using a Community Indicator Program as a tool. In doing so, I will focus on local governance**,** not government, because government only has control over a portion of the improvement efforts (Blair 2001; Greenwood 2008). Drawing from a transdisciplinary literature review as well as from CIP practice, I outline a model for the development and function of a CIP, and use this as a heuristic (Figure 1.1) to deconstruct and describe the program and its function. I have two main research objectives: 1) Examine the CIP model against actual cases; identify differences and other potential factors of interest; and 2) Identify and examine factors influencing CIP's ability to facilitate change. Sub-questions are listed below each research objective.

RO 1: Examine CIP heuristic against actual cases; identify differences and other potential factors of interest

1. How do the programs function and how does that differ from the conceptual model (in 2.2)?
    a. What are the observations related to any differences?
    b. Are there significant variations between cases? Implications for planning?
    c. Inductively added variables?

RO 2: Identify and examine factors influencing CIP's ability to facilitate change.

2. What is the role of integration in CIPs ability to influence community improvement?
    a. Do programs make linkages to other entities (local agencies, NGOs, etc)?
    b. How does that differ from the conceptual model? What are the observations related to these differences? Implications for planning?

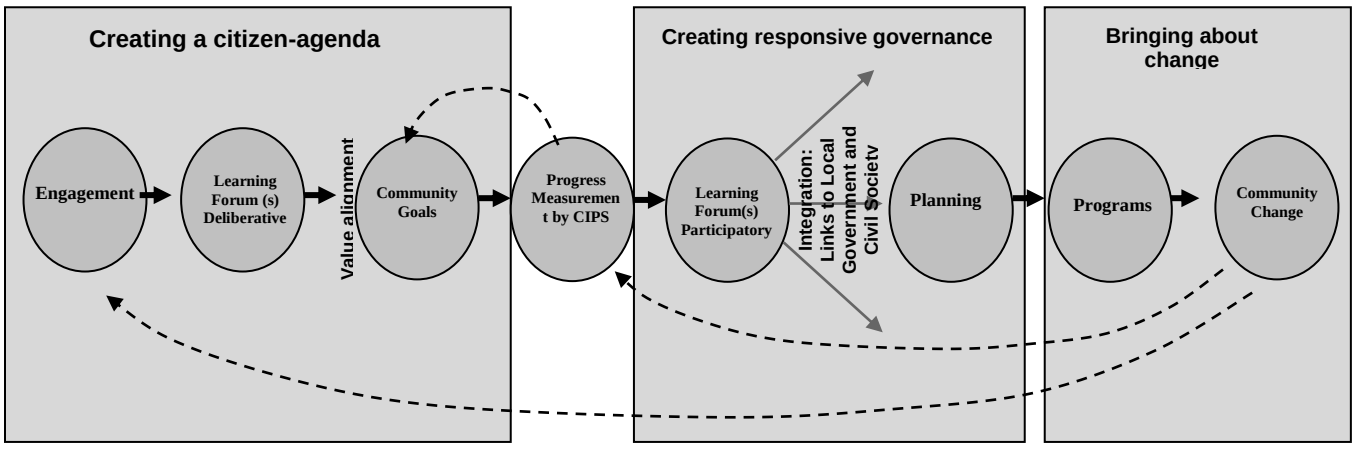
3. What is the role of learning in CIPs ability to influence community improvement?
    a. How (and where in the process) do the programs actually employ learning strategies? What are the observations related to these differences? Implications for planning?

4. What is the role of citizen and stakeholder engagement in CIP process?
    a. How (and where in the process) do the programs actually employ engagement strategies?
    b. How does that differ from the conceptual model? What are the observations related to these differences? Implications for planning?

1.4 Conceptual Diagram – CIP Heuristic

Using themes in the literature to frame my analysis (Chapter 2), I have constructed a heuristic (Figure 1.1) to examine CIPs against and to help to identify potential factors influencing their effectiveness. General areas of *a priori* emphasis for this investigation based on the literature review are participation, learning, and integration. The CIP heuristic outlines three distinct aspects related to how CIPs accomplish change, linked by a process of progress measurement. For *Creating a Citizen Agenda*, citizen-level engagement, citizen-level deliberation and learning forums (over differing interests), value alignment, and goal setting/citizen agenda are identified

Figure 1.1 Community Indicator Program Heuristic



as key components. For *Creating Responsive Governance*, stakeholder-level engagement and learning forums, governance integration, and program planning are identified as key components. The concept of integration is deconstructed in the Methods Section (Chapter 3) using tools from the planning literature (Margerum and Born 2000; Morrison, McDonald et al. 2004). Last, programs and initiatives for community improvement to are part of *Bringing about Change*. This cycles back to measurement for an on-going process.

In looking at outcomes, I am approaching it broadly. Depending on their combination and modified by other aspects such as CIP capacity, two factors might work together to manifest different types of outcomes or a 'typology of effectiveness' p 85 (George and Bennett 2005). Consequently, my conception of effectiveness for a Community Indicator Program is more than improvement in the measures. For this research, 'Improvement' or change is defined as either a change in the indicator itself, or some act of government or civil society based on that indicator (eg. decision or program change).

The CIP heuristic is somewhat similar to the Jacksonville Community Council change theory (Warner 2006), though drawn more from the participatory democracy and performance management literature reviews. It illustrates the need to take into account quality and process concerns, as well as other intermediate measures. While a CIP may show improvement in indicators for the community, if indicators themselves do not appropriately take into account community issues or represent sectors they are an inaccurate picture of community improvement. Further, if the CIP efforts are not producing some funding changes or alignment

in the governance activities in the community, then the influence of the CIP and therefore its effectiveness on these changes is questionable. The cyclical evaluation process is to help identify potential disconnects within the problem-measurement-action cycle.

1.5 Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters, including this introduction. In the following chapters, I present theoretical model for CIPs, a methodology, and case studies to identify and examine factors and causal pathways for facilitating change with a CIP. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the literatures drawn from in order to provide a critical lens for the different stages of facilitating change with a CIP. Chapter 3 describes my methodological approach, including research design, case selection, data collection, and method of analysis. Chapter 4, Chapter 5, and Chapter 6 each present a case of a CIP, including deconstucting their approach using the CIP heuristic and following an initiative. Chapter 7 provides a discussion of the findings from the cases; Chapter 8 outlines the potential implications of these findings to community indicator efforts and a prospective role for planning. I close with some suggestions for future research for CIPs and their juncture with planning.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Community Indicators Programs

About Community Indicator Programs

There are hundreds of local government agencies and NGOs in the United States and Canada that monitor economic, environmental and social trends with suites of indicators (Blair 2005; Dluhy and Swartz 2006). Although a few CIPs began in the late 1980s, they have become prevalent in the last decade. CIPs are developed in a variety of forms; some are initiated or operated by a citizen or nonprofit group, and some by the local government or other institutions. Many have an implicit or explicit goal to improve the local community and employ measurement and monitoring as a tool for furthering that purpose. The stated purposes of Community Indicator Programs can vary considerably, and sometimes the program does not have a clear purpose (Sawicki 2002; Dluhy and Swartz 2006; Greenwood 2008).

Blair (2001) contends that CIP purposes fall into two categories – outcome and process.

> In the first case the CIP is used as a management tool for policy evaluation and planning. The second function applies to most NGOs and a number of LGA promoted indicator exercises which view community education, consensus building and enhancing community spirit as important functions in their own right. p26

For outcome focused, Blair identifies the following purposes for these programs: informing policy, improving coordination, tracking and monitoring, programming and budgeting, and increasing awareness and education (Blair 2001).

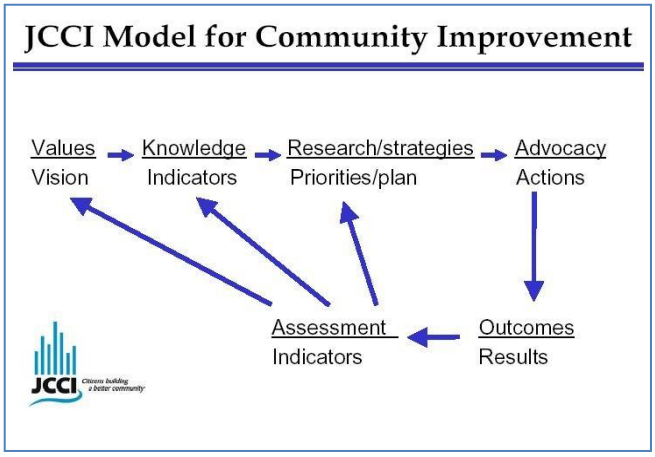
Themes in the CIP literature

There is much literature dealing with the design of indicators generally (Innes and Booher 2000), but the scholarly literature regarding Community Indicator Programs specifically is spare (Blair 2005). Professional practice, associations, and institutes, in part, have begun to define some themes in the literature. There are a variety of lenses that I might bring to examine CIPs and add to the literature. Below I have identified existing and underdeveloped themes relevant to my research, and have organized them according to associated topics.

Theory and CIP Development

0Although there has been a proliferation of CIPs in practice, they are a relatively unexamined trend. As noted, many programs are developed without a clear purpose, let alone a theory of program change. There are exceptions, and Jacksonville Community Council (JCCI), the oldest community indicator program, has a fairly well articulated one (Figure 1.1) p14 (Warner 2006) For other programs, many seek public discourse around the indicator information to help shape their community, but they are not sure how to make it happen (Innes and Booher 2000). This may be in part because the process of change is difficult to describe. According to Sawicki (2002), the assumed relationships

Figure 2.1 JCCI Model



between information, policy change, and real change often do not exist, and disentangling impacts from decisions is difficult at best. Many CIPs emphasize reporting, “as if the numbers themselves would be enough to make change happen” (Innes and Booher, 2000, p 174), but the monitoring holds little value if it does not eventually lead to change (Blair 2005).

Innes and Booher (2000) note that for those programs that are influential, it is through a complex process; the indicators may be less important than the discourse and learning that occurs during their development. The authors propose complexity theory as the best guide and argument for the development and use of indicators:

> Complexity theory…suggests that the world is more like an organism, growing, evolving and adapting to its environment… p178

This perspective makes explicit what is often implicit in these programs – that learning is a fundamental component of a CIP. Sawicki concurs, holding that Innes and Booher “provided the theoretical and practical underpinnings for a balance between procedural and substantive objectives when designing indicator systems." (p 25)

Some authors provide documentation of the process of developing a CIP (Heggeness, Buschmann et al. 2004; Reed, Fraser et al. 2006; Smolko, Strange et al. 2006; Blair and Greene 2007), but fewer weigh in with prescriptive suggestions for the development of one (Innes and Booher 2000; Reed, Fraser et al. 2006). Indicator programs comprised of a broad range of measures can only be valuable if certain conditions are met. These are: collaborative production of the indicators, public attention to the indicators, and institutionalization of the

indicators by agencies and/or stakeholders. While it may be less contentious to focus on government agency activities alone, it will inevitably be less effective (Blair 2001; Carmichael, Talwar et al. 2005).

Engagement and Learning

Several authors note the importance of participation in the development or analysis of community indicators (Innes and Booher 2000; Blair 2001; Gahin and Paterson 2001; Sawicki 2002; Carmichael, Talwar et al. 2005; Greenwood 2008; Holden 2009). Democratic ethics aside, a key rationale for broad engagement is that government is unable to produce the community's quality of life or sustainability goals unaided (Blair 2001). Further, value alignment is necessary even for progress by local government agencies. Innes and Booher (2000) underscore the importance of involving a range of stakeholders in the development of system level indicators. They hold that without value agreement or at least a vigorous public dialogue in selecting these broad indicators, the information will be ignored. Innes and Booher (2000) state that:

> System indicators require substantial public discussion and, ultimately, consensus among important players because they reflect, or even help create, shared community values in a way no expert-driven indicator can do. Unless they are developed consensually and with ample discussion, these indicators will not serve the crucial purposes of framing public discourse and permitting joint learning. p1

Given that many of these are grassroots efforts, there has been a significant increase in citizen participation in these community indicator efforts. (Gahin and Paterson 2001; Sawicki 2002) The CIP literature, however, has not given much attention to the quality of engagement – both from a standpoint of normative criteria and observed processes in empirical studies. Two exceptions of note: one study noted that while there are a variety of methods applied to

engage stakeholders in the development of sustainability indicators, social stratification presents considerable limitations to these methods (Reed, Fraser et al. 2006); another focused on communities of difference, acknowledging the indicator systems may not serve a single "public."(Holden 2009)

Also important, according to Innes and Booher (2000) is engagement that produces learning. They contend that the influence of community indicator programs is a function of "learning and change among key players that took place during the course of their development and the new shared meanings and changed discourses that often made the difference (p174)." In keeping with this perspective, the Hennepin County indicators report is aimed at cultivating dialogue between stakeholders in all sectors regarding issues and influences on the quality of life in the region (Heggeness, Buschmann et al. 2004). Similarly, Reed, et al (2006) draw from social learning for their proposed adaptive learning process for developing sustainability indicators; they intend "to develop a process that stimulates change of individuals and systems through an ongoing process of learning and negotiation. (p415)" Data utilization is key to such learning, and one program's approach was to develop a curriculum for "using data for community assessment."p79 (Murphey 1999) These scholars feel that information can stimulate dialogue that enhances learning and decision-making (Innes and Booher 2000; Sawicki 2002; Reed, Fraser et al. 2006).

Planning for QOL / Sustainability and CIP Effectiveness

Although the relevance to urban and regional planning of CIPs measuring progress on important community development issues seems apparent, CIPs are fairly recent in the

planning literature. Planning and CIPs both desire to guide and improve community development and priorities. In developing a vision or construct of a sustainable community, the presence of an indicator system is considered by some planning scholars as one important measure of commitment and likelihood of progress toward the goal of sustainability (Portney 2003; Saha and Paterson 2008).

Potential for links between CIPs and planning processes are many. Perhaps the most obvious link between the two is using shared goals. For Hennepin County (MN), aligning community indicators with broader community goals was considered a step toward accountability to and measuring progress toward those goals (Heggeness, Buschmann et al. 2004). Others suggest integration can occur through links between comprehensive /strategic planning or government performance measures with CIPs (CIC 2007; Saha and Paterson 2008). For CIPs that are non-governmental organizations (NGO), Blair (2005) feels that a strong partnership with local government (through the leadership of an elected official) is likely required for implementation to occur. Conversely, a government CIP needs to make linkages to area NGOs, since local problem-solving needing to occur requires more than just government actors. Nonetheless, according to Seasons (2005), municipal officials and staff remain the primary users of indicator analysis.

Blair (2005) notes that while most cities have adopted comprehensive plans and ordinances, monitoring progress made on them has been almost non-existent. Some feel that there is great potential for CIPs as a tool for measuring the health, safety and welfare of our communities,

but there is some discrepancy regarding the degree to which this might be done. Despite the fact that Seasons (2005) encourages the use of community indicators for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation of planning efforts, Innes and Booher (2000) strongly caution against evaluation applications.

> If indicators are to provide the distributed intelligence needed to assure that cities can be self-organizing learning systems that can be creative and sustainable, it is critical that indicators are not used in a simplistic way to argue that a policy is working or to punish any player or agency for some presumed failure. Indicators do not show the causes of problems, only their existence. They show trends in conditions but they do not tell us what to do. They are indicators, not answers. They are the starting place for discussion and exploration of potential action. Their purpose is to help all of us reflect, experiment and improve. If one tries to use indicators as criteria to reward and punish cities or agencies, the result will be to undermine the entire indicator system. No agency will produce accurate data if they are going to be used for criticism and punishment. p183(Innes and Booher 2000)

The actual use of indicators by planners was surveyed in a study by Seasons (2005). Not surprisingly, economic indicators are the most commonly employed. He surveyed those planning for the core areas in mid-sized Canadian cities and found that planners thought that the main constraints to indicator use in these core areas included time and resources. Further, planners relied on available data that was not necessarily appropriate – e.g. not disaggregated to the core area level.

An application of the indicators similar to that described by Innes and Booher is an “adaptive learning process” such as that proposed by Reed et al (2006). This process, the authors feel, empowers local communities; translating this empowerment to reaching (sustainability) goals

"depends on the institutional structures and support to communities required to facilitate the community-led planning process and decision-making"(Reed, Fraser et al. 2006, p415). Others indicate that using CIP data hinges on making linkages to local government or resources available (Seasons 2005; CIC 2007; Greenwood 2008).

Determining the effectiveness of a Community Indicator Program itself presents some challenges. Conventionally, in order to assess the effectiveness of a program, that program is evaluated against a set of goals within the context of resources and outside influences. Blair (2001) notes about CIPs:

> They are not programs in the sense that an event takes place after which a measurable degree of change is expected. CIPs are neutral in that respect. They monitor trends in the community health…if the community dislikes those trends, a program may be introduced to modify them. Thus, CIPs become an important means for organizing data and can contribute to problem-solving. (p25).

By this definition, a CIP is effective to the degree it organizes data and contributes to problem-solving. Yet, the level at which indicators are constructed is usually not itself actionable (Greenwood 2008). According to Innes and Booher (2000), leadership is necessary to assure the use and analysis of indicators for problem-solving. As noted, CIPs come with a wide range of explicit and implicit purposes. Effectiveness, consequently, may have both an organizing (process) component as well as an outcome (substantive) one (Blair 2001; Greenwood 2008).

2.2 Participation and Performance: citizen voice and community improvement

My research will builds on the CIP literature by drawing from two areas of scholarship: participatory and deliberative themes in democracy literature and performance management in the public administration literature. Such scholarship provides a framework for thinking about the role of CIPs in citizen engagement and voice in performance improvement and accountability in governance. Within these literatures, I have identified those themes analogous to existing or underdeveloped themes in the CIP literature. My intent was to begin to understand the relationship between the literature that I am drawing from, CIPs, and community planning and improvement.

Participation – Understanding the Issues with Finding "Citizen-Voice"

Who is at the Table?

There are a variety of assumptions about citizen engagement, not the least of which is "if you build it, they will come" (Mutz 2006). This is generally as true in community planning activities as in political spheres. This assumption, that merely providing participatory structures will lead to citizen participation, is called into question by findings related to participation factors, representation, and citizen motivation (Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995; Mutz 2006).

> Citizen participation is at the heart of democracy. Indeed democracy is unthinkable without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the governing process. Through their activity citizens in a democracy seek to control who will hold public office and to influence what the government does. ...Voice and equality are central to democratic participation. ...Since democracy not only implies government responsiveness to citizen interests but also equal consideration of the interests of each citizen, democratic participation must also be equal.(Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995)

A healthy democracy then is contingent on the processes that shape *who* is given voice and participation in those processes (Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995), and that *who* is the issue of representation in the participation literature. Verba (1995) defines representation as "the extent to which participatory input reflects accurately the politically relevant characteristics of the public." (p162) The complexity of giving accurate voice to a group is strongly influenced by the homogeneity within a group, as one concept of representation is to act on behalf of other people's (shifting) interests. In these theories, *people* not ideas are what is thought to be represented. (Hedrén 2002) With evidence of representation distortion in participation at a variety of levels (Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995), there is a case for a better means of addressing representation issues for minorities. Increasing participation in local governance without attending to representation (and participation barriers) may actually increase inequalities with regard to local resources.

Levels and Types of Participation

Arnstein's ladder (Arnstein 1969) left some with a preconception of "good" and "bad" types of citizen involvement; many consider participation as a continuum in which more participation is an obvious good. The assumption that "more is better" for citizen participation has been challenged both in contemporary theories (Pateman 1970) and in recent studies that have shown that widespread participation does not necessarily mean better outcomes (Moynihan 2003; Melo and Baiocchi 2006). Some authors have argued that the attributes of the problem define the role and value of different forms of participation (Bishop and Davis 2002; Lane 2005), and others argue that the intention of the administrator has more to do with participation

outcomes than the mode of participation (Moynihan 2003). Bishop and Davis (2002) conceive participation as a discontinuous interaction that changes with context and purpose. This allows for thinking about participation tools without value judgments.

Further, in planning practice, participation is often used as a catchall term for any form of engagement or deliberation. This lack of clarity can make discourse difficult. In the democratic theory literature, participation and deliberation may serve different functions.

> One feature that distinguishes deliberative democracy from "direct or participatory democracy" more generally defined…is the key assumption of the mutability of interests and the potential for the discovery (or construction) of common goals among participants. Deliberative democratic theorists have offered this model of deliberation – of collective decision-making based on reason-giving by an inclusive group of equals under conditions of equality that offers justifications to those affected by the decision – as a potential solution to a wide variety of problems…(Melo and Baiocchi 2006)

Mutz (2006) not only makes the distinctions between the two clear, she identifies and dissects a paradoxical tension in these two grouped concepts. Participation and deliberation in democracy likely have different actors and purposes. Like-minded individuals engaged in "enclave deliberation," which is good for bonding and encouraging political mobilization/participation, while pluralistic environments tend to produce greater deliberation and bridging social capital (Putnam 2000). Mutz's evidence suggests there is a trade-off where active participation does not coexist long with diverse perspectives and consideration of alternatives that occurs in a deliberative model. She notes that "what deliberative democracy asks of participatory democrats is that both of these tasks – activism and deliberation – have

been embedded in a single model as simultaneous responsibilities of the individual." (Mutz 2006)

Many community indicator programs have at their roots the perspective that citizens should share in identifying, measuring, planning, and addressing issues in their communities (Dluhy and Swartz 2006; Greenwood 2008; Holden 2009; Zachary, Brutschy et al. 2010). This understood role for community indicator programs is normative, and it can be embraced or not, though some consider citizen engagement critical to success (Dluhy and Swartz 2006). Public problem-solving and legitimacy is at the core of the engagement discussion from both literatures, assuming that decisions "are made with more, and better, information, and these decisions will come to be accepted as legitimate and justified by participants." (Melo and Baiocchi 2006).

Problem-solving, Learning, and the Public Interest

Fung (2004) noted, paraphrasing John Dewey, that "...a democratic public exists when individuals in a society can collectively recognize and sensibly respond to the problems that arise from their interactions with one another." (p16). In order for a group to recognize and sensibly respond to a problem, learning must occur. Deliberative theories of democracy imply a public sphere that serves as a learning forum, since some view participation as having a potentially transformative function (Pateman 1970; Forester 1999; Hanna 2000).

The development of a “public interest” or “common good” in a pluralistic setting is a primary goal of deliberative processes.

> … theorists of deliberative democracy address some of the problems that face democratic theory in complex societies, such as the plurality of values which would, in principle, render the construction of the “common good” of democratic theory as well as the establishment of common democratic practices difficult. … these theorists argue democratic deliberation provides a more satisfactory solution to the inevitable intractable difficulties in modern polities, such as deep moral disagreements between reasonable persons and choices about the allocation of limited collective resources, than “majority-rule” or “representative” democracy (Melo and Baiocchi 2006).

As noted earlier, this reconciliation of diverse values is thought to occur through the process of participation, developing in the individual a concern for the public interest (Pateman 1970; Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995; Hanna 2000; Putnam 2000; Fung 2004).This, in turn, would allow for the transformation or re-cognition of preferences that makes value alignment and the identification of the “public interest” possible.

Due to issues of power and conflict, there is disagreement regarding how and if this process of value alignment occurs. While there are examples of value alignment taking place at a small scale such as a neighborhood (Cohen and Rogers 2003; Fung 2004), Cohen and Rogers (2003) note that the issue of power is not taken sufficiently into account in examples of deliberative models. In such setting, this power can be formal or informal (Lane 2005). Mouffe (1999) contends that deliberative democracy refuses to acknowledge the role of conflict in the construction of collective identities.

Consequently, the advocacy or selection of a particular type of participatory process has inherent assumptions regarding the nature of the public sphere. Deliberative theories envisage a public sphere in which learning takes place, where a re-cognition of viewpoints through communicative acts occurs (Forester 1999). Mouffe's (1999) perspective of the conflict inherent in democracy, however, imagines the nature of the public sphere differently than deliberative democracy. According to her, consensus is viewed as something that is arrived at *not* through transformation or re-cognition (Forester 1987; Hanna 2000), but through provisional hegemony that by definition demands exclusion (Mouffe 1999). Mouffe (1999) places a name on this "deliberation" that occurs when pluralistic interests come together: agonistic pluralism.

Accountability and Citizen Trust

The literature indicates a positive relationship between engagement and citizen trust in government (Halvorsen 2003), and trust is essential to a healthy democracy (Putnam 2000; Fung 2004; Yang and Holzer 2006). Indeed, one of the key goals in Fung's (2004) "accountable autonomy," which refers to a model with central oversight with divested decision-making and accountability, is to restore trust and mend a rift between government and the public. The process of deliberation in this setting allows participants to see commitment to a shared goal, thus building trust (Fung 2004).

An underlying assumption in engagement processes is that the citizenry has some measure of faith that the processes hold some utility. If public trust is eroded, however, there is a circular problem created that entails engaging a public that does not trust public processes. This can

make improving struggling communities more difficult. Stressed communities generally cannot afford to waste resources, yet mistrustful societies are less efficient (Putnam 2000). Fung's (2004) description of accountable autonomy portrayed a model that successfully appealed to a disengaged public and restored public trust. The accountable autonomy model offered a carrot in the form of devolved decision-making. This indicates a need for assurances that engagement processes will hold some power.

Performance – Understanding Issues in Fostering Improvement

Engagement in Performance

Engagement related to public management and the development of performance management systems is itself a theme within the performance literature. In fact, DeLeon and DeLeon (2002) suggest that every citizen should have access to all levels of public decision-making. While there is concern with the idea of "direct participation" in public management (Lynn 2002) and citizen involvement in internal management processes (Streib and Poister 1999), Bouckeart's conception of legitimacy in performance management included the citizen and connected popular involvement to performance management; he suggests that citizen involvement will help make it known that the public sector can deliver services efficiently and effectively (Streib and Poister 1999). Indeed, the desire to improve governmental legitimacy or citizens' trust in government is seen as a key motivation to public managers for implementing meaningful citizen engagement. (Moynihan 2003).

There has been considerable debate concerning the advantages of one mode of citizen engagement over another, yet the effectiveness of participation is more linked to outcome intention of the administrator than to mode of participation (Bishop and Davis 2002; Moynihan 2003). Some argue that effective participation requires a measure of citizen's trust of public management, and vice versa (Yang 2005; Heikkila and Isett 2007), while others argue that in order for public managers to advance effective public engagement processes instrumental and normative goals for engagement must overlap (Moynihan 2003). Regardless, public managers play an important role in shaping the form, quality, and power of participation processes (Moynihan 2003; Yang 2005).

Learning, Accountability, and Trust

The literature indicates a positive relationship between learning and increased performance (Argyris 1999; Moynihan 2007), and between government performance and citizen trust in government (Yang and Holzer 2006). Indeed, a key assumption in the performance measurement movement is a learning theory: that performance information will lead to better decisions (Moynihan 2005). Argyris (1994) describes learning as a change in an organization's theory-in-use – or what they actually *do* – not their espoused theory (Argyris and Schon 1994).

There is also an implicit assumption within the performance management movement that accountability increases government performance. The desire for accountability, however, can thwart potential learning (Moynihan 2007). Confrontational approaches to management using performance data is more likely to incite defensive reactions than learning (Argyris 1999;

Moynihan 2007). At levels where expectations for accountability take the form of reproach, therefore, there is a negative relationship between accountability and learning (Argyris 1999; Moynihan 2007). This leaves us with the possibility that that which may increase public trust (accountability) in government may actually cause government to be less innovative and efficient.

In performance management, learning has strong links to data utilization. In order for learning from performance data to take place, however, there must be an environment that facilitates the learning process. Like the deliberative democratic model, learning in performance management is conceived as a process that occurs through deliberation (Moynihan 2007) where learning forums are analogous to the public sphere. As Moynihan (2007) notes, "Without learning forums, performance management is an incomplete structural approach to learning."(p10) Dialogue and engagement is seen as key in these forums, as it helps to create "shared mental models" and broad stakeholder involvement can advance double-loop learning (Yang and Holzer 2006; Moynihan 2007).

Interestingly, the performance management literature also notes that learning is not always a positive thing; adaptive change may take place based on false assumptions (Argyris and Schon 1994; Radin 2006). There does not appear to be a comparable discussion in the democracy literature. The closest seems to be Mouffe's (1999) identification of the "provisional hegemony" in consensus that alludes to the dubious nature of decisions.

Value Alignment

In performance management, the role of value alignment is important; it is what makes the use of data a learning process and it helps to de-politicize the development of data. Value alignment is thought to be a precondition for information to be used effectively for problem-solving, because data is more likely to be used for advocacy without agreement on value concerns. Further, information generated in a less contentious environment is more likely to be valid (Argyris 1974; Moynihan 2007), and reliable data is a precondition for Habermas's ideal speech conditions (Forester 1987).

The process of deliberation is considered fundamental in developing value alignment, as it allows participants to see commitment to a shared goal (Fung 2004). Moynihan (2007) notes similar findings in the development of a performance management system. He indicates that there is a positive relationship between engagement (in the form of employee deliberation) and government accountability, that "dialogue forms a basis of social cooperation, and people feel committed to the agreements researched in such a context." (Moynihan 2007)

2.3 Adding to the Literature for CIPs and Planning

As noted, scholarship particular to CIPs, as defined in this research, is slender, but growing. The literature review extending into performance management and participatory democracy provides a lens with which to view CIPs and outlines sizable areas for exploration.

Engagement and Learning

Participation is noted as an important element in the development of community indicators and a theme in the literature. Issues such as representation, deliberative versus participatory theories, and the appropriateness of participatory structures are among the subthemes in participation for the democracy literature. In the performance management literature, participation subthemes include deliberation, validity and appropriateness of participatory structures. Are there more appropriate types of engagement structures for particular stages of development of a CIP, e.g. bridging /deliberative for goal-setting and bonding/participatory for action and implementation? For the deliberative processes, would they best be described as transformative or agonistic pluralism? Does value alignment take place in these participatory structures? These considerations have helped to frame my thinking about CIPs and the heuristic I will use to look at them.

Learning is a much less discussed theme than participation, but it has been linked to participation (Innes and Booher 2000) in the CIP literature. Learning is envisaged to occur through the deliberative process in a public sphere. This is true in both the democracy and the performance management literature. In the democracy literature, deliberation and learning is linked to value alignment, as learning may be manifest as preference transformation. In the performance management literature, context, implementation, and hierarchy in measures in performance data are understood through learning processes (Moynihan 2008). Learning is touched on theoretically in the CIP literature by Innes and Booher (2000), but is empirically undeveloped. Drawing from lessons in democracy and performance management, such as

homogeneity of stakeholders, data utilization, learning forums, barriers to learning, and negative learning, I intend to view CIPs with these lessons in mind; learning through CIPs will be a factor that I will explicitly examine.

The Public Interest and Power

Value alignment is a discussion within both the performance management and democracy literatures; it is often used as an approximation of the public interest or citizen agenda, as a concern for the public interest is thought to be the precondition to achieve value alignment (Pateman 1970; Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995; Hanna 2000; Putnam 2000; Fung 2004). Yet to be explored is how or if this process takes place within CIPs in the determination of indicators or program initiatives. The literature indicates that value alignment is important to the production of valid information and its use toward solving problems (Argyris 1974; Moynihan 2007).

Also, the democracy literature indicates a danger of an imbalance of power in this process, and that it is not taken into account sufficiently in deliberative models (Cohen and Rogers 2003). Some also argue that value alignment does not occur, but rather "provisional hegemony," implying a tyranny of the majority or the powerful (Mouffe 1999). Both literatures see the role of leadership as key to the redistribution of power and meaningful participation in governance (Behn 2002; Jennings and Haist 2005; Melo and Baiocchi 2006). This is linked to institutional design, as leadership is a key to the use of engagement processes intended to redistribute power by defusing or reinforcing power interests (Hendriks 2002; Melo and Baiocchi 2006). Leadership, power, and value alignment in the development and the maintenance of CIPs is

another area that warrants examination. Again, this is important background information for constructing a heuristic and thinking about relationships. These issues, however, will not be the emphasis of this dissertation unless they relate to community improvement.

Accountability and Citizen Trust

Ensuring accountability of local institutions is often an implicit if not explicit motivation for the development of CIPs. Accountability is a strong theme in the performance management literature; in the democracy literature, it is linked to citizen trust, which is considered essential to a healthy democracy (Putnam 2000; Fung 2004; Yang and Holzer 2006). Citizen trust is also linked to engagement. There is a short reference in the CIP literature regarding the value of trust in the effectiveness of CIP implementation (CIC 2007), but empirical studies examining its role and the relationship to other factors is absent. An area warranting exploration, therefore, is the relationship between CIP development, citizen engagement, citizen trust, and accountability. These issues may be of interest as I begin to identify central factors of community improvement with the CIP. Regardless, these will provide a background understanding necessary to examine processes of interest.

Planning and Effecting Change with CIPs

There are a few existing themes in the CIP literature directly related to planning: the appropriate role of indicators, linkages between indicators and planning/government or NGO processes, and the relationship of linkages to CIP effectiveness. There is disagreement regarding the appropriate role of CIPs in the planning and CIP literature. Some see CIPs as an

evaluation tool (Seasons 2005), some as a foil pushing citizen agenda (CIC 2007; Greenwood 2008), and others see the appropriate role as one of problem identification and an agent of problem-solving (Innes and Booher 2000; Blair 2001). Fundamentally, community indicators provide information that, if determined through an intentional, inclusive engagement process, can reflect many of the values of import to local citizens (Greenwood 2008). While there is disagreement on the range of appropriate applications, there seems to be agreement on their use for problem identification, which is fundamental to effective planning.

Several authors underscore the importance of making linkages between CIPs and community actions. Blair (2001) feels that the use of CIPs hinges not on the conceptual framework, but on "the political will to connect with policy response" (p31). This is supported by Saha and Paterson (2008) in their study of sustainability community indicators, and they identify comprehensive plans and action plans as the vehicle(s). Others posit that use of CIP data for community improvement centers on making linkages to local government performance measures (CIC 2007; Greenwood 2008).

Clearly, guidance on making such linkages is limited and merits further consideration, as the CIP literature has concentrated on structural approaches. Understanding these connections to community is of particular interest in my research. Consequently, I will draw from the broader planning literature, specifically environmental planning, for tools that can help to assess connections (Margerum and Born 2000; Morrison, McDonald et al. 2004). While I have modified these tools to better fit the purposes of a CIP effort (see Chapter 3 Methods),

Margerum and Born (2000, p6) noted their coordination diagnostic to be “applicable to other complex planning and management settings.”

3 Methods

3.1 Research Design, Selection, and Unit of Analysis

The research design for this project was a case study approach. I selected this approach to better understand the function of CIPs in providing information for community improvement. I suspected that community improvement facilitated by a CIP is a phenomenon "governed by equifinality." (George and Bennett, 2005, p161) Equifinality is defined as "involving several explanatory paths, combinations, or sequences leading to the same outcome, and these paths may or may not have one or more variables in common." (George and Bennett 2005, p20) The case study approach allows me to give sufficient attention to the complexity of the phenomenon (Yin 2003; George and Bennett 2005).

Case selection

For the case studies, the list of potential cases was initially drawn from the Community Indicators Consortium (CIC) and the Canadian Sustainability Indicators Network (CSIN) membership. I supplemented this list by searching for non-member programs on the internet (searching on terms "community" and "indicators" and "participation"). This original list was condensed through interviews with the CIC and CSIN staff using case study screening questions, and similar interviews with the CIPs themselves. Further, the cases were kept to three, one small, one medium, and one large municipality.

Programs used in this study were not randomly selected, but rather selected based on being what Gerring (2007) describes as an *influential* case. I used *influential* cases, because they help to verify presumed causal relationships, such as the relationships between the identified factors and the desired outcomes (Gerring 2007). For this research, an influential case was considered to be a program that has an example of a CIP "success," meaning a *change*. I defined success/change as improvement in the individual indicator itself or a funding or programmatic change associated with the CIP. Thus, I varied selection on the independent variable and remained (relatively) constant on the dependent variable. While this has been criticized by some, George and Bennett (2005) note that "…single-case studies and "no variance" studies of multiple cases can be useful if they pose "tough tests" for theories or identify **alternative causal paths to similar outcomes when equifinality is present**" p76 (emphasis added). Other qualitative methodologists concur (Collier, Brady et al. 2004; Ragin 2004).

Figure 3.1 Case Screening Questions

Case Study Screening

General

- How long has the program been in operation? (min 3 years)
- What is the purpose of the program? (QOL, sustainability, responsiveness to citizen agenda)
- Is the program hosted by an NGO or a governmental body? (NGO, or collaboration)
- Did the program have a 'success' in its efforts related to an initiative? (Yes)

Engagement

- Did the program have stakeholder input at its inception? (Yes)
- Does it have systematic on-going stakeholder input? (note)
- Did the program have citizen input at its inception? (note)
- Does it have systematic on-going citizen input? (note)

Data Analysis

- Does the program have formal or informal structures for systematic data analysis? (note)
- Does the program have informal structures for systematic data analysis? (note)
- Does the program have formal or informal structures for irregular data analysis? (note)
- Does the program include stakeholders in the data analysis process? (note)
- Does the program include the citizenry in the data analysis process? (note)

Aside from being an influential case, to the extent possible I selected cases that had good examples of the factors of interest identified in the literature review. Nonetheless, I recognize that a screening process, especially by telephone, may not yield accurate results. When interviewing those with a vested interest in the success of the effort, they are more likely to overstate program achievements or its relationship to community improvement efforts. Furthermore, to some extent case selection is opportunistic (George and Bennett 2005) in that a *de facto* additional criteria was that my programs had to agree to be studied. New programs were generally not candidates, as programs needed to have been in existence long enough to have had the opportunity to establish some of the institutional structures of interest and/or to show improvement. Based on the screening conversations, the CIPs that were selected are: the Alliance for Building Community (Quincy, IL), FOCUS / CNY Vitals (Syracuse, NY), and the Jacksonville Quality of Life Indicators (Jacksonville, FL).

Table 3.1 Layout of Comparisons

Observation within Cases			
Quincy (context A)	**Syracuse (context B)**	**Jacksonville (context C)**	**Outcome**
This section describes the contextual factors unique to **Quincy** that facilitated the program or the initiative.	This section describes the contextual factors unique to **Syracuse** that facilitated the program or the initiative	This section describes the contextual factors unique to **Jacksonville** that facilitated the program or the initiative	**CHANGE**
What was different in Quincy in the "no change" scenario?	What was different in Syracuse in the "no change" scenario?	What was different in Jacksonville in the "no change" scenario?	**NO CHANGE**

Observation across Cases
Are there observations or differences regarding the way the "change" outcome was manifest in the different contexts? Were the factors of interest the same? Did the factors of interest (and any added) interact differently based on the context? If so, what are some of the possible intervening influences?

Unit(s) of Analysis

As implied, the unit of analysis is the outcome associated with a CIP initiative. Within the selected CIPs, two outcomes of "success" or "failure" (meaning change/no change) are examined. This gave the opportunity to compare examples of *most different* (Gerring 2007) for unit of analysis within the same context. By varying the outcome (change/no change) in each context, looking at the same outcome in different contexts (the three case study sites), and tracing the process of change, I made observations regarding how these "conjunctions of variables" (George and Bennett, 2005, p26) behave across and within contexts. This provides context contingent, generalizable information to guide improving the efficacy of CIPs as an instrument for facilitating community improvement.

3.2 Data collection and Analysis

Data collection

Data used in this study included documentation, observation, and interviews. Documentation included, when available, indicator reports, committee notes, annual reports, organizational literature, and participant comments from engagement sessions. At each case study site, I was able to observe at least one stakeholder group meeting. In Quincy, I attended the Health Leadership Delegation, the Employment Leadership Delegation, and the Research and Evaluation Committee meetings. In Syracuse, I attended a FOCUS board meeting, an CNY pathways committee meeting, and a citizens' academy meeting. In Jacksonville, I attended an economic recovery study meeting, and a Mayor's forum. None of the meetings that I attended included a data review session.

Following case selection, initial interviews were all conducted on-site and in person. Follow-up conversations were conducted in-person or by telephone. With permission, I recorded all interviews; information was fully or partially transcribed sufficiently to verify interview findings. The number of interviews varied by site and according to the difficulty in corroborating evidence. In total, I conducted 47 interviews lasting between thirty and ninety minutes with 37 different interviewees. Most interviews were about an hour. Initial interviews were semi-structured using the interview script (Appendix); follow-up interviews were generally guided by notes from the initial interview or extemporaneous. Each site included interviews from the CIP staff, board, partner groups, and participants in engagement events.

Analysis

In order to organize and categorize information from the cases, I used several frameworks. As I collected information about the program itself, I used my CIP heuristic as a framework for organizing observations. This provided an easy means for comparisons between the factors in the literature and empirical observations. I identified differences between the CIP heuristic and the case studies, adding factors from site observations as the research progressed. Thus, at the end of my case studies, I had information about factors related to the development and operation of these CIPs to begin to identify some of the "conjunctions of variables"p26 (George and Bennett 2005) that lead to community improvement.

Drawing from the planning literature, I also used a tool/framework to help assess more holistically the CIP linkages into the community. Originally developed as a coordination

diagnostic for environmental planning and expanded to include collaboration, cooperation, and coordination (Margerum and Born 2000; Morrison, McDonald et al. 2004), I have further modified the framework to be an *integration assessment for CIPs* (Figure 3.1). Since CIPs are ideally facilitating a "coordinated approach" to governance for solving particular problems, the assessment helped me to identify a broader range of linkages from the CIP into the community in the process of forwarding an initiative.

Table 3.2 Integration Assessment for CIPs

	Strategic integration	Structural integration	Functional integration	Participatory integration
Characteristics	**Engagement** and commitment by lead actors or figure heads in the community (e.g. Mayor); **and/or** CIP links **formally** or **informally** to strategic documents in the community (e.g. Comprehensive Plan); **and/or** CIP activities **enabled** at the policy level (local, state, federal)	Other organizations link their programs **formally** ***from*** the CIP efforts or ***across to*** the CIP (e.g. an action group that forms within CIP or links to work of CIP through written protocols, shared staff, regular meetings, shared database or data, goal/task alignment)	Other organizations link their programs **informally** *from* the CIP efforts or *across to* the CIP (e.g. an action group that forms within CIP or links to work of CIP; implicit norms and actions)	CIP connects to community concerns and goals; gathers and distributes information though broad citizen and stakeholder **engagement**.
Questions	▪ Is there integration with strategic documents ▪ Is there engagement of leadership in the community? ▪ Are there policies that enable/ inhibit CIP activities?	▪ Are there formal connections with civil society networks? ▪ Are there formal connections with government? ▪ Is there a formal process for information exchange? ▪ Is there authority to require consistency (contracts, funding sources)?	▪ Are there informal connections with civil society networks? ▪ Are there informal connections with government? ▪ Is there an informal means of information exchange? ▪ Is there dialogue processes for conflict resolution?	▪ Is there engagement of the general citizenry? Is representation attended to? ▪ Is there engagement of the major stakeholders?? ▪ Is there both initial and on-going engagement strategies? ▪ Are there links to other engagement strategies or community goals?

Modified from Margerum and Born (2000) and Morrison, McDonald, and Lane(2004)

For following the initiatives within each case, I used process tracing, which George and Bennett (2005) forward as an approach for understanding equifinality. To do so, I reviewed information from various interviews at each case study site and organized information about initiatives of

interest in sequence. There was considerably more information remembered concerning the "success" versus the "failure" at each case study site. With the information available, I outlined benchmarks for each initiative into a timeline for an easy reading of the sequence of events. Then, I organized the benchmarks into a table with corresponding factors from the literature and integration qualities, when possible. Process tracing "tests" are included in the table to indicate the strength of the relationship of the initiative to the efforts of the CIP (Bennett 2010).

Bennett (2010) outlines process tracing in greater detail as a means for examining causal processes. He provides a table of tests for causation (Table 3.3) that somewhat parallel how the information might be viewed from a quantitative perspective, noting that it "…obviously does not involve a *definitive* test. Rather, as with any causal inference, qualitative or quantitative, it is a *plausible* test in the framework of this particular method of inference and a specific data set" (Bennett 2010, p210). Given the type of data collection methods of this research, this caveat is duly noted. Although I attempted to verify and record information faithfully, as noted in the following section on limitations of this study, data collected through interviews is subject to both the bias of the informant and the researcher.

Table 3.3 Process Tracing Tests for Causation

		Sufficient to establish causation	
		NO	**YES**
Necessary to establish causation	**NO**	**Straw in the Wind** *Passing* affirms relevance of hypothesis but does not confirm it. *Failing* suggests hypothesis may not be relevant, but does not eliminate it.	**Smoking Gun** *Passing* confirms hypothesis *Failing* does not eliminate it
	YES	**Hoop** *Passing* affirms relevance of hypothesis but does not confirm it. *Failing* eliminates it	**Doubly Decisive** *Passing* confirms hypothesis and eliminates others. *Failing* eliminates it.

(Bennett 2010) p210

3.3 Limitations of the Study and Threats to Validity

Limitations

This is the best methodological approach for the phenomenon and questions of interest, yet the study has inherent limitations based on the methodology selected. While process tracing is useful to help identify constellations of variables of import in certain contexts, I am not able to provide much information regarding the relative importance of each (George and Bennett 2005). Further, because I have selected only three case studies, the findings are not generalizable in the statistical sense; rather, I am making contingent, analytical generalizations (Yin 2003; George and Bennett 2005), and providing insights into the function of the programs.

Threats

Aside from limitation on the methodology itself, there are also potential threats to the accuracy of observations on the relationships of interest. Aside from potential problems operationalizing the concepts, other issues include the reliability of data sources and extraneous influences. Because I have relied heavily on interviews for the case studies, the informant potentially biases information collected. Consequently, to the extent possible, I have tried to verify information from multiple sources, through either documentation or other interviews. External and internal influences to the program could also obscure the relationships of interest. These include the size or demographics of the city, the commitment from local stakeholders, transition in staff, or program resources. To the extent feasible, I have noted and assessed these influences.

4 Improvement with the Alliance for Building Community in Quincy, IL

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the community indicator program in Quincy, Illinois, which began as a collaboration to collect data. The Alliance for Building Community (ABC), which introduced indicators in 2004, is both the youngest indicator effort and smallest community in these case studies. ABC matured as a program quickly, and began to test different implementation approaches through information from the CIC. Finding one approach that fit their local culture and capacities best, leadership delegations, ABC has used the model to address specific issues in their community. In collaboration with their YMCA partner, one of ABC's recent implementation efforts, childhood obesity, was successful in gaining funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

In the first subsection, I briefly outline Quincy and some baseline statistics. The next subsection provides a history of the development of the CIP and how it operates. I then discuss the elements of ABC in relation to the factors from the CIP heuristic. . For the last part of the model, Bringing About Change, I briefly follow the childhood obesity initiative in a different subsection. In the last subsection, I discuss observations particular to this case.

4.2 Orientation to Quincy

Quincy is a small city of approximately 40,000 people that serves as the county seat for Adams County in west-central Illinois. Located on the Mississippi River, it is also the principle city in the

Micropolitan Statistical Area (μSA) that includes Adams County and Lewis County, Missouri. The population for the μSA is approximately 75,000 people, down nearly 2.5% since 2000. Demographically, Quincy is about 91% white, with about 5% black or African American, about 2% mixed race, and slightly over than 1% Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau 2009).

Table 4.1 Quincy U.S. Census Information

Quincy Quickfacts	
Population (2010)	40, 633
Persons under 18	22.3%
Persons over 65	18.3%
Minority	9.2%
Median household income (2005-2009)	$38,072
Unemployed, in labor force (2010)	4.9%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units (2005-2009)	$89,700
Home ownership rate (2005-2009)	65.3%
Poverty	
All persons below poverty level (2005-2009)	17.1%
Children, under 18, below poverty level (2005-2009)	29.7%
Families with female householder, no husband	36.6%
Educational attainment	
High school graduates, persons 25+ (2005-2009)	88.2%
Bachelor's degree or higher, persons 25+ (2005-2009)	22.3%
Major university	No

As with many smaller cities in the U.S., Quincy struggles with economic vitality. Its location on the Mississippi made Quincy an economic hub for shipping at its birth, experiencing its greatest growth during the mid-1800s. It nearly doubled in size each decade from 1850 to 1870, but reached its height of population in the 1970s. Health care is by far the greatest employment sector now, with over 23% of those employed. The retail sector follows health care at 17% of the employed labor force, but manufacturing is now only at 12 %. While Adams County has a

smaller percentage than the State of Illinois of families living below the poverty-line, when isolating the figure to families with children it has the same percentage. Going further, female-headed families with children have a substantially higher percentage below poverty level in Adams County than that of the State of Illinois (32% versus 38%); in fact, 15.5% of all children under 18 were below the poverty line.(U.S. Census Bureau 2004). Most major issues in Quincy/Adams County stem from poverty (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010; Alliance for Building Community 2011).

4.3 Program History and Development

Formation of the organization

The Quincy Alliance for Building Community (ABC) program began almost by happenstance. It was born from a chance conversation between leaders of different arms of governance in Adams County in 2003. A member of the University of Illinois Extension was at a public meeting held by the United Way of Adams County; the United Way was reviewing the results of a recent community assessment that they completed.

> I am sitting in the back of the room, watching the presentation of the results of their community survey. They were almost identical to the survey results we had done a few months before. (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010)

At the end of the meeting, the Extension and United Way leaders began talking about the nearly identical results of their community assessments. While they were having this conversation, a representative from the county health department came over to them and

Table 4.2 ABC Summary

Community indicators initiated	2005
Founding organization(s)	Alliance for Building Community (ABC)
Hosting organization(s) (if different)	Same
Engagement	Citizen engagement for community issue identification, on-going stakeholder involvement, and annual community event
Selection of indicators	By stakeholders, some citizens involved
Primary Partners	Adams County Health Department, University of Illinois Extension, and United Way of Adams County; primary initiative partner is the YMCA.
Capacity (staff)	Staff of 1
Primary capacity builders	Marion Gardner Jackson Foundation (MGJF)
Primary linkages	County agencies, non-profit governance through United Way
Implementation	Delegations around issues (e.g. obesity, jobs, etc)

noted that while doing the mandated needs assessments for the IPLAN (Illinois Plan for Local Assessment of Need), they too had done a survey and had gotten corresponding results. They all discussed the considerable resources that were tied up in doing these assessments – survey costs and staff time. This led to a discussion of how they might work together, and, instead of duplicating work, do a comprehensive community survey and save money too. (Quincy_Interview[5] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010; Quincy_Interview[6] 11/19/2010)

> So we really came together, the three organizations, around just the idea of doing a joint community assessment... (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010)

The triad of United Way of Adams County, University of Illinois Extension, and the Adams County Health Department focused on that task, and did their first joint community assessment in 2004.

As they were examining the data that they got back against previous community assessments over the past twenty years, they noticed that the same five or six issues always came up. The group expanded the effort to include indicators when they began acknowledging the chronic quality of community problems (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010; Alliance for Building Community 2007).

> Once we decided that community indicators made sense, we just headed in that direction. It didn't hurt that United Way (national) was pushing this kind of work – so the local United Way became a driving force for this effort. Extension and the Health Department were a strong part of it, but United Way was a driving force (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

As they began thinking about tracking progress on issues more systematically and bringing more attention to them, they did some exploration into community indicator programs, and eventually launched the Alliance for Building Community.

At the same time this was happening, the United Way began conversations with a private, local foundation, the Marion Gardner Jackson Foundation (MGJF), regarding capacity building in the community (Quincy_Interview[6] 11/19/2010). The trustees of MGJF began to look at the types of projects they were funding and wanted to know that the money was making a difference in the community. They took an interest in the nascent collaboration between members of the

triad and brought in some organizational consultants from Boston (at the time the MGJF was managed from Boston) to work with them.

Development of the indicators

ABC formed an Advisory Committee, made up of stakeholder leadership in the community, in order to help guide the development of the indicators. When the three organizations (United Way, Public Health, and Extension) joined forces, it drew a lot of attention and people were especially interested in being involved. Due to the interest level, the Advisory Committee was able to draw broad and influential representation from the community, including the mayor, the city planner, and healthcare and economic development organizations. (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011)

The original partners and the Advisory Committee together identified and guided a process for community engagement in the indicator effort. It began with engagement around community issues, with at least half of those involved from the general citizenry and the remaining sector stakeholders(Quincy_Interview[14] 11/23/2011). The partners felt that a high level of engagement would not only give them the best information, but they also thought it would create buy-in and ownership of the program in the community (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

> To move into community indicators, we brought together hundreds of people from 40 or 50 different organizations. We tried to include as many people as we could. We had meetings morning, noon, and night. (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010)

The selection and development of indicators for the Alliance for Building Community occurred following the large community engagement process (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011).

Selection of indicators and data sources

Following the public meetings, focus groups, and the community survey, ABC convened the large event to review data and select indicators. Four core areas were identified; attendees, who were primarily stakeholders from a particular sector, broke into "impact teams."

> We identified broad areas like youth, education, health (and adopted United Way terminology to make things easier). The United Way sort of defined the sectors based on their sectors. (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010)

These teams were charged with brainstorming key issues in their area and what they would like to measure.

In order to identify measures, teams first needed to frame the problem that they were trying to address and identify existing data. Each team developed its own approach, based on those involved (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011). Sometimes people settled in a team because they were advocates or even family members representing a particular group (e.g. seniors), but not public health professionals. They knew the issues of their group, yet were not familiar with some of the terminology or programs.

> The beauty of the process from a research perspective is that you have such a variety of people at the table and that you have questions generated that would not have been had it only been the usual suspects. … So, they would talk about data from a survey and the non-public health people might ask: Where is that coming from? How is that utilized? Who asked those questions? How can you be a part of that survey? Every

> permutation of that process was deconstructed. It varied, based on who was attending – any particular meeting could be different. (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011).

This mix of interested professionals and citizens, all committed to the same issue but with different experiences and knowledge of it, sometimes resulted in education along the way for both groups. (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011). Because of the training provided by the MGJF consultants, each team developed a logic model or multiple logic models with outcome measures around their issue(s). Together, the four teams identified 170 indicators (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

The MJGF consultants, the Steering Committee, and an academic consultant reviewed the list of indicators, looking for clusters and redundancies. When an indicator came up across multiple teams, it was given higher priority. They distinguished categories that emerged from the indicators themselves rather than the defined sector impact teams, winnowing the number of indicators to 54.

The data was then further categorized into 1) data they have; 2) data they want, but don't have; and 3) indicator sets (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011). Data sources for the indicator reports include partner groups, the U.S. Census, and city, county, and state agencies. For most of the indicators, there was a data source available. There were also a few indicators identified that lacked data but were deemed worthy of primary data collection. That missing data shaped future collaborative community survey development (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

In developing the community indicators, not all sectors were well-represented. This is due in part to the United Way being a key partner. For many CIPs *initiated* by a United Way, having the sectors defined by their sectors is common. This tends to make such indicator projects less comprehensive, as the United Way has a specific focus on social services. Given that the partners initiated ABC as a collaborative effort with a quality-of-life emphasis, however, some sectors were conspicuously neglected (Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011).

> …environmental was one of them. It wasn't left out completely, but it was less important. It was only in the last couple of years that we added that in…and it was because I just kept pushing for it. Unlike some places, there wasn't a big local push for it either. There wasn't a strong voice for the environmental piece. (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010)

Representatives from the University of Illinois Extension advocated for a more substantial environmental component. A local environmental group exists, the Adams County Green Coalition, which also advocated for environmental indicators. The environment as a core area, however, is far less developed or facilitated than many of those in the social sector.

Implementation Approaches

For the first couple of years of the program, the role of the data for the Alliance for Building Community was just about building awareness; their focus was on publishing trends. Then, ABC investigated some of the "best practice" approaches recommended through the Community Indicator Consortium. One approach that ABC identified through the CIC and attempted was *Adopt an Indicator* (Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011).

Truckee Meadows Tomorrow (TMT), a community indicator program in Reno, Nevada, developed the approach as a means of getting community involvement around issues measured by the indicators and "moving the needle." Essentially, local organizations or private industries sign a contract indicating their commitment to move the needle on that particular measure (e.g. childhood obesity). The nonprofit (in this case TMT) negotiates the contract and makes it public, and celebrates the commitment. The premise is that the act of signing a contract will force entities to take action on issues.

ABC found the "Adopt an Indicator" model was not effective in Quincy. Partner staff observed a few reasons why the model did not work. At the most basic, even when ABC was able to get people to sign contracts, those signing did not know what to do next; the causal links were not always known or clear (Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011) and there was no built-in method of discovering them. In order for people to remain motivated around "moving the needle," the TMT model seems to assume known causal chains, sensitive measures, accurate measures, and no lag effects.

In 2008, ABC began a different approach that has proven effective (Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011), both for its capacity to address unknowns around causal relationships to indicators and for its fit to the local culture. The "leadership delegation" model assembles stakeholders and interested citizens around a particular issue, such as obesity in the community, and facilitates them developing and implementing action steps around the issue. The leadership delegations have a minimum of a one-year commitment, but members can stay with the delegation throughout its duration if they choose. ABC targets certain groups already involved

in the issue for recruitment. The delegations are, however, inclusive; people can self-select into the groups (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

The leadership delegations have a different relationship to information and each other than the TMT model. The nature of the delegations is more informal and exploratory.

> Using information we already have, we work to create a conversation around the different issue areas for action. …Quincy has good networking and collaboration here. They aren't perfect, but people do work together, they see connections, they discuss things a lot...(Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011)

Members of the delegation meet regularly and review and discuss programs, audience, and data; ABC even collects additional data if deemed necessary (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010). The two approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but the "Adopt an Indicator" approach does not have review and analysis built into it.

Description of the Program

Purpose and structure

The Alliance for Building Community (ABC) describes itself as a "community partnership of individuals and groups working to improve the quality of life for all residents of Adams County."(Alliance for Building Community 2011) It does this through data, analysis, and training around issues in the community and facilitating and improving programs toward addressing those issues.

> We provide data, tools, and training for the community to make informed decisions, offer quality programs, and evaluate project outcomes. ABC helps our community research, create, and test long-term solutions to Adams County's challenges. We monitor the overall impact of many projects and report their results. In turn, these results are used to make effective social policy and help community organizations best allocate their resources. (Alliance for Building Community 2011)

ABC has three primary activities that take place (identified below in Table 2), and is made up of staff, the Steering Committee, the Research and Evaluation Committee, and leadership delegations around particular issues. Currently, there is one for health, education, and income. The three original organizers from the University of Illinois Extension, United Way of Adams County, and the Adams County Health Department became the Steering Committee, and this group operates informally. They meet as necessary, which at the beginning was as frequently as weekly, but now is closer to monthly. The committee has recently had attrition, as two of the originally founders have taken other positions in different organizations. The remaining member is interested in expanding the Steering Committee as they replace those original members. (Quincy_Interview[5] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[2] 2/19/2011; Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010; Quincy_Interview[6] 11/19/2010)

Table 4.3 Activities in ABC

Activity	Entity
Organizational development and program assessment	Steering Committee
	Advisory Committee (initially)
	Research and Evaluation Committee
Issue planning	Leadership Delegations
	Staff
Issue action	Leadership Delegations
	Staff

The Research and Evaluation Committee currently has a limited role; they assist local groups in their own evaluation needs. It is responsive, in that it is driven by requests from the organizations themselves (Quincy_Interview[3] 2/21/2011). There is interest, however, in broadening the scope of the committee to include evaluating the processes of ABC itself and identifying research needs in the community (Quincy_Interview[5] 2/16/2011). ABC solicited members for this committee, and it is comprised primarily of professionals with expertise or a role in evaluation. This includes an institutional researcher from the community college, a business professor at the university, a coordinator for the substance abuse coalition, UI Extension staff, and a school foundation director.

Other organizational structures within ABC are not necessarily meant to be permanent. In order to develop the indicators, the Steering Committee organized an Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee helped organize the process for developing indicators and members participated in the stakeholder teams selecting the indicators (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010) Since its creation, the Advisory Committee has essentially disbanded, as it does not meet with any regularity. It is likely to transition into a United Way committee under their Community Impact division. (Quincy_Interview[2] 2/19/2011), but the primary role of the Advisory Committee within ABC was to get the ball rolling for engagement and indicator development.

Leadership delegations replaced the impact teams in 2008. They are a hybrid between a permanent organizational structure and one set up for a temporary task. Leadership delegations are essentially action committees made up of stakeholders from various sectors of the community and individual volunteers that can be solicited by ABC or self-selected.

The purpose of Leadership Delegations (LDs) is to:

1. Create public will to support new and ongoing initiatives
2. Determine strategies for sustainable programming
3. Identify what works from perspectives related to the identified topic
4. Inventory what is available in the community and identify gaps
5. Determine a countywide measure/indicator of the identified topic (Alliance for Building Community 2008)

ABC establishes a delegation around an issue area to address a persistent problem in the community and develop action plans. ABC facilitates the meetings and helps to organize the delegation, but leadership and action is meant to come from those on the delegation itself. Since these delegations are centered on an issue-area, a highly successful leadership delegation in theory may become defunct as the issue is addressed. That said, the delegation could exist in perpetuity. ABC intends these delegations to be fluid, with new ones added (or removed) as needed. There are currently four leadership delegations, Education, Health, Income, and Environment. Functionally, however, the Health Delegation is the only one with traction (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011). The Income Delegation was only recently launched, and the remaining two do not have the capacity in terms of volunteers or community attention that the Health Delegation does.

Organizational Capacity

Having formed as a partnership from its inception and getting early funding, ABC had the good fortune to have greater organizational capacity than most fledgling programs from the start. Due at least in part to the close involvement of the MGJ Foundation, a number of things occurred during the inception of the Alliance for Building Community that strengthened the effort and assured some early successes. These were nearly all **capacity** building factors.

First, the MGJF consultants provided technical assistance that helped ABC think more strategically, including helping them to identify the process that they used to come up with the community goals and indicators. They also significantly built the capacity of ABC to develop effective community groups and volunteers. The MGJF consultants delivered a "training of the trainers" workshop to core ABC staff and volunteers on outcomes measurement and logic modeling. ABC then trained their participants in evaluation techniques to ensure that efforts around each group's issues and indicators were strategic and well thought out. Further, United Way as a primary partner added a measure of capacity in the form of early engagement as well. As a funding entity, United Way has leverage over many of their agencies to ensure broad participation, at least from the social services sector. Finally, through partner resources and MGJF funding, ABC was able to have paid staff very early into the process. All of the partners noted this was vital to keeping the momentum behind the initiative and providing greater organizational capacity (Quincy_Interview[5] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[3] 2/21/2011; Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010; Quincy_Interview[6] 11/19/2010) .

While ABC had a strong start, there have been recent transitions that will likely reorganize how they operate, the power structures, and perhaps the purpose of the organization. That said, there is a fairly strong sense from those involved that ABC itself is sustainable:

> There are diffuse networks in Quincy. There isn't one person who is the lynchpin that if you pulled them out, the program would unravel (Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011).

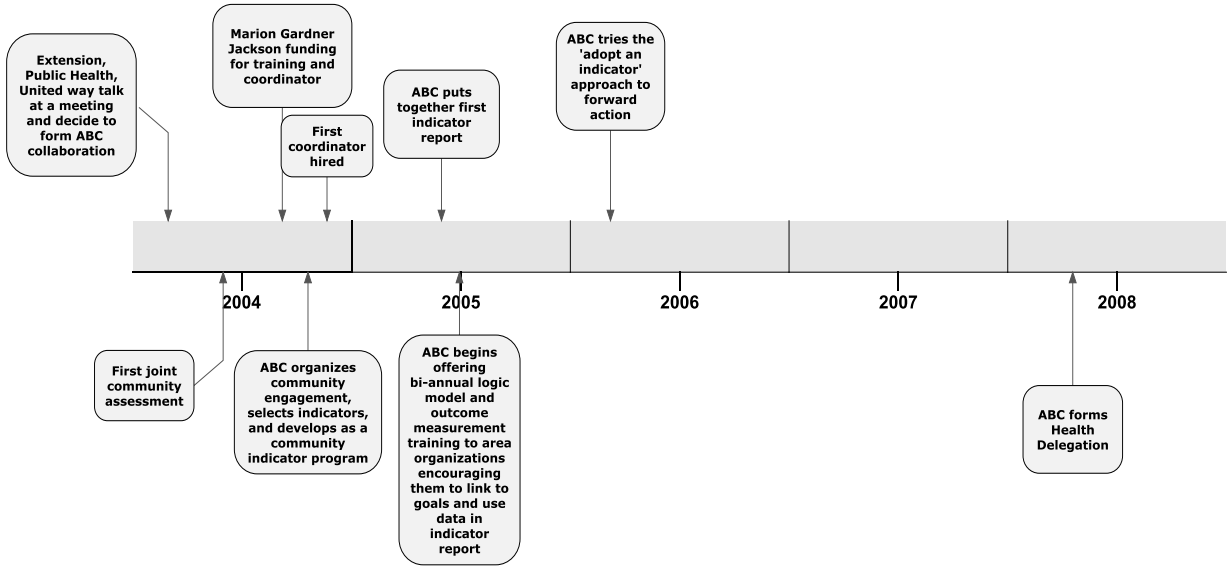
It is unclear, however, what the implications of these changes might be for organizational capacity. Actions taken may build capacity in one area, but reduce capacity in another. As

noted, two of the original three founders have taken positions elsewhere. This opens up the Steering Committee, and perhaps ABC itself, for restructuring (Quincy_Interview[3] 2/21/2011) .

Indicators, Implementation, and Leadership Delegations

ABC produced the first indicator report in 2005, with the aid of an academic consultant. The target audience for the report was the general public. Because of this, ABC ensured that the first indicator report included not only data trends, but presented the data graphically and with text. In addition, the report included an explanation of the importance of each indicator.

Figure 4.1 Major Events in ABC Development



4.4 Deconstructing the program – ABC and factors of interest

In each of the cases, I use the CIP heuristic to examine the list of concepts introduced in the first literature review. I discuss these factors of interest, as well as those added inductively, as they pertain to Quincy's path in developing a community indicator program and using it to facilitate change.

Figure 4.2 Factors from CIP Heuristic and Inductively Added

From CIP Heuristic

Creating a citizen agenda

- Citizen engagement and representation
- Deliberation for goal-setting

Creating responsive governance

- Learning Forums (data use, data analysis, dialogue, culture, leadership)
- Stakeholder involvement
- Linkages/integration (SEE table; planning, engagement, media, etc)

Process and mediating factors from the literature

- Leadership – individual, organizational, issue (for representation, improvement culture, learning forum)
- Cyclical processes (to revisit citizen input, ground truth data, data analysis).
- Institutional design (mainly discussed for engagement of citizenry, but also for integration of indicators, for carrying out the process of measurement and communication…)

Inductively added variables

The following is a list of factors from case observations that I will also discuss within the framework of the CIP heuristic and process/mediating factors.

Exogenous

- Capacity-builder/leverage: university, funding, volunteers, etc.
- Community ethos
- Community size and quality of social networks in community

Endogenous

- Well-respected organization or group of organizations
- Linkages of initiative (rather than linkages of program)
- Institutional resilience (people or organizations drop out and there is enough of a collaboration around the program to keep it going)
- Influence with partners (eg funding)

Creating a citizen agenda

Citizen engagement

As noted in the section on Genesis of the Program, the engagement effort in the development of the indicator program included hundreds of people – about half of which were estimated to

be general citizenry and half stakeholders (Quincy_Interview[14] 11/23/2011). This initial portion of the process was primarily about identifying community issues, not prioritizing per se. Metrics were later identified within the issue groups, which were stakeholder dominated (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

ABC also hosts an annual community building celebration, usually in March, which is open to the public. A featured speaker from a well-regarded community indicator program is usually the center of the breakfast event. In addition, a participatory activity always follows the speaker and other activities. ABC advertises this celebration through radio spots and its email and mailing lists. The Alliance for Building Community compiles these lists through the people involved with trainings, committees, and events. About 100 people typically attend, and although it is heavily from the nonprofit sector, the private sector contingent has been growing. Both Quincy mayors have also regularly attended the annual event (Quincy_Interview[2] 2/19/2011; Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

Representation

During the issue-identification stage, there were groups conspicuously absent in reasonable numbers. In particular, rural populations, lower-income, and the African American publics were not well represented. With regard to rural interests, there is a good deal of rural poverty in Adams County; access to health care is a key issue for this population, which is aging. (Quincy_Interview[5] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[16] 11/19/2010). The League of Women Voters led some discussions around racial issues, such as differences in income, education, and health in Quincy; engagement within the minority population itself, however, is low.

> There is a small minority population in Quincy, mostly African American. There, the usual suspects are less than five. The same five people serve on the boards and everyone wants one of them so they can claim diversity. It is a very white middle-class group that is engaged. (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010)

ABC attempted to involve low income and minority groups through focus groups. Quincy is geographically segregated; the minority population is concentrated in the northwest, and the working class is concentrated in the southwest (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011). ABC held the focus groups sessions at churches and community centers in targeted areas. Despite this, attendance at these sessions was poor relative to representation in the process by other groups (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

Organizational Representation and Leadership

Groups that serve the minority and low-income populations, such as member organizations of the United Way, were present throughout much of the process. When ABC assembled the first indicator report, however, measures of inequality within the interest areas were not included. Either the metrics did not "make the cut" or the data was unavailable. (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011).

> We don't deal with diversity issues at all. We've discussed whether it should be its own area or if it should weave though the other delegation groups. Our human rights commission wanted us to do a delegation on diversity issues… (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010)

The primary concern for data and representation is that there are racial disparities on a number of issues that ABC is bringing to the community's attention. Specifically, for issues such as obesity, rates are significantly higher in the minority population. Other key issues include

poverty and school performance. Members of the Steering Committee have expressed concern regarding adequate representation of disparities, so it is on the organizational radar. “In some delegations it (weaving of diversity) is happening and not so well in others.” (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010)

Deliberation for goal setting

Contrary to the CIP model drawn from the literature, there is no actual deliberation across interests at the level of the general citizenry in the case of the Alliance for Building Community. While arguments within the literature are unsettled regarding the outcome of deliberative participation across interests – whether it produces “re-cognition” or “provisional hegemony” – it theoretically serves to create a collective agenda.

For ABC, deliberation occurs within the issue groups, which are primarily stakeholders. Goal setting or prioritizing occurs between stakeholders, but amongst those in the same issue area. As noted in Chapter 1, like-minded deliberation is good for mobilization and participation (Mutz 2006), and this is more the province of responsive governance. ABC in Quincy illustrates this well; engagement around a specific topic of concern attracts involvement from interested residents and momentum for action (Quincy_Interview[2] 2/19/2011). This deliberation within interest groups helps to prioritize goals within an issue area, such as health. ABC does not yet have a governance mechanism that provides a community or stakeholder forum for debating the allocation of limited resources (staff, funding, etc.) for issues competing for attention (e.g. health or education).

Creating responsive governance

Learning Forums and data review

Learning forums, as discussed in the literature review in Chapter 1, have specific qualities. They exhibit a collegial and inquisitive environment, with norms of mutual respect. They also have a regularity to them that ensures on-going review and analysis of data and continuity (of people or structure) that ensures links to information networks. Learning forums are a critical component to the use and analysis of data – thereby providing the basis for identifying and monitoring trends in the community.

For ABC, forums for data review occurred at a variety of levels. The Leadership Team and issue leadership delegations have regularly rescheduled data sessions. There is also the Research and Evaluation Committee; its role to date has been to assist partner organizations in the evaluation of their efforts, but more recently the committee has discussed issues around data needs, collection, and integrity. Consequently, ABC has data review at the community level, at the individual issue level, and at the level of data development itself (Quincy_Interview[3] 2/21/2011).

While the Leadership Team and the Research and Evaluation Committee tend to be more episodic in their data review, the issue leadership delegations review data systematically (Quincy_Interview[5] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[3] 2/21/2011). Data review is part of their decision-making process, and the delegations are data-intensive. Because ABC conducts community surveys and assessments on a fixed schedule, the data review process has a built-in timetable. This process begins ahead of the community survey, as delegations occasionally add

questions to the survey when they identify new data needs. ABC generates indicators for the data review through a combination of available data and ongoing surveys in the community. Partners involved in the leadership delegations are sometimes the originators of different pieces of the existing data (Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011; Quincy_Interview[6] 11/19/2010).

Leadership, culture and collaboration

As indicated, most of the data review occurs within the issue leadership delegations. Since learning from the data requires more than simply regular review and initiatives in Quincy are born from the leadership delegations (Quincy_Interview[6] 11/19/2010), the process of review and the culture of the leadership delegations are areas of interest. As noted in the literature review, leadership, both that of the delegation and in the broader organization, can have a significant impact on the culture of the process.

In the case of Quincy, the backgrounds and education of the individuals that comprised the subgroups in the delegations also had a significant impact on the culture of the process. For example, the subgroup mainly comprised of individuals representing the private sector were less familiar with working with groups with differing interests (public interest issues) and bureaucratic and volunteer constraints. The pace of the process and dialogues were more frustrating for the members of this subgroup than for those mainly comprised of public and nonprofit sector individuals. Partly, the subgroup became a subgroup in order to have a group familiar with the culture of the private-sector and able to identify areas of influence within it.

This subgroup was very action-oriented, so it identified and took on relatively small, discrete projects contained wholly within their sphere of influence (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

In general, the Quincy region has a very collaborative ethos and this permeates the efforts of ABC. One interviewee attributes this, in part, to geographic isolation:

> Quincy is an isolated community. There are more resources (than in outlying areas) – organizations have a tendency to work more in networks than a town of a similar size that was only a half hour from a larger area (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011).

This prevailing mindset is so evident that several interviewees noted the "work together" nature of Quincy (Quincy_Interview[5] 2/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[3] 2/21/2011; Quincy_Interview[8] 3/15/2011; Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010; Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010), which manifests itself in a variety of ways. First, individual organizations were very forthcoming with information and data. In addition, the meeting environment was welcoming and engaging to the breadth of participants. For example, since laypersons were openly invited to the delegations, some of the meetings were spent explaining to participants how the data is collected and used around a particular issue; at another meeting, everyone involved might have similar training and be from stakeholder groups interested in moving the discussion forward on a very specific facet of the issue (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011).

> People were very amenable to that process. There was no negativity…engaging, not confrontational, not elitist. The process also helped build professional networks (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011).

This set a stage for easy exchange of information and for bringing alternative knowledge into the conversation (Innes and Booher 2010). One of the partners noted that the discussions led her to a much deeper understanding of the root cause (poverty) of many of the issues in Quincy (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010).

Linkages

The interest with regard to linkages in the practitioner community, the Community Indicators Consortium, has been predominantly about formally linking the community indicators to government performance measures. As a smaller city, this seems impractical or even pointless for Quincy and ABC. Metrics for government performance are thinner and networks are thicker in this setting. As indicated in the methods section, I am looking at broader linkages for CIP programs. This is summed in a table at the end of this chapter.

As a city of about 40,000, Quincy has relatively few city staff. ABC has some informal linkages to the city, such as involvement of staff in the leadership delegations. In particular, the city planner in charge of pedestrian and bicycle planning is on the Health Leadership Delegation and part of the Pioneering Healthy Communities Grant. Since two of the founding ABC partners, however, were the Adams County Health Department and University of Illinois Extension, county and state (extension) employees are the dominant public sector presence. Local

government has also been engaged through the mayor's involvement in the initial engagement in setting up the indicators and the annual events.

The more formal linkage to ABC's work is provided through governance, not government. With United Way as a key partner, many of their member agencies have gone through measurement training and logic modeling as part of the ABC effort. Because of these agencies' involvement with ABC and their training, they and other partners have an awareness of the broader community-wide indicators. There are, however, hurdles related to the state of the knowledge around causal chains that prevent further steps:

> We haven't gone to the level of connecting program-level outcomes with community-level change (indicators) because it isn't clear. You can draw those dotted lines, but they're not solid. (Quincy_Interview[6] 11/19/2010)

These issues speak to how ABC as an organization links to other entities, but linkages may vary between initiatives. What the initiative is and who heads efforts within it may influence which organizations or persons get involved. In the case of Quincy, two efforts within the Reducing Childhood Obesity initiative had very different levels of connection with key partners. The first, the school lunch effort, sought to transform the food environment in the local school system. Unlike the second effort, the exercise program, the school lunch effort did not include key participants and policy-makers from the onset of the discussion.

Program Planning

Since the issue leadership delegations are self-directed, planning for new initiatives occurs within the leadership delegations themselves. Individual leadership within these delgations is meant to be organic, and who is at the helm can influence the direction and program planning to some degree. A connection to planning within the organizations of the founding partners, as applicable, is assumed to occur. For other organizations, public, private, or nonprofit, a connection to their planning processes is first and foremost dependent on who is at the table. For example, groups such as the City of Quincy's Safe Routes to School, the YMCA, and the local hospital (Blessing) have been involved in the reduction of childhood obesity effort. Each entity has done planning within their scope of work around the issue. Some work through planning programs aimed at movement (Quincy, YMCA), nutrition (YMCA), and education (Blessing, YMCA). These efforts are discussed broadly and strategically within the realm of the Leadership Delegation, but the detailed program planning is dealt with by the individual organizations.

4.5 Bringing about Change and ABC in Quincy

This section describes an initiative to reduce childhood obesity headed by the ABC, including two separate efforts – one for increasing exercise for at-risk kids, and the other for improving healthy food options with the school lunches. While the effort around exercise produced a community wide funded program through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the effort to reform school lunches was thwarted early. I identify key points and processes in each effort for the purpose of better understanding how change might be facilitated through this CIP.

The Reducing Childhood Obesity initiative – a facilitated change and a thwarted effort

This section describes an initiative forwarded from within the Alliance for Building Community, including two separate efforts – one for exercise, and one for school lunches. While the effort around exercise bore fruit in the form of funding for a community-wide effort around exercise and nutrition, the latter effort met with a relatively early demise. I identify key points and participants in each effort for the purpose of better understanding how change might be facilitated through this CIP.

ABC formed the Health Leadership Delegation in 2008, although a task force on health preceded it. Given that one of the founding partners was the Adams County Department of Health, ABC started with a health focus. From 2006 to 2008, the role of the data was just about building awareness – so the focus was on publishing trends. With the delegation, the members narrowed the focus to obesity.

For the delegations, initiative development is a group process. The delegations have a more informal, exploratory nature than the "Adopt an Indicator" model, with review of the data as part of the process. The data was a "wake-up call" for obesity in Quincy (Quincy_Interview[2] 2/19/2011). When the Obesity Initiative was born, everyone knew that obesity was an issue, but people were not aware of how serious it was (Quincy_Interview[5] 2/16/2011). The Obesity Initiative divided into tracks: childhood (school, etc), community, health provider, and business (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011).

For the focus on childhood obesity in particular, the first step for ABC was to assess the data needs. The role of the data was to help form and frame where they were going to place emphasis. There was a lot of information on adult obesity and some information regarding childhood obesity at the state level, but very little information about childhood obesity at the county level. They did not really have data that parsed out kids. They involved the school nurse to access information, but it was incomplete. They are in the process of creating primary data from the school data; the school had not been tracking much information that would be useful to ascertain basics such as the percentage of obese and overweight children in K-12 schools. The school nurses had aggregated data; they needed to obtain the different pieces to calculate BMI (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011). This process encouraged them to assemble the data over 2010.

> We spent a good deal of time with the school numbers, because they were shocking. They were shocking to the school, and they were shocking to us. (Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010)

The YMCA used some of this data to write the Pioneering Healthy Communities grant (Quincy_Interview[2] 2/19/2011), and the childhood obesity subgroup was formed in the midst of this process.

The ABC model for leadership delegations is one that allows for leadership to emerge organically. Within the childhood obesity effort, different individuals took the lead on what they perceived to be the various pieces of the puzzle. The YMCA took on the fitness piece initially, and a volunteer from the private sector took an interest in the food environment in the local schools. These continued to be the primary leaders out of the childhood obesity effort.

School lunch – a thwarted effort

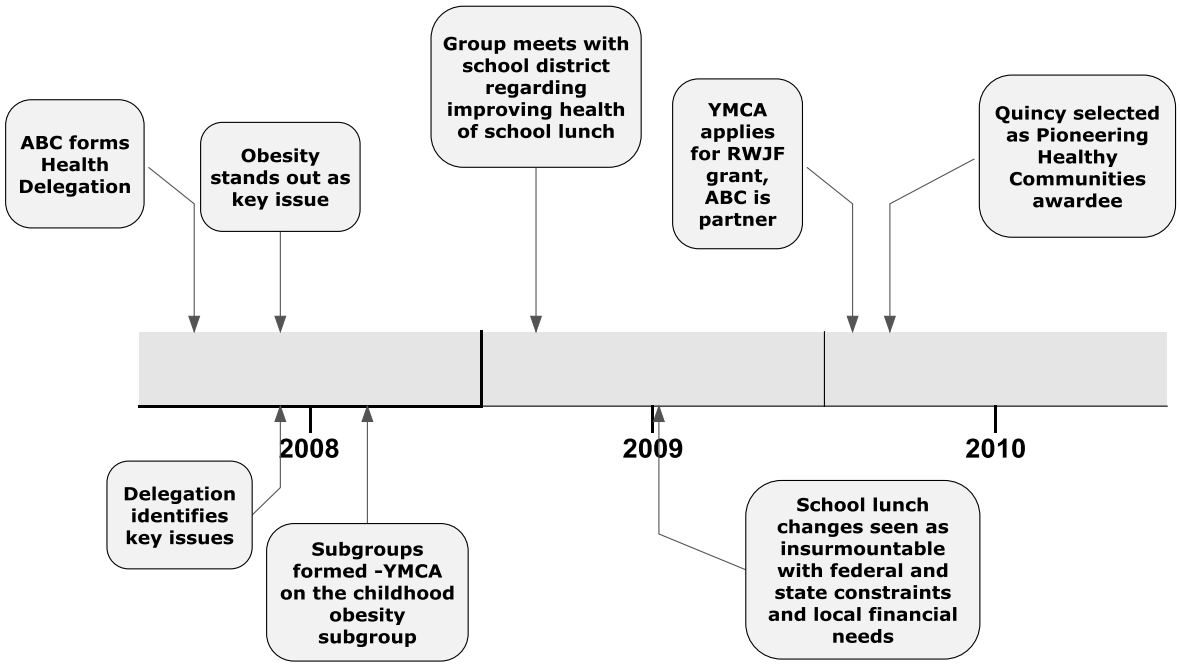
A private sector volunteer that headed the adult effort for the business group also served as the major force behind the school lunch effort. Because she was a parent of school-aged children, she was interested in that part of children's diets. "Our school lunches are absolutely appalling," was her assessment of the situation (Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010). The delegation members were interested in finding out what the options were (and how ABC could assist) in moving toward a healthier lunch platform (Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010).

Three members of the delegation went to talk with the director of food services for the school district. The director responded as though ambushed at first, though was more forthcoming as the two hour conversation proceeded (Quincy_Interview[15] 3/15/2011). The group found that the context that the food director operated in was much more complicated than they anticipated. Essentially, with a large number of students on free lunch, the director needed to meet state and federal regulatory criteria for the meals with no money and food that is provided to her.

> It was essentially a roadblock. There were no next steps.
> (Quincy_Interview[15] 3/15/2011)

The delegation may approach the issue from a different angle than food environment (Quincy_Interview[15] 3/15/2011). They have discussed the social marketing that is thrown at kids (Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011). Currently, neither the public nor the parochial schools have any messaging related to our wellness campaign (Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010). Some thought that the food environment might be more investment than the payoff (on moving the needle on childhood obesity).

Figure 4.3 Key Events in Reducing Childhood Obesity Initiative



Exercise funding – a facilitated change

As noted, the Director of the YMCA in Quincy was part of the early ABC efforts around public health issues about five or six years ago (Quincy_Interview[12] 3/15/2011). This began while they were still in task forces, before they even formed the Health Delegation. The director was on the health group that selected the indicators eventually used by the Health Delegation. At the beginning, a good deal of the work was assembling data through collection and survey and reviewing it with the intention of finding a direction; the YMCA was a relatively quiet participant in many of the meetings (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010). Because the YMCA tends to be program-oriented, the Director's focus was on figuring out their role.

> What is in it for the Y? What can I contribute on behalf of our agency? (Quincy_Interview[12] 3/15/2011)

Quincy has had a culture of inactivity; this is not a place where residents are out riding bikes (Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010). Based on ABC surveys, they estimate that most people do not exercise after fifth grade (Quincy_Interview[8] 3/15/2011). The Director had the YMCA staff try a variety of smaller events around getting the community more active. When the Health Delegation began a subgroup focusing specifically on childhood obesity, the YMCA launched Fit for the Future. The local Wellness Director conceived this program for obese youth, typically with BMI over 28, by doctor referral (Quincy_Interview[17] 3/16/2011). ABC presented the YMCA with an award for the program (Quincy_Interview[18] 3/16/2011).

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) awarded the national YMCA funding in 2008 to funnel support for local efforts on childhood obesity through its Pioneering Healthy Communities. This seemed like the perfect fit, as ABC had much of the data in place to bolster a strong application. The YMCA applied with ABC as a co-applicant. In the fall of 2010, Quincy was selected as one of 16 YMCAs in the second round of RWJF's Pioneering Health Communities.

> Without a doubt ABC helped get it moving…when I read the grant application it was clear that the PHC model would be a great next step. Being an organization that is a doer, it was a good way to move forward ABC's information (Quincy_Interview[12] 3/15/2011)

Many on the Health Delegation felt that this grant could take the local effort to the next level since the emphasis is on policy change, but exercise and nutrition will be the intended outcomes (Quincy_Interview[8] 3/15/2011; Quincy_Interview[10] 3/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[18] 3/16/2011; Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010; Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010).

Table 4.4 Initiative Events

Supposition: CIP facilitated change in YMCA funding for health issues through obesity initiative.			
Events / Observation	**Process-Tracing Test for Causation**	**Integration Category**	**Concepts from literature and inductively added**
ABC forms Health Delegation. YMCA is part of the delegation; school representatives are not part of the delegation.	Hoop – passed	Participatory Strategic Structural	▪ Stakeholder (minor citizen) Engagement ▪ Institutional Design
Delegation identifies key issues		Functional	▪ Learning Forum with like interests (participatory)
Obesity stands out as key issue	Hoop – passed	Functional	▪ Goal-setting
Subgroups formed -YMCA on the childhood obesity subgroup; they look for programmatic efforts that they bring to the effort.	Hoop – passed	Participatory	▪ Stakeholder Engagement ▪ Institutional Design ▪ Linkages
Members of group meet with school district representatives regarding improving health of school lunch	Hoop – passed	<u>Strategic</u> <u>Participatory</u>	▪ Stakeholder Engagement
School lunch changes insurmountable with federal and state constraints and local financial needs - group sees no change	Hoop – ***failed***	<u>Strategic</u> Structural Functional	▪ <u>Capacity builder/leverage</u> ▪ Institutional design
YMCA applies for RWJF grant, identifying ABC as a partner/co-applicant	Smoking gun – passed	Structural	▪ Stakeholder Engagement
Quincy selected as Pioneering Healthy Communities awardee			▪ Capacity builder/leverage
YMCA director asserts that Quincy would not have been chosen if not for the groundwork laid by ABC	Double decisive – ***passed***		

Exercise effort

School lunch effort

<u>Underlined</u>= quality was needed, but missing

4.6 Discussion

In facilitating community improvement through the use of a community indicator program, there are a variety of considerations and approaches that might be taken. In a smaller

community, one runs the risk of being too much or too little data-driven. Data availability and capacity are frequently quite limited compared to larger communities, leading to staff time, volunteer time, financial resources disproportionately allocated toward data collection and analysis rather than action. Conversely, a smaller community may be more likely to be an indicator program in name only, and very rarely utilize the data.

As the Adams County seat and the hub of the micropolitan area, Quincy actually had a significant amount of data in place. Many states do not have county-level behavioral risk factor data in place, but Illinois does, so a number of the stakeholders in the health sector were used to dealing with county-level data. This context made it more likely that Quincy would have data, use data, yet not be handicapped from action from a capacity standpoint (Quincy_Interview[11] 2/16/2011).

The partners launching the Quincy program investigated indicator programs extensively prior to and during the development by linking to the practitioner community – the Community Indicators Consortium (CIC). Consequently, ABC tried approaches identified as "best practices" of the CIC (Quincy_Interview[1] 11/16/2010). This gave the program an eye to implementation with the indicators from the beginning.

Nonetheless, ABC recognized early that one of the touted practices "Adopt an Indicator" was not a good fit. There are cultural differences between the two contexts that may inhibit the approach in Quincy and necessitate it in Reno. The Midwestern small-town ethos may not fit the model:

> We were not extremely persistent on making those connections (for the "adopt an indicator" contracts). It (the model) needs a champion….someone a bit pushier. (Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011)

As a small, relatively isolated, south Midwestern city, Quincy has thick social networks (Quincy_Interview[4] 3/15/2011; Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010). There is less need to connect the different parts of the community through a person serving as a bridge between different groups than in more diffusely connected places; people are used to being involved and working together. Rather than a representative making a contact and urging a commitment, stakeholders from the private, public, and nonprofit sector discussed and committed within the delegation, person-to-person. "…it is usually how anyone finds out about anything in Quincy" (Quincy_Interview[7] 11/16/2010).

5 Facilitating Change: Community Visioning to Community Indicators for Syracuse

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the Syracuse community indicator effort, now CNY Vitals. Unlike the other two cases in this document, the CIP in Syracuse has not been vested with a single entity or group over time. The indicators were first introduced in 2000 following an extensive community visioning effort, followed up by an additional report, and then picked up by the local community foundation. After collaborating on a third written report, the community foundation launched the community indicators as a website and added dedicated staff and implementation structures. Eventually, with the indicators now readily available to the public,

the community foundation board decided that applicants for funding requests must consider the data.

In the first subsection, I briefly outline Syracuse and some baseline statistics. The next subsection provides a history of the development of the community indicator program in Syracuse in detail, as well as an account of the current program, CNY Vitals. Next, I use the CIP heuristic to walk through the CIP process in Syracuse: Creating a Citizen Agenda and Creating Responsive Governance. In a different subsection for the last part of the model, Bringing About Change, I briefly follow a couple of initiatives forwarded by the lead organization for community indicators at the time. In the last subsection, I discuss limitations and observations particular to this case.

5.2 Orientation to Syracuse

Although in a speech in 1921, businessman J.P. Whitcomb described Syracuse as a manufacturing powerhouse (Preservation_Association_of_CNY 2011), the City of Syracuse, like many post-industrial cities, has been in general decline for a number of decades. From 1970 to 2000, the population declined by 50,000 residents, with the economy suffering. Syracuse currently has roughly 145,000 residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2009), but peaked in the 1950s at 210,000. It is the county seat of Onondaga County, and the metropolitan area has over 600,000 people. Demographically, Syracuse is about 56% white, and 44% minorities, primarily black or African American, Asian, and Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau 2009).

Table 5. 1 Syracuse U.S. Census Information

Syracuse Quickfacts	

Population (2010)	145,170
Persons under 18	23.0%
Persons over 65	10.6%
Minority	44.0%
Median household income (2006-2010)	$30,891
Unemployed, in labor force (2010)	5.9%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units (2005-2009)	$83,400
Home ownership rate (2005-2009)	41.2%
Poverty	
All persons below poverty level (2005-2009)	31.1%
Children, under 18, below poverty level (2005-2009)	44.1%
Families with female householder, no husband	44.8%
Educational attainment	
High school graduates, persons 25+ (2005-2009)	80.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher, persons 25+ (2005-2009)	25.6%
Major university	Yes

Syracuse struggled with economic vitality in the latter part of the 1900s, and still grapples with its lost industrial base. Education is the dominant employment sector, with SUNY Upstate Medical University and Syracuse University employing over 12,000 people. Retail is the second largest employer. Now, only a couple of the top ten employers in Syracuse are in manufacturing. The City of Syracuse also has a high percentage of poverty. With over 30% of the population below the poverty level and nearly 45% of all female-headed families below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau 2010), there are serious attendant social problems.

5.3 Program History and Development

Formation of the parent organization, engagement, and community goals

The community indicator program in Syracuse is rooted in the birth of an organization. Disturbed by the long-term downward population and economic trends and the general community malaise, some community leaders got an idea to begin FOCUS Greater Syracuse, a local non-profit. The organization's acronym, FOCUS, stands for Forging Our Communities United Strength. The group describes itself as:

> A community-wide project to unite, strengthen and advance Central New York—its people and its economy. By facilitating an atmosphere of positive change by and for the people, FOCUS seeks to engender a feeling of pride and a future of promise. (FOCUS 1999)

Those involved were graduates of Leadership Greater Syracuse, a community leadership training nonprofit in central New York. From that involvement, these local leaders were exposed to national leadership conferences, and organizers learned about citizen empowerment efforts in a variety of places around the country. Such experiences inspired them to do something similar in Syracuse.

Table 5. 2 Syracuse Community Indicators Summary

Community indicators initiated	2000
Founding organization(s)	FOCUS
Hosting organization(s) (if different)	CNY Community Foundation
Engagement	Citizen engagement for community goal-setting tangentially related to indicators; on-going stakeholder involvement
Selection of indicators	By stakeholders

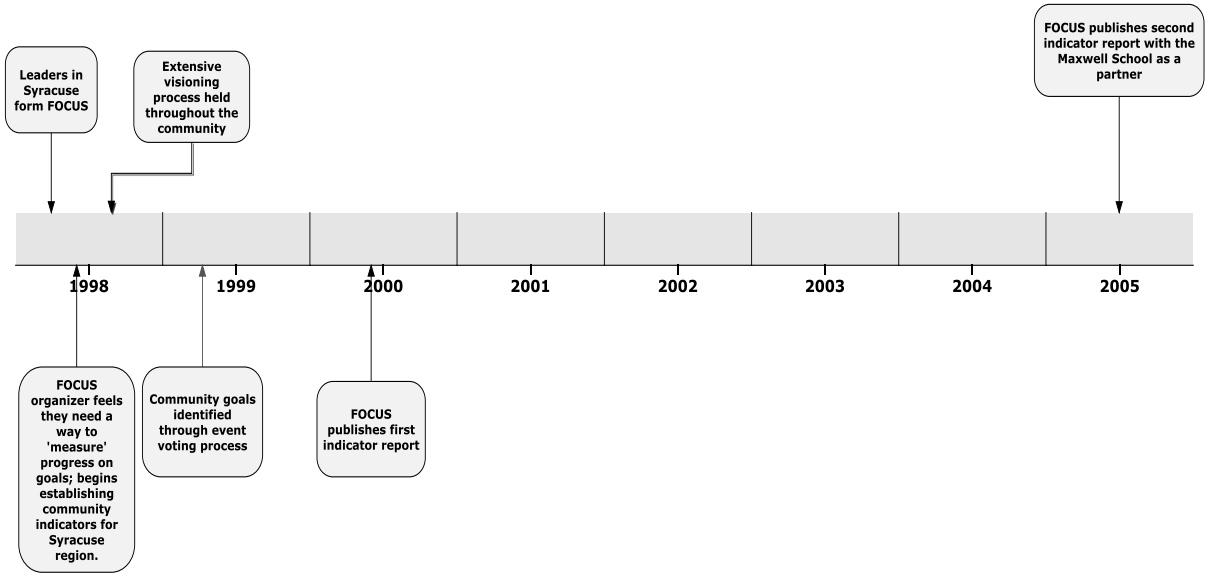
Primary Partners (over time)	**Report one**: FOCUS, United Way, CNY Technology Development Corporation, Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce; **Report two**: FOCUS and Syracuse University; **Report three**: FOCUS, Syracuse University, and CNY Community Foundation; **CNY Vitals**: CNY Community Foundation and Syracuse University. There are a long list of supporting partners to CNY Vitals.
Capacity (staff)	Originally, staff of 1 for founding organization; now dedicated staff varies, but it is between 1 and 2
Primary capacity builders	Syracuse University
Primary linkages	Originally, city government through FOCUS; now, non-profit governance through CNY Community Foundation
Implementation	Teams around sectors (e.g. Education, Economy, etc)

In 1997, they began to organize an engagement process loosely modeled on several visioning projects around the country, such as Chattanooga and St. Louis. From their discussions with the city, there had not been a comprehensive plan since 1911. There had been many smaller ones, but nothing comprehensive. (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011) The organizers wanted to ensure that the visioning process was far-reaching.

> Our purpose wasn't just to include people; it was also to rally pride and concern, and build a sense of responsibility. (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011)

The community-wide visioning effort began with a discussion amongst twelve organizers. From that group, they organized another meeting with the assignment of bringing one person each, but the effort grew almost exponentially with over 100 people at the next organizing meeting at the local community college (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011).

Figure 5.1 Development of Community Indicators in Syracuse



The organizing group talked about potential process approaches; they wanted a process that was clearly defined. The engagement processes also needed funding. FOCUS managed to get contributions for combined grants of about $65,000 from two community foundations to support the engagement effort (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011). For process, they chose an approach that brought the visioning session to the people, rather than the people to the visioning session. FOCUS organized local residents representing different backgrounds and interests for training in a consistent facilitation approach for leading engagement processes. This approach would be most likely to allow people from different backgrounds to feel most

comfortable, and also address other participation barriers (Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995) such as civic skills.

Facilitators had both geographic and demographic distribution; there were business-owners, suburbanites, inner-city residents, government, and teens. Furthermore, the city had recently formed Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT), which designates eight distinct regions in Syracuse and corresponding neighborhood associations (Syracuse_Interview[9] 4/6/2011). The organizers tapped this new network as a mechanism to reach all of the neighborhood areas for the sessions. One volunteer devoted herself entirely to identifying and recruiting potential facilitators for different areas. In the end, organizers provided two, two-hour training sessions to over 200 facilitators. These trained facilitators went back to the groups and regions that they represented and hosted visioning sessions on issues. The sessions took place in a wide range of locations: churches, schools, nonprofits and people's living rooms. They even held some sessions at some of the larger factories during lunchtime. The minimum attendance that they had at one was 10 people and the maximum was 300. (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011; Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011)

Organizers attempted to get input and representation from the different minority communities, although they were unable to reach as deeply into some as they would have liked. The African-American and Hispanic communities were relatively well-served; for example, they translated all of their materials into Spanish (Syracuse_Interview[7] 4/7/2011). There were sessions held in these neighborhoods and facilitators hosted two sessions in Spanish with great turnout. Organizers stated that they had insufficient Asian immigrant input (Chinese, Japanese, Hmong,

Thai, and Korean) (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011). Lower-income populations, which are correlated with minority-status, are difficult to reach and are therefore generally under-represented (Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995). Overall, however, the engagement effort was more far-reaching than many visioning efforts.

Facilitators recorded roughly 15,000 ideas from over 4,000 people at these visioning sessions throughout the Syracuse region. Because they wanted to ensure the information was well-documented and properly represented, they organized the information in several steps so that it could be better understood. First, organizers transcribed and recorded all of the original comments. Many of the statements were repetitive, but they kept track of the frequency of the comments as well. Next, nearly 100 volunteers helped to turn the comments into goals and code and then categorize the information (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011; Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011; Syracuse_Interview[7] 4/7/2011). The research department of the local community college provided guidance for this task. Volunteers coded each idea up to three different ways; this permitted filing under different, overlapping categories. The final grouping of ideas included eighty-seven. FOCUS organized the goals under six broad goal areas (see Table 5.2), with several sub-categories under each (FOCUS 2000)

Figure 5.2 Goal Areas

People

1. Education
2. Health and Human Services
3. Families (includes children and youth)
4. Discrimination
5. Community Building

Places

6. Environment
7. Downtown
8. Planning and Development
9. Neighborhoods (city town rural)
10. Transportation

Visitors

11. Visitor Attractions
12. Marketing Greater Syracuse
13. How we see ourselves (self-image)

Work

14. Workplace
15. Job creation
16. Economic development

Play

17. Parks and recreation
18. Arts and culture

Government

19. Crime and safety
20. Government services
21. Citizen involvement
22. Government cost and efficiency

Following the coding and grouping, FOCUS held a visioning fair to display the results of the sessions. They recruited a variety of special interests, such as organizations, businesses, and the university, to put up exhibits. Hundreds of people attended the visioning fair, which served the dual purpose of marketing the results of the sessions and refining the list of goals. Using a common facilitation method of "voting" on goals, each attendee was given three bingo chips (red for adults, blue for children) to vote on those they deemed most important. Following the visioning fair, FOCUS identified those with the most votes as "preferred goals." (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011; Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011)

From Visioning to Community Indicators

FOCUS introduced community indicators to their effort in 2000; the United Way of Central New York, the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, and Technology Development Organization

were co-sponsors in the development of the initial report (FOCUS 2000). It was an initiative largely championed by one of the FOCUS founders, who felt the group needed a way to measure progress on community efforts. This same advocate, however, understood the limitations of measurement from the start:

> How communities develop and improve isn't always intuitive.
> Some of the most important things are not measurable.
> (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011)

FOCUS began a process to develop a set of community indicators using some guidelines from the National Civic League and Redefining Progress (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011). Since their effort began with a broad engagement process, they felt comfortable working with a smaller group of experts from each of the goal sub-categories to develop the actual indicators. FOCUS hand-picked two or three people from each issue area, such as health care or economic development, that would have an understanding of and access to data that might be available. In the end, the indicator group included approximately 30 people and met several times (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011; Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011).

The indicator group began by identifying what they wanted to know in each category. They also wrestled with the criteria and extent of the measures. The goal was to identify ways to measure the community's progress broadly. In the end, they settled on four criteria for the selection of metrics; these criteria are outlined at the beginning of the original and subsequent reports (FOCUS 2000; FOCUS 2005; FOCUS 2010). At minimum:

1. The indicator measures something that can be changed by community effort.
2. The information comes from a reliable source.
3. The indicator is clear and understandable.

4. Most people would agree on whether the indicator should move up or down.

Although it wasn't listed in the reports, two other important criteria were added: the information must also be able to be tracked over time and be consistent across data sources (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011).

Most of the criteria may seem self-evident. It was surprising to many of those working on the report, however, to find that you could go to different (public) sources for the same information and it would be discordant. They found that this was, in part, due to the different approaches for recording the information, such as crime rates (Syracuse_Interview[5] 4/7/2011). Also, given the engagement emphasis of FOCUS, they wanted to pick measures that, if the community rallied around it, they could actually change. Finally, picking the direction the data should move for "community improvement" isn't always clear. For example, if DWI arrests are up one year, is that a good thing or a bad thing? (Syracuse_Interview[5] 4/7/2011)

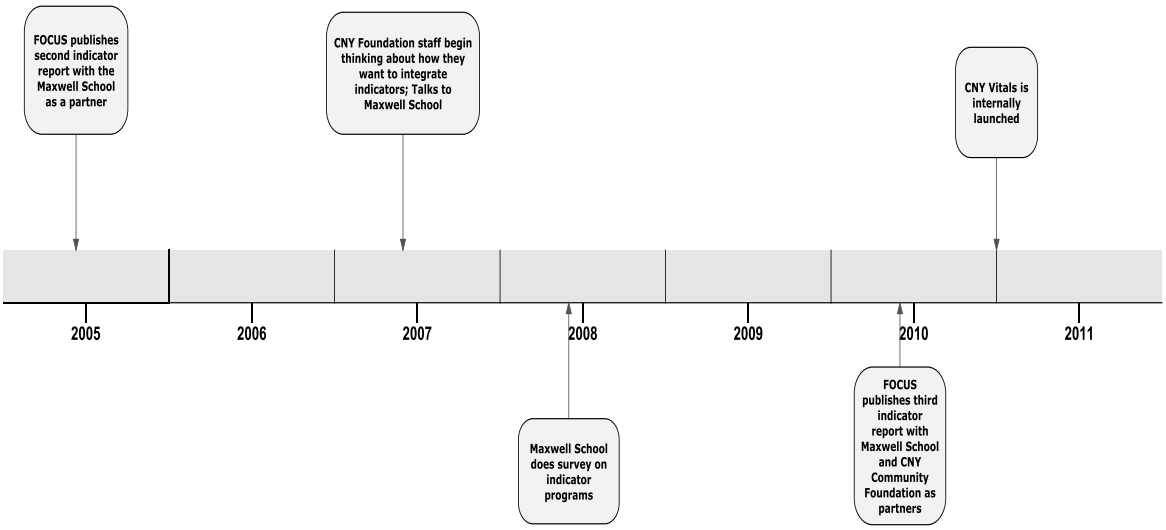
In the end, some of the measures identified and available matched well with goal categories and some did not.

> "It seemed like a daunting task to find measures for all 89 goals. Some goals were such that it would be difficult to measure progress…like eliminate racism." (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011)

There was a general feeling that the measures tied somewhat well to the goals, but not great. (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011; Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011; Syracuse_Interview[3] 4/6/2011) This may be due to the unavailability of some data or its inability to pass the vetting process. Also, in the indicator selection process, experts identified and wanted to measure certain problems in the community, such as youth crime, which residents were unaware of. In this way,

some metrics were chosen without regard to the goals, but it does show how information can lead public consciousness (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011).

Figure 5.3 Development of Partnership around Indicators



Community Indicator Iterations, the Maxwell School, and the CNY Foundation

Following the initial report, five years passed before the community indicators were updated again. This might be due, at least in part, to the fact that FOCUS did not integrate the indicators into their own work. Nonetheless, in 2004, the leader of FOCUS contacted an instructor at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University to help with the update. This instructor had participated in the visioning sessions, but was not involved in any of the organizing. Having worked with FOCUS on a number of other projects, however, she agreed to help. (Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011) The instructor selected a student from the Maxwell School to update and expand the indicators as an independent project.

The original 2000 report was relatively small, less than 15 pages; the 2005 report was another ten pages. The student added data through an informal iterative process between FOCUS and her instructor. She based much of the additions on indicator models from other cities found online and suggestions from FOCUS. Aside from updating and expanding the indicator set considerably, the 2005 report now had sustainability as an organizing framework. (Syracuse_Interview[3] 4/6/2011; FOCUS 2005) A FOCUS board member forwarded this shift because of a desire to have a way to relate the different issues taken up by the organization. This sustainability theme continued into the next report as well.

In 2008, the leader of FOCUS again approached her ally at Syracuse University, who was also the director of the Community Benchmarks Program, to update the community indicators (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011; Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011). This time, the project was assigned not to one student, but to an entire class for a semester. In developing this report, each student was assigned the task of looking at another indicator project; they examined a variety of different types of programs throughout the country. In the end, they replicated much of what Rochester (NY) was doing with community indicators. Given Rochester's location, they were also able to use some of the same sources, most of which were state databases. The students and the instructor had on-going discussions throughout the semester regarding issues around data selection and presentation. They debated the pros and cons of presenting data over time versus against comparative data, such as regional, state, or national. The final report incorporated both approaches, allowing users to apply the data in a way most informative for them (Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011). This effort became the 2010 Onondaga County Community Indicators Report.

It was while initiating the work for the 2010 report that the Community Benchmarks instructor met staff from the CNY Community Foundation. They began talking about the indicator update, and he was very interested and became a collaborator in the 2010 report. The community foundation had been looking into indicators and really wanted to do something on-going. They began exploring the idea of a partnership – a relationship providing timely information to the community and meaningful educational activities to the CB students. This began a permanent commitment, as updating the community indicators is now part of the curricula for the Community Benchmarks Program.

The Foundation, however, was interested in taking the indicator effort a step further. While one of the goals of all of the community indicator reports was to "generate discussion, debate and action around aspects of our community's … quality of life that need improvement" (FOCUS 2000; FOCUS 2005; FOCUS 2010), there was not as much use of the data as hoped. FOCUS launched the first community indicators report in the region, but they never really used the data themselves (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011). For example, there was no "systematic checking of the data against the goals" following the report update (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011). FOCUS hosts a monthly meeting to draw attention to a community issue. These "Core Meetings" used the data on occasion (Syracuse_Interview[3] 4/6/2011). For the most part, the organization viewed the report production itself as a service to the community; the need to track community data was viewed as another issue that they had highlighted. Stakeholders were involved in the development of the 2010 report; this makes the likelihood of them using the report higher, but it would still be ad hoc. The community foundation was interested in

getting organizations to pay more attention to data systematically (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011; Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011).

CNY Vitals

A critical question for many of those involved in indicator efforts relates to whether and how the data is used (Sawicki 2002; Holden 2009). Reports are often not read when they are completed (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011; Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011; Innes and Booher 2000). In order to get more attention to the data, the community foundation has taken the static report and made it dynamic (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011). They have developed a website for the effort, *CNY Vitals*, and began by populating the site with the last round of indicators (from the 2010 report) .

Purpose and structure

As a program of The CNY Community Foundation, CNY Vitals is used to fulfill elements of the Foundation's work. Described as the following:

> The Community Foundation plays a number of roles in the Central New York community. We aim to enhance the quality of life for those who live and work within the community by:
>
> - Encouraging the growth of a permanent charitable endowment to meet the community's changing opportunities and needs;
> - Providing vehicles for donors with diverse philanthropic interests which make giving easy, personally satisfying and effective;
> - Serving as a catalyst, neutral convener and facilitator by stimulating and promoting collaborations among various organizations to accomplish common objectives;

- Carrying out a strategic grantmaking program that is flexible, visionary and inclusive.(CNY_Community_Foundation 2011)

The CNY Vitals program serves as a tool to assist in the last two aims of the Foundation; it helps to organize collaborative teams around key issues and it provides information to the Foundation for strategic grantmaking. As the Foundation develops the site more fully, they want it have the capacity to "dial down" so that users can see things such as graduation rates by demographics or neighborhoods. The site is arranged so that the user can see the data around an issue and go to another tab to see the strategies to address it. Ideally, they would like to create a site that would allow the user to organize the information by themes, such as "early education." The structure of the website has also been designed so that it may be added to in terms of both breadth geographically (adding counties) and depth (adding information); the intent is to make it adaptable to meet the needs of the broader community and simple enough so that any layperson can use it (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011). Those involved hope that the indicator effort will drive funding, not just for the CNY Community Foundation, but others involved in community investment (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011; Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011).

The Foundation has formed and launched nine *Action Teams*: Arts, Culture, and Recreation; Civic Engagement; Demographics; Economy; Education; Environment, Transportation, and Planning; Housing; Human Services and Health; and Public Safety. Using these Action Teams, one for each indicator area, the Foundation seeks to serve as a convener around community issues (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011; Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011). The Foundation

established these Action Teams in order to create a model of data development and use that is sustainable, but also taps the structures and momentum already in place in the community (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011). Currently, the nine teams include more than eighty key people in the community in total, some from each indicator area (Syracuse_Interview[14] 12/2011). Having the right people is important, because they need to be knowledgeable enough to engage each other and they need to have ownership of the indicators. Ownership in this sense implies both data development and progress on "moving the needle" on that issue (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011).

Table 5.3 CNY Vitals

Entity	Activity
CNY Community Foundation	Program development
Action Teams	
Maxwell School benchmarking class	Indicator assembly, updating, and vetting
Action Teams	
CNY Community Foundation	
Action Teams	Issue planning
Action Teams	Issue action: funding, programmatic efforts
CNY Community Foundation	

The intention is for the Action Teams to be self-sustaining after their launch: to update their indicators and build networks and actions around their issue. By continuing to dedicate staff to maintaining the website, the Foundation expects this to ensure that the group stays connected with the indicators over time (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011). Due to the prominence and schedules of many of the Action Team members, however, the convening had some breakdown within certain teams (Syracuse_Interview[15] 1/31/2012). Partners in the CNY Vitals effort expect

that this will be resolved, in the end, by agency heads dedicating staff members to the Action Teams who have more reliable schedules (Syracuse_Interview[15] 1/31/2012).

Programmatic capacity and operation

The Syracuse program has many advantages in being set where it is. First, Syracuse University serves as an incomparable asset for tapping expertise regarding a variety of issues around policy development, the assembly and vetting of metrics, and the building of collaborative partnerships. Next, the CNY Community Foundation provides not only funding and staff support, but also brings its leverage in the community to bear in engaging stakeholders. Furthermore, the actual updating of the indicators themselves has essentially been "outsourced" without any expenditure on the part of the Foundation. As mentioned, the Community Benchmarks class will continue to update and facilitate assessment of the indicators annually. There will also be a Maxwell School Fellow to help manage the effort.

As implied by their name, Action Teams are expected to be the implementation arm of any collaborative initiatives that comes from CNY Vitals. Nonetheless, the CNY Foundation formalized their commitment to facilitating that action. They have dedicated a staff member and a Maxwell School fellow to maintaining the website, facilitating the Action Team activities, and creating action around the information. Furthermore, the CNY Foundation board of directors decided in mid- 2011 to use CNY Vitals with future grant applications (Syracuse_Interview[16] 1/30/2012).

Indicators

As noted, although a large visioning process through FOCUS was the impetus for the initial indicator set, engagement around updating the indicators and developing CNY Vitals has occurred essentially through stakeholders. The Foundation anticipates engaging residents again around the indicators through Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT), perhaps as part of the updating process (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011). The TNT districts in Syracuse are a mechanism for planning and are linked to how it distributes HUD Community Development Block Grants. Since TNT also functions as neighborhood associations, it can also provide access to residents' local knowledge on community issues.

5.4 Deconstructing the program – FOCUS, CNY Vitals, and factors of interest

In each of the cases, I use the CIP heuristic to examine the list of concepts introduced in the first literature review. I discuss these factors of interest, as well as those added inductively, as they pertain to Syracuse's path in developing a community indicator program and using it to facilitate change.

Figure 5.4 Factors from CIP Heuristic and Inductively Added

From CIP Heuristic

Creating a citizen agenda

- Citizen engagement and representation
- Deliberation for goal-setting

Creating responsive governance

- Learning Forums (data use, data analysis, dialogue, culture, leadership)
- Stakeholder involvement
- Linkages/integration (SEE table; planning, engagement, media, etc)

Process and mediating factors from the literature

- Leadership – individual, organizational, issue (for representation, improvement culture, learning forum)
- Cyclical processes (to revisit citizen input, ground truth data, data analysis).
- Institutional design (mainly discussed for engagement of citizenry, but also for integration of indicators, for carrying out the process of measurement and communication…)

Inductively added variables

The following is a list of factors from case observations that I will also discuss within the framework of the CIP heuristic and process/mediating factors.

Exogenous

- Capacity-builder/leverage: university, funding, volunteers, etc.
- Community ethos
- Community size and quality of social networks in community

Endogenous

- Well-respected organization or group of organizations
- Linkages of initiative (rather than linkages of program)
- Institutional resilience (people or organizations drop out and there is enough of a collaboration around the program to keep it going)
- Influence with partners (eg funding)

Creating a citizen agenda

Citizen engagement and representation

Looking at the history of the development of community indicators in Syracuse, FOCUS preceded the development of the first indicator effort with an extensive engagement process. Although the final selection of goals presented limitations for representation, the engagement effort was heroic, in terms of both scale and reach. That said, there was only modest connection between this engagement process and the indicators developed. Later iterations primarily used models from other communities and stakeholder input to remove or augment the indicator set.

Deliberation for goal-setting

Similar to observations in Chapter 4, there is no actual deliberation across interests at the level of the general citizenry. Even in the initial engagement process, the process of ranking goals was not done through deliberative processes. Since the process of deliberation exists to, theoretically, create a collective agenda, this lack of deliberation around the goals means that the residents did not prioritize the goals. Functionally, prioritization has and will occur between stakeholder groups within the same sector. Across sectors, it is likely that goal-prioritization will occur through the Foundation board of directors, as manifest in funding priorities.

Creating responsive governance

Learning forums, data review, and leadership

Although earlier community indicator efforts in Syracuse did not include data-learning and learning forums into the process, the CNY Vitals effort has integrated it as part of its institutional design. The updating process that occurs through the Maxwell School benchmarking class ensures an automatic minimum annual review of the data. While only facilitating the effort, the Foundation has expressed a desire for data review to occur more frequently. It is too early to tell what the culture or the opportunity for interaction amongst the partners will be in the data review process; whether stakeholders will bring the Foundation's vision of the collaborative Action Teams into fruition or they will participate in some lesser way.

Leadership style and interest has influenced the development process and the use of community indicators in Syracuse significantly. FOCUS viewed the initial development of the indicators as a service and an end in itself, secondary to their primary interest in citizen

engagement. FOCUS considers itself a launcher or highlighter of initiatives. This made the indicators less likely to be used, given that the lead agency itself was not actively using them. When the CNY Foundation came on as a partner, there was a clear interest in the use of community indicators, because "it helps the Community Foundation carry out its mission." (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011) They led the latest iteration of community indicators and facilitated the development of collaborative structures around them with indicator use in mind.

Stakeholder involvement and community culture

While there is now leadership in place that supports data-learning and collaboration around the information, it is not clear what the ethos of Syracuse is with regard to a new model of operation or community action. On one hand, while one interviewee described Syracuse as a "can't do" community (Syracuse_Interview[11] 4/7/2011), another indicated it was more of a "persevering" community; this was to imply that many residents understand change is slow, but it comes for important things (Syracuse_Interview[15] 1/31/2012). One interviewee indicated that:

> A resistance to change is part of the culture, but one-on-one people want to see things change. (People in Syracuse are) honest, skeptical….they would embrace change if they think the potential for change is real. (Syracuse_Interview[9] 4/6/2011)

As Action Teams are assembled, the predisposition of the community for collaborating around an issue may have a significant impact on the ability of the CNY Vitals program to facilitate change. To date, while Action Teams have been formed, they have met infrequently (Syracuse_Interview[15] 1/31/2012). This may not be indicative of anything other than the slow process of figuring out scheduling for diverse schedules. If, however, members of Action Teams

participate primarily by providing data absent from any collective meetings, then there is not much opportunity for dialogue, data-learning, or change-in-action (Argyris and Schon 1994; Moynihan 2008). Consequently, the primary contribution of the indicator program would be to provide public access to community data.

Linkages/integration

As noted, the Community Indicator Consortium has been interested in formal linkages to government performance measures. This has not occurred in Syracuse, although other connections to government at a variety of levels have occurred throughout the development of the community indicators. For a city its size, Syracuse is not deeply staffed. Within the city structures, however, there have been close connections to FOCUS. The director of planning sits on the FOCUS board; in 2005 a comprehensive plan was completed for Syracuse, which connected to the FOCUS engagement process goals. As noted earlier, FOCUS also connected early with the then-fledgling TNT neighborhood associations for community outreach. Connections to governance and government for CNY Vitals are still forming. The Foundation has strong ties in the region with both, and governmental representatives at a variety of levels are part of the Action Teams. Furthermore, now that community indicators are affiliated with the Foundation as CNY Vitals, the indicators will be more formally linked with governance through funding.

Program Planning

Program planning is intended to occur through the Action Teams, although new initiatives could be incentivized through CNY Community Foundation funding. The Action Teams are meant to be self-directed, and planning for new initiatives occurs organically within the Teams. The primary team that is "up and running" is Education, which was already organized as the Literacy Coalition (Syracuse_Interview[12] 7/22/11). This team was assembled earlier around a literacy initiative begun at the Foundation, and now self-sustaining. Essentially, Action Teams are modeled after the literacy coalition (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011); they are meant to meet periodically, review data, and organize initiatives around key issues.

Process and mediating factors

Other factors affecting the impact of a community indicator program in Syracuse stand apart from the linear stages in the CIP model. These are process and mediating factors such as *leadership* (individual, organizational, issue), *community ethos*, the quality of the *social networks* of the community, the *cyclical quality* of the process, and the *reputation* of the hosting organization(s) and its *resilience* to change. Some of these elements came into play in particular stages of the development of the community indicator program, while others are in the background.

In this case, individual leadership guided both the birth of community indicators in Syracuse and their transfer to another organization. The push to add indicators to the follow up on the community goals came from one of the key organizers from FOCUS, but she eventually left to pursue other activities. Consequently, while the indicators were periodically updated, there was

no vigilance regarding their use or relationship to progress on established goals. Organizational leadership in relation to the CIP has come primarily from the Foundation, as evidenced by the development of CNY Vitals, yet that too was driven by one person. Issue leadership has occurred around literacy in the community, but predating CNY Vitals.

As suggested, the qualities of the community that the indicator program is set in can affect its impact, reach, and sustainability. The community ethos of Syracuse might be summed as: the promise of persistent hard work toward change, once past a deep-seated skepticism that change will happen. This implicates the need for efforts that can be sustained long enough to engage cynical residents. One-shot efforts would be particularly ineffective in such a setting, so CNY Vitals establishing permanent Action Teams versus ad hoc approaches may be an approach better suited to the Syracuse context. Also, given the general reluctance toward getting involved, social networks did not appear to be as diffuse in Syracuse as in places of strong collaborative tendencies. One person, such as the leader of FOCUS or of CNY Vitals, tends to serve as the hub to pull the others together. Such a situation limits the possibilities of connection, but also makes the organization less resilient in that it is dependent on that leader remaining.

The Syracuse effort lacked any true “cycling” in its approach to goal-setting or indicator development until the development of CNY Vitals. Many of the activities were “events” rather than part of an on-going, defined process. While the indicator report was updated every five years in its follow-up two reports, there was not systematic assessment of the data against

community conditions. The Maxwell School Benchmarking class did assess the report with regard to “best practices” for community indicators, but there were no structures in place for regular data review and use.

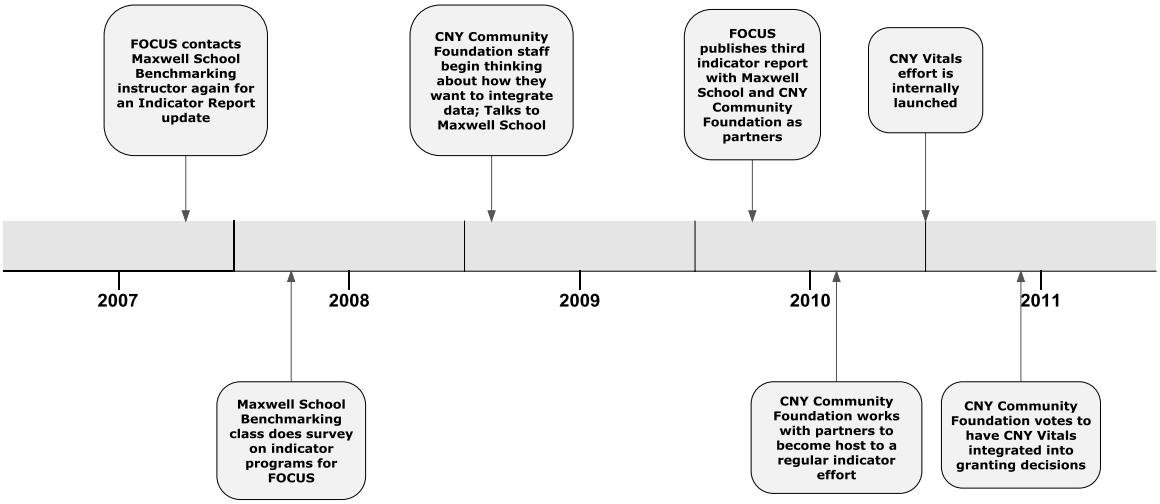
5.5 Bringing about Change and Community Indicators in Syracuse

This section outlines initiatives in Syracuse forwarded through the organizations at the head of the community indicators effort at the time. Each effort had a different lead group, since community indicators have been forwarded by collections of different actors over time. Chronologically, the efforts are discussed in reverse order, with the most recent “facilitated change” forwarded from within the CNY Community Foundation discussed first. The “thwarted effort”, forwarded by FOCUS, has looser links to the indicators per se, which will be discussed.

CNY85 – a facilitated change

This section outlines an initiative forwarded from within the CNY Community Foundation, which has its beginnings in the final hardcopy of the community indicator report. In this final document, the Foundation became a collaborating partner before taking on the lead on the indicator efforts in Syracuse. I identify key points along the path to the Foundation using community indicators for a change in funding protocol.

Figure 5.5 Community Indicators and Community Funding Initiative



As noted, the CNY Community Foundation became involved with the community indicators originally in collaboration with FOCUS and the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. FOCUS and the Maxwell School began again to partner in 2008 in the update of the community indicators (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011; Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011). The Benchmarking course instructor had the class surveying other indicator programs to provide information for the next FOCUS community indicators report.

It was roughly at this time that the Foundation connected to the FOCUS indicator effort through their mutual connections to the Maxwell School. The Foundation enjoys the benefit of two fellows assigned to them annually from the Maxwell School; the Benchmarking course instructor began discussing the community indicator effort with one of the Foundation fellows, as she was looking for information requested by the Foundation (Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011). The head of the Foundation's Grants and Community Initiatives was interested in

information on community indicators, and shortly thereafter he and the Benchmarking course instructor met on campus (Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011). Due to their interest in developing and using community indicators, the Foundation connected to the indicator update in progress.

In 2010, FOCUS published the third indicator report with Maxwell School and CNY Community Foundation as partners. This report was more extensive, with time series and comparison data. Nonetheless, the Foundation was interested in moving from a static report to something that would be able to be actively used by a wide range of audiences.

> What tends to happen in our community is when the report comes out, it is not typically read. It goes on people's shelves. Rather than just putting those disparity reports on the website…we probably still will…but we want to take the accurate, meaningful data out that is embedded in the indicators report. So, you'll see under education – graduation rates or literacy rates, and you'll see the demographics. I might say overall 46% aren't ready for kindergarten, but it is 90% of this particular group. You can dial down with the website. It is hopefully creating themes. (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011)

Following, and even during, the development of the third indicator report, the Foundation began conversations with Syracuse University about annual updates to the information with the Benchmarking class (Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011).

In mid-2010, the Foundation began convening leaders around the idea of up-to-date indicators (Syracuse_Interview[5] 4/7/2011), introducing community leadership to a formalized community indicator program.

> FOCUS was the catalyst to work on the community indicators report – they viewed it as a service to the community. Never really intent on using the data themselves. …the Foundation wants to take it to a whole new level. I (VP of Grants and

> Community Initiatives) want organizations to pay attention to the data (Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011).

They launched the effort internally in early 2011 by securing a website domain, CNY Vitals. By mid-2011, the Foundation was in the process of building the website. The indicators from the previous report were up, and they were sorting out indicator categories for their effort (Syracuse_Interview[12] 7/22/11).

The leader of Grants and Community Initiatives, who had headed the CNY Vitals effort, was interested in seeing a change in the way funding was done at the Foundation.

> There has been a movement to get groups to work together more collaboratively. I hope that the data will serve as a mechanism to help identify those issues for collaboration. (Syracuse_Interview[8] 4/13/2011)

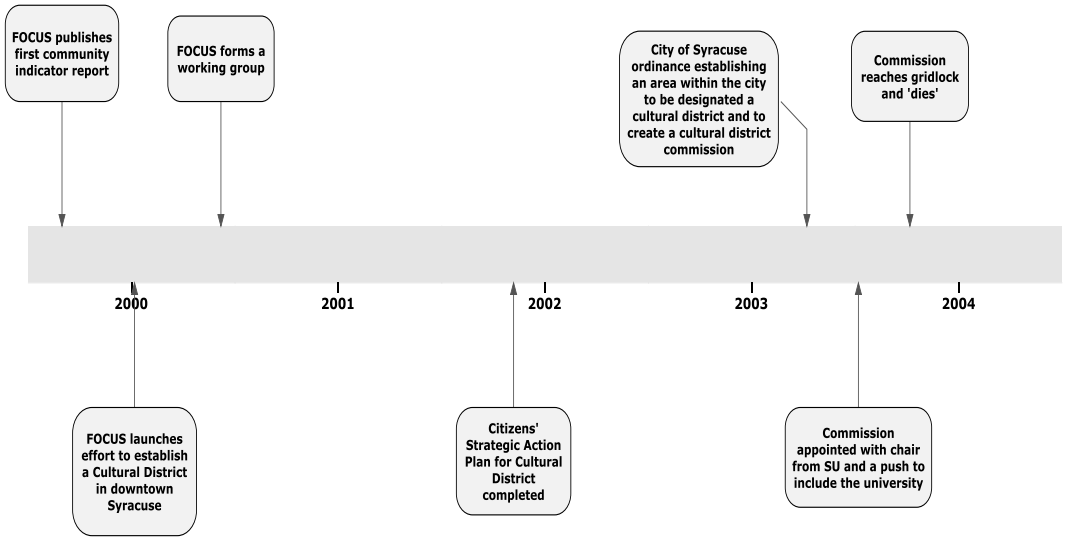
In mid- 2011, community indicators became part of the funding process; the Board of Directors at the Foundation voted to use CNY Vitals to guide grant decisions for the CNY85 – the granting initiative around the Foundation's 85th anniversary (Syracuse_Interview[16] 1/30/2012). The giving project awards one $8,500 grant each quarter to an area organization, as well as a larger $85,000 grant for an innovative and collaborative impact project.

Syracuse Cultural District – a thwarted effort

Following the publication of the first indicator report, FOCUS launched an effort to establish a Cultural District in downtown Syracuse. While the effort wasn't launched directly in connection with the indicators, the information regarding the state of the downtown was implicitly "in the background."(Syracuse_Interview17 1/30/2012) The 2000 indicator report included a collection of declining retail occupancy rates for downtown, but not much in the way of detail. Many of

those organizing the effort, however, had wanted to see something done for quite some time. The idea of an arts district as an approach to revitalization had been done in a number of cities around the country, as those involved with Leadership Greater Syracuse were aware.

Figure 5.6 Cultural District Initiative



Shortly after the decision to forward a cultural district, FOCUS formed a group of stakeholders and interested parties. This comprised a mix of residents and representatives from the city, county, and major cultural institutions. The working group was in partnership with the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, which was a subgroup of the Chamber of Commerce who own downtown businesses. In 2002, they had completed a “Citizens’ Strategic Action Plan,” and petitioned the city for designating a cultural district. In 2003, the City of Syracuse alders passed an ordinance establishing an area in the city to be designated a cultural district and to create a corresponding cultural commission.

Table 5.4 Initiative Events

Supposition: CIP facilitated the change in CNY Community Foundation funding			
Events / Observation	**Process-Tracing Test for Causation**	**Integration Category**	**Concepts from literature and inductively added**
FOCUS publishes first community indicator report published	Hoop; passed	Participatory	▪ Citizen engagement ▪ Stakeholder engagement ▪ Leadership (organizational)
FOCUS launches effort to establish Cultural District; forms working group	Hoop; passed	Strategic Structural Functional	▪ Stakeholder engagement/linkages to government
Citizens' Strategic Action Plan completed	Straw in the wind	Functional	▪ Stakeholder involvement
City ordinance establishing Cultural District and Commission	Hoop; passed	Strategic Structural	▪ Leadership (organizational) ▪ Well-respected organization
Commission chair appointed	Straw in the wind	Structural	
Commission reaches gridlock and 'dies.'	Hoop; ***failed***	Strategic Participatory	▪ Community ethos ▪ Leadership ▪ Stakeholder involvement/ linkages
FOCUS contacts Maxwell School Benchmarking instructor again for an Indicator Report update	Straw in the wind	Participatory Functional	▪ Stakeholder Engagement ▪ Capacity builder/leverage ▪ Leadership/social networks
Maxwell School Benchmarking class does survey on indicator programs for FOCUS	Straw in the wind	Participatory Functional	▪ Stakeholder Engagement ▪ Capacity-builder/leverage
CNY Community Foundation staff begin thinking about how they want to integrate data; Talks to Maxwell School	Hoop; passed	Participatory Functional	▪ Stakeholder Engagement ▪ Capacity builder/leverage
FOCUS publishes third indicator report with Maxwell School and CNY Community Foundation as partners	Hoop; passed	Participatory Functional	▪ Capacity-builder/leverage
CNY Community Foundation works with partners to become host to a regular indicator effort	Straw in the wind	Participatory Functional Structural	▪ Leadership ▪ Stakeholder engagement ▪ Institutional design ▪ Cyclical process
CNY Vitals effort is internally launched	Straw in the wind	Participatory Structural	▪ Stakeholder engagement ▪ Institutional resilience
CNY Community Foundation Board of Directors votes to have CNY Vitals integrated into granting decisions	Smoking gun; **passed**	Participatory Structural	▪ Stakeholder engagement ▪ Institutional design ▪ Data use, data analysis

CIP funding effort

Arts District effort

Underlined= quality was needed, but missing

(George and Bennett 2005; Bennett 2010)

While this felt like a significant success to organizers, “the arts district met a relatively early demise.” (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011) Organizers have attributed the roadblock to a few things, but mainly the pre-existing Business Improvement District (BID) and the push to include Syracuse University in the district. While the BID, a project of the Metropolitan Development Association (MDA), and the cultural district overlapped somewhat, the cultural district extended beyond the BID. The MDA did not want resources drawn away from the BID, and that created a resistance to the cultural district. In addition, the mayor appointed as the chair of the Cultural District Commission a representative of the University. Members of the Commission became frustrated, “because most of the discussions were about how to include the University in the district.” (Syracuse_Interview[1] 4/5/2011)

5.6 Discussion

The Syracuse case is both rich with information and digression from my topic. While the process of developing the actual CIP in Syracuse was protracted, it provided interesting insights into how CIPs are commonly used and challenges with each. CIPs are commonly used to get attention around an issue. Essentially, the intention of FOCUS in embarking on this process of both visioning and indicators was just that.

> FOCUS is a starter of community-wide conversations…. it amplifies it to a level until people who have the wherewithal pick it up… acts as a megaphone to amplify an issue until everyone can hear it and an “implementation” group picks it up. (Syracuse_Interview[3] 4/6/2011)

While this is often an important role for performance data (Behn 2003), FOCUS did not fully exploit the role that community data could play in that amplification process.

Further, because the visioning process and the goals were constructed without regard to indicator development in the future, there was a disconnect. This essentially left both the visioning process and the indicator development without an initial conceptual framework, contrary to best practice recommendations (Sawicki 2002; Dluhy and Swartz 2006). Yet, the engagement process was wildly successful in terms of numbers and range of persons engaged. The visioning process, at the time it occurred, was its own end. As a precursor to another endeavor, it may not have had the amount of resources and energy behind it that it had. Oddly, the disconnect may have made the engagement process more successful. In the first report, however, the indicators were only loosely related to the community goals.

How does this "visioning" beginning impact future community engagement with regard to the budding community indicator program – CNY Vitals? Given the continued collaboration with the original partners, the Foundation seems committed to continuing this ethos of engagement in its indicator effort. FOCUS tapped from the onset the newly formed TNT neighborhood groups. CNY Vitals organizers have indicated they will tap these structures again as part of the indicator updates (Syracuse_Interview[6] 4/6/2011).

Another common use for data is for problem-identification (Behn 2003). The Foundation is intent on using the CIP not only to highlight issues in the community, but also to identify worrisome trends. The challenge with data as a means of problem-identification is that data can be incomplete or inaccurate. Another asset to on-going engagement with citizenry is that it allows for "local knowledge" (Innes and Booher 2010) to be used to both truth-check the indicators for measurement accuracy and to identify what indicators are missing in the effort. Further, perceptions of problems often hang on a long time after progress on the issue. The

cyclical process provides for information exchange in both directions, and indicators are most influential in collaborative learning processes (Innes and Booher 2000).

A community foundation, such as CNY Community Foundation, is a natural advocate for a robust community indicator program. Many programs around the country are hosted by grantmakers or in collaboration with grantmakers. Foundations have a vested interest in having data around an issue before they deploy resources. Moreover, a community foundation, unlike a United Way hosted program, addresses the broad range of interests in the community, not just socio-economic issues.

6 Trusting the Process: Jacksonville Community Council and Community Change

6.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the Jacksonville community indicator effort, one of the most recognized CIPs in the country. The community indicator effort in Jacksonville has its history firmly rooted in government accountability, as the organization, Jacksonville Community Council, Incorporated (JCCI), began during an effort to rein in problems in their community. The Quality of Life (QOL) Indicators Report was first introduced in 1985, and has become an essential part of the community. Unlike many other CIPs in the country, the JCCI has integrated a formal issue study and implementation process into its indicator monitoring effort. This process, in which they annually select an indicator to target effort toward, involves a three year process that includes an in depth study and a stakeholders' implementation effort. One of its recent study-implementation efforts, Infant Mortality, was successful not only with getting programs in place, but also with moving the indicator trend.

In the first subsection, I briefly outline Jacksonville and some baseline statistics. The next subsection provides a history of the development of the community indicator program and its associated study process, as well as an overview of the current process. Next, I use the CIP heuristic to walk through the CIP process in Jacksonville: Creating a Citizen Agenda and Creating Responsive Governance. For the last part of the model, Bringing About Change, I briefly follow

the Infant Mortality initiative in a different subsection. In the last subsection, I discuss observations particular to this case.

6.2 Orientation to Jacksonville

Jacksonville is located in the "First Coast," northeastern part of Florida. It has both coastal access from the Atlantic Ocean and a river port on the St. Johns River, which has been key to its development. It has the largest deep-water port in the South, and that has been touted as the focus of economic revitalization efforts by the new mayor (Mueller August 29, 2011). Jacksonville has several institutions of higher education, including the University of Northern Florida. The flagship of the state university system in the region, however, is the University of Florida in Gainesville. Jacksonville is the county seat of Duval County, and the two consolidated to a single government by referendum in the late 1960s (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011).

As the largest city in Florida, Jacksonville currently has over 800,000 residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2009), and has been growing by significant percentages through most of its history. The Jacksonville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is made up of five counties: Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns, and has a population of nearly 1, 370,000 (JCCI[1] 2010). Demographically, Jacksonville is about 56% white, about 30% black or African American, about 8% Hispanic, about 4% Asian, and the remainder smaller amounts of other races. (U.S. Census Bureau 2009).

Table 6.1 Jacksonville Overview

Jacksonville Quickfacts	
Population (2010)	811,833
Persons under 18	24.4%
Persons over 65	10.5%
Minority	37.2%
Median household income (2006-2010)	$48,829
Unemployed, in labor force (2010)	5.9%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units (2005-2009)	$171,500
Home ownership rate (2005-2009)	63.2%
Poverty	
All persons below poverty level (2005-2009)	14.3%
Children, under 18, below poverty level (2005-2009)	20.4%
Families with female householder, no husband	27.3%
Educational attainment	
High school graduates, persons 25+ (2005-2009)	86.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher, persons 25+ (2005-2009)	24.0%
Major university	No

6.3 Program History and Development

Formation of the organization

The Jacksonville Community Council, Incorporated (JCCI) formed in 1975 following the *Amelia Island Conference* the previous year, where the idea for the organization was born. The "movers and shakers" from all walks of life from the region came together at the conference to figure out how to tackle the major issues that faced Jacksonville (Jacksonville_Interview[7] 5/03/2011; JCCI[2] 2010). One of the recommendations from this event included the creation of an organization that could be a "neutral convener," bringing citizens together to examine major quality of life issues. That neutral convener became JCCI, and that has remained a core role of

the organization ever since (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011; Jacksonville_Interview[7] 5/03/2011; Swain 2001; Warner 2006).

Table 6.2 Overview of Jacksonville CIP

Community indicators initiated	1985
Founding organization(s)	Jacksonville Community Council, Incorporated
Hosting organization(s) (if different)	Same
Engagement	Initial development with stakeholders; citizen review of indicators; study and implementation of issue topic with citizen and stakeholder committee; study issues can be nominated by citizens.
Selection of indicators	By citizens and stakeholders
Primary Partners (over time)	There is also a long list of supporting partners, including the United Way of Northeast Florida, and some vary by implementation project.
Capacity (staff)	11
Primary capacity builders	Local citizens and partner groups
Primary linkages	JCCI is well connected to city government, government service agencies, and nonprofit governance structures in the community.
Implementation	JCCI only implements one key issue per year for a three-year cycle. There is a defined process for implementation, but the subgroups and tools are defined by the topic implementation committee.

JCCI is described as a "mashing together" of existing activities, but community activism and community planning are the heritages that were brought to the mixture.

(Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011). This description is meant to underscore that the roots of the organization affect how they approach problem solving:

> We actually brought together two different kinds of approaches to understanding information. One of them, which had more of a social service side to it, was the planning councils approach. We were a planning arm for the United Way for a long time before we reached this current iteration. So part of our work has always been involved in that softer side of things. The other part came from the civic activism side, where one of the results was the "revolution" in Jacksonville when we removed our government and created a new consolidated government through citizen referendum; it was about "voice of the people." We have these two very different approaches. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

Because the influentials of the Jacksonville Region created JCCI, there was never the "credibility curve" that most new organizations must face. JCCI had instant credibility by virtue of those that formed it (Jacksonville_Interview[7] 5/03/2011); that beginning, consequently, conferred JCCI instant influence.

Within the first couple of years after their inception, JCCI began their *community studies*. These community studies are detailed, fact-finding reports on an issue selected by a citizen's panel. Beginning in 1977 with a study on Local Government Finance, these reports cover a broad range of issues: Citizen Participation in Schools, Theatre in Jacksonville, Indigent Health, Visual Pollution, Minority Business, Energy Efficiency, Adequate Water Supply, Young Black Males, and Child Daycare Services, to name a few.

> Our first 10 years of studies helped inform our indicator set, but every year as we do additional studies we find out new things about data we should be paying attention to and bring that into the conversation. For example, in looking at infant mortality, we looked at issues like education level of mothers. We looked at

> different ways of children being born into poverty or stress….in our race relations report, we look at children births being paid for through charity or Medicaid as a way of looking at children born into poverty. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

The reports are typically 20 to 40 pages long, including: a problem statement; detailed findings from community listening sessions, literature review, and expert input; and recommendations for action.

Unlike many other CIPs in the country, JCCI has articulated a theory of change (Swain 2001; Warner 2006), that was developed in 2001. While graphically this has changed somewhat, the elements of the JCCI Model for Community Improvement have remained the same over time. The change theory (see Figure 1.1) was positivist, as it described what JCCI had been doing on the ground that worked for community change. Essentially, the model represented what they figured out over time by trial and error; it was an attempt to conceptualize it.

Now, with indicators to signal a problem in the change process, the community studies are used as a means for uncovering causal processes behind the change in an indicator, "drilling down" on a particular issue. One study, the Improving Race Relations in 2002, identified significant areas on which JCCI needed to focus that they had not and new indicators came out of the process.

> It is sort of a continual learning process of what is important and how the story is changing in the community. That's a long way of saying that while the process is formalized, there are LOTS of entry points for change and that is intentional. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

These added indicators generate new discussions, and those discussions initiate further studies, action, and perhaps more changes in the indicator report.

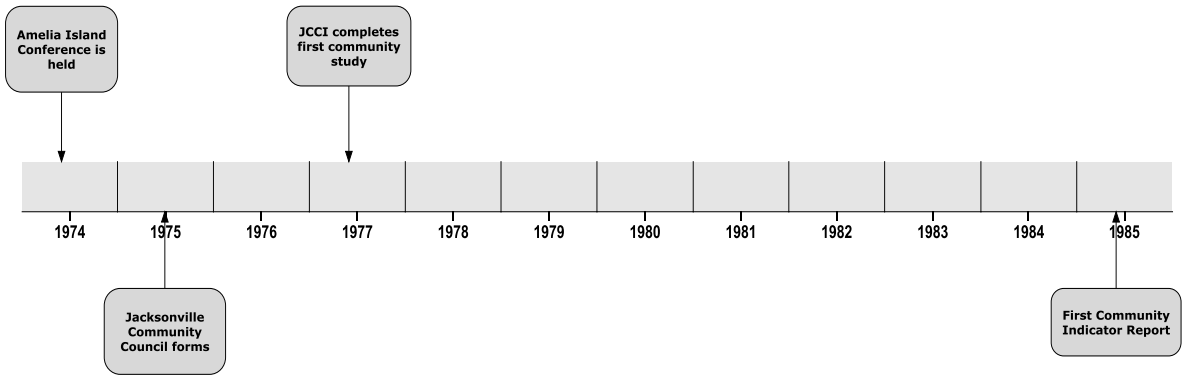
Community Quality of Life Reports

The JCCI publishes their community indicators as the *Quality of Life Report for Jacksonville and Northeast Florida*, organizing the information into nine indicator categories (see Table 6.3). JCCI introduced their community indicators to Jacksonville in 1985. They have produced QOL Report annually since that time, and the report become a fixture of the community.

> They do a good job with the indicators. Their QOL report is the community's conscience. They measure across a variety of issues. It is a way to hold elected officials accountable. (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11)

To illustrate, not only is the indicator report and attendant study and implementation process supported by many major organizations in the community, but the report is introduced on the cover page by the City of Jacksonville Mayor and the President of the United Way of Northeast Florida (JCCI[1] 2010).

Figure 6.1 Development of Community Indicators



For that initial report, JCCI pulled together roughly 100 people from across the community to talk about a vision for Jacksonville and the best ways to measure it. Each year JCCI still has a Citizen Review Committee for the QOL Progress Report, which meets four times, to help

identify which measures are no longer valid or ones that should be added (Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011). As part of that review, JCCI ensures a mix of regular citizens, as well as data and policy experts at the table.

> … from the beginning, the target audience was the community. We wanted people in the community to tell us not only what THEY thought was important, but also the kind of information they needed to know to answer the questions that they had. THAT has some really specific implications for how you present data and what data you present. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

It is through this process that new data may be added to the QOL Report. Consequently, the report looks different over time as indicators have been added or subtracted and data presentation changes. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011).

Figure 6.2 Indicator Categories

1. **Achieving Educational Excellence**
2. **Growing a Vibrant Economy**
3. **Preserving the Natural Environment**
4. **Promoting Social Wellbeing and Harmony**
5. **Enjoying the Arts, Recreation, Culture**
6. **Sustaining a Healthy Community**
7. **Maintaining Responsive Government**
8. **Moving Around Efficiently and Safely**
9. **Keeping the Community Safe**

The role of JCCI with regard to data has also changed over time. When they first began doing the report in 1985, one of their primary roles was just finding and collecting information about the community for citizens. As data became more widely available and easily accessible from computers and smart phones, their role with data has become more complex. Now, they help partner groups learn how to *create* good data – such as literacy groups pretesting and post-testing, instead of providing anecdotes regarding their effectiveness (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011). JCCI also gets groups to *share* data, because some groups

collect data on their work but do not share it. Some groups think that they will be judged or punished for the trends going the wrong direction.

In order for data-sharing to occur, there needs to be a culture of learning rather than reprimand in place (Argyris 1974; Moynihan 2007; Innes and Booher 2010). Over the years, JCCI has been able to create much more of a culture of shared problem-solving than most communities have.

> In some ways, the best news for Jacksonville is the (Quality of Life Progress) Report itself. The very premise of the report, and of JCCI is the belief in Jacksonville as a community where the problems of some are the responsibility of everyone. (Patton 2005)

Beginning to create this spirit at the most basic level, the Citizen Review of the data is a diverse mix of people – it might include a CEO, a teacher, a parent, or a foundation president. This acculturation process has led to more cooperation in data sharing.

A reflection of how JCCI has created this culture of problem-solving rather than punishment around data is manifest in reactions to their "red flags," "gold stars," and their study selection process. When an indicator or issue area has made laudable improvement, it gets a gold star in the QOL Report. A problem trend gets a red flag; the red flag is not viewed with a "bad job!" reaction, but rather a sign that the issue needs attention from the full community.

> Generally, after something has been flagged, we may decide to do a full-fledged study on it. We begin with saying, "The people who have been working on this issue are doing the best they know how." We still look at what they are doing and see what might not be working, but we assume the problem is larger…and that changes the conversation from defensive to collaborative. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

By bringing the assumption that everyone involved in the issue is doing their best with the resources and structures they are working with, JCCI can begin to look more deeply at the problem. Sometimes they have found that the structures are not effective and that people were doing a good job at an ineffective task; sometimes they are doing the correct things, but it is only part of the problem. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011) This kind of information might be uncovered during a Community Study process.

Description of the Program

Unlike many CIP efforts, JCCI need not wrestle with the critical questions of whether and how their data is used (Sawicki 2002; Holden 2009). Its *Quality of Life Progress Report* is the longest-standing community indicator report in the United States, and it is used for planning and evaluation by all of the region's sectors (JCCI[1] 2010). Nonetheless, action around community issues was JCCI's birthright, and they added the community indicators for their own use in these efforts. As noted, JCCI has a formalized process not just for data review and updates, but also for understanding and taking action on a data trend of concern.

Purpose, structure, and capacity

While JCCI plays a variety of roles, such as the neutral convener, it formally describes itself as:

> a nonpartisan civic organization that engages diverse citizens in open dialogue, research, consensus building, advocacy and leadership development to improve the quality of life and build a better community in Northeast Florida and beyond (JCCI[2] 2010).

The community indicators are an important part of JCCI's model for improving the quality of life of the region, as they are the signal to the community for action. JCCI makes the information available in different formats in order to make it as accessible as possible. For different user

needs, JCCI has the QOL Progress report as a summary document, a reference document with greater detail, or as an interactive, online version that is updated as information becomes available (JCCI[1] 2010). The latter provides the most current information in between reports.

Structurally, JCCI is very straightforward; it has a Board of Directors and staff. Board members are selected through a prescribed process using a nominating committee. They have a matrix of factors for selection to ensure good demographic diversity (Jacksonville_Interview[2] 5/05/2011). While JCCI produces the QOL Progress Report and the Community Study cyclically, the committees are ad-hoc and committee members change each year. This is partly because each year, the study is different. Moreover, JCCI is a larger, established program with greater staff capacity; regular activities related to the indicator updates, the studies, and implementation all have a staff person dedicated to them.

Table 6.3 JCCI

Entity	Activity
JCCI Board and staff	Program development
JCCI staff and partner groups	Indicator assembly, updating, and vetting
QOL Review Committee	
Topic Selection Committee	Issue selection – community studies
Study Committee	Issue planning – community studies
Implementation Task Force	Issue action: funding, programmatic efforts
Partner groups	

In contrast to committees, partner groups that contribute data to the QOL Report are relatively consistent. This allows JCCI to work with groups to help them develop quality data or to understand their reporting processes. JCCI makes it a point to know how the data is developed, because over time some of the "same" measures have changed. For example, Jacksonville does

not calculate high school graduation rates the same way they did 25 years ago (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011). For some data, they would see changes following the election cycles; data reporting rules changed depending on who was in office for issues such as child abuse or domestic violence. Without looking at the meaning behind the numbers, JCCI, and consequently the community, would not know that the data is not comparable.

Although JCCI has a number of full-time staff, Jacksonville is a large city. From a capacity perspective, it is difficult to know what would be equivalent capacity for JCCI to that of a smaller city's program. Still, JCCI has sufficient staff capacity to attend each of the major elements of their work. With increased capacity, they would not be doing a greater number of activities similar to what they are already engaged in; JCCI would add geographic targeting and depth to their current activities (Jacksonville_Interview[6] 5/05/2011).

> There is a desire to be able to deal with more complex and more detailed data…neighborhood specific, more data streams that feed into different issues…There is a demand for that, and we don't currently have the capacity to do it. ...If I had my druthers, and we had unlimited capacity, we would track and pay attention to some of the very detailed factors that have come out of our studies…following the risk factors …keeping track of the whole system. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

Interestingly, the primary criticism of JCCI by forward-thinking stakeholders is that, with the advancement of indicators and the science of "social epidemiology," JCCI is measuring the same types of things. They are not measuring the critical determinants. (Jacksonville_Interview[8] 5/04/11) This clearly seems to be a capacity issue, given that JCCI has indicated an interest to build its capabilities in exactly that area.

Moreover, the capacity for more of the same activities, meaning "community conversations and action" around JCCI's community studies, is limited by more than the capacity of JCCI. The community itself is limited in its ability to focus on an issue – both in terms of the number of conversations and in terms of duration. In elevating the conversation around an important community issue, it needs to be almost the only community conversation; if everything is important, then nothing is. Furthermore, the attention to an issue needs to be concentrated and short, because communities have a short attention span. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

Other issues relevant to the capacity of JCCI to carry out its work include expertise and funding. JCCI has addressed access to expertise, in some instances, by bringing specialists into the community (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11). Jacksonville itself does not have the flagship university to tap. JCCI found that not having a research university locally was a challenge, but recently has begun collaborations with research centers at the University of Florida at Gainesville (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011). Funding, another common capacity concern, is fairly diversified for JCCI. They receive funding from a broad range of partners, including the City of Jacksonville, the United Way of Northeast Florida, and private donations. JCCI even has a membership base and provides consulting to other communities, unlike other programs examined. The diversified funding gives the organization stability and greater independence.

The Process: Indicators, Community Study, and Implementation

Unique to Jacksonville is a systematic approach to using the information, unpacking the causal factors behind an indicator trend, and building in a strategic implementation process for making progress on issues.

> Part of what we were created to do was to be a place for the community to stay on top of its issues and to directly deal with some specific long term issues in the community, such as education, economy, environment, and racism, arts and culture – the big issues we had to think about moving forward (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

JCCI's Study Process is a three-year commitment to an issue of concern, including a staff summary of information in the summer, an in-depth study that goes from fall to spring and implementation of the findings that continues for two years more. This process begins before that with the nomination of study topics from January through March; JCCI solicits suggestions through flyers, postcards, email, and partner groups. Topics are often identified through trends of concern in the community indicators, the "red flags." Organizations can advocate for an issue to become a study topic, but it must be defensible; the Board of Directors use *importance* and *necessity* as criteria for selection of a topic and justification occurs through data (Jacksonville_Interview[1] 5/02/2011; Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011).

Nominated topics are reviewed by a Topic Selection Committee, which is made up of twenty invited citizens from throughout the community and chaired by the incoming president of the JCCI Board of Directors. Staff whittles down nominated topics through basic screening, such as a review of the indicators, and the remainder go to the committee. In 2010, there were 650 submissions, with 150 going on to the committee (Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011). The Topic Selection Committee meets two or three times, reviews the submissions, and forwards

the finalists to the Board of Directors. The Board views presentations for the finalists and selects the next study topic (Jacksonville_Interview[1] 5/02/2011).

After the study topic for that fall is selected, JCCI staff spend the summer amassing the state of the knowledge on the issue. Concurrently, JCCI constructs a Study Committee management team of about ten people that will coordinate the study process. A Study Committee of 50-60 people, including the management team, is then assembled and is usually comprised of roughly half stakeholders and half general citizenry. The Study Committee reviews the information, identifies areas that are missing, meets with affected populations, brings in experts on the topic, and develops a set of findings around the issue. From this information, they make a set of recommendations that are handed off to the Implementation Task Force (Jacksonville_Interview[1] 5/02/2011).

The Implementation Task Force does just that, it implements the recommendations of the Study Committee. The Task Force is usually about two-thirds the size of the Study Committee and there are some members who serve on both. They enroll a broad range of people from "door openers" to the "average joe," but half of the Task Force is usually made up of the general citizenry. The Task Force usually assigns recommendations to a specific person or organization to ensure accountability. (Jacksonville_Interview[1] 5/02/2011)

JCCI has a process and documents to guide the Implementation Task Force, but the decisions are left up to them. (Jacksonville_Interview[1] 5/02/2011) They also have a staff person dedicated entirely to facilitating the task force through the process; this is a relatively new

position and it has proven to be a valuable addition (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011). Some staff feel that the greatest determinant of the implementation success of an initiative is the quality of the recommendations – are they actionable? (Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011) Nevertheless, the process is continually being examined and reflection is part of the process. At the end of every implementation process, they look back and identify strengths and weaknesses. (Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011)

6.4 Deconstructing the program – JCCI and factors of interest

In each of the cases, I use the CIP heuristic to examine the list of concepts introduced in the first literature review. I discuss these factors of interest, as well as those added inductively, as they pertain to the Jacksonville's path in developing a community indicator program and using it to facilitate change.

Figure 6.3 Factors from CIP Heuristic and Inductively Added

From CIP Heuristic

Creating a citizen agenda

- Citizen engagement and representation
- Deliberation for goal-setting

Creating responsive governance

- Learning Forums (data use, data analysis, dialogue, culture, leadership)
- Stakeholder involvement
- Linkages/integration (SEE table; planning, engagement, media, etc)

Process and mediating factors from the literature

- Leadership – individual, organizational, issue (for representation, improvement culture, learning forum)
- Cyclical processes (to revisit citizen input, ground truth data, data analysis).
- Institutional design (mainly discussed for engagement of citizenry, but also for integration of indicators, for carrying out the process of measurement and communication…)

Inductively added variables

The following is a list of factors from case observations that I will also discuss within the framework of the CIP heuristic and process/mediating factors.

Exogenous

- Capacity-builder/leverage: university, funding, volunteers, etc.
- Community ethos
- Community size and quality of social networks in community

Endogenous

- Well-respected organization or group of organizations
- Linkages of initiative (rather than linkages of program)
- Institutional resilience (people or organizations drop out and there is enough of a collaboration around the program to keep it going)
- Influence with partners (eg funding)

Creating a citizen agenda

Citizen engagement and representation

The Jacksonville Community Council was born of a citizen's movement and it brought that tradition to the indicator and study process. While JCCI works as heavily with stakeholders, they integrate the general citizenry into nearly all they do. The original indicator set and later iterations all included a review process that included citizens. Further, the study process engages an issue-specific broad array of citizens each year. While this does not intentionally seek out under-represented populations, the affected population for certain study topics is also an under-represented group. This inherently provides for greater opportunity for perspectives from disenfranchised groups. Nonetheless, study topics are forwarded based on knowledge of the community; without ensuring representation during the solicitation of topics or the advocacy of a topic, unknown problems may take longer to become known.

Deliberation for goal-setting

In the case of JCCI, the Community Study may be viewed as a proxy for a community-wide goal: We will make progress on *this* issue *now*. Actual deliberation between general citizenry across issues for the purpose of selecting that community-wide goal naturally occurs with the Study Committee. Since the Study Committee is a mix of stakeholders and citizens, there is the threat of the discussion being dominated by stakeholders. Despite any weaknesses that may occur regarding balancing voice in the discussions, this process generally serves to create the collective agenda necessary to create community momentum.

Creating responsive governance

Learning forums and data review

JCCI has institutionalized a learning forum epitomized in its Study Committee. Not only is there a regular review and examination of the validity of the indicators themselves on an annual basis, but the investigative process behind the data on specific indicators. Furthermore, the Study Committee incorporates more than indicator data in its learning process. As noted, the nine-month study process may include focus groups with affected populations and bringing in experts from around the country to discuss nuance in the research.

Stakeholder involvement community culture

In Jacksonville, stakeholders are involved in all stages of the process: revising and reviewing indicators, study topic selection, the study process, and implementation. The most critical and taxing, however, is stakeholder participation in implementation. All of the improvement that occurs around a targeting issue, occurs because of efforts of those on the Implementation Task Force, not JCCI staff. To date, collaborative activities among the diverse members have worked well. Although this is likely due to a number of factors, one aspect is certainly that the processes around collaboration and implementation have been institutionalized within the community through JCCI.

Linkages/integration

Although there are close connections between the city and JCCI that include funding support, there is not the coordinated separate roles – community indicators and performance benchmarks – that have been envisioned by CIC. In fact, while the two are well-linked, they

have overlapping and interconnected efforts. The city relatively recently began including community-level indicators as part of its reporting. Rather than referring someone interested in the data to JCCI, they stand separate. Interestingly, the executive director for JCCI sits on the executive team for the city's effort.

JCCI has linkages in the community that are far wider than the city. As noted, they have strong links to the nonprofit and private sectors as well. JCCI has the credibility to assemble the important stakeholders around nearly any issue and the staff and structures to facilitate collaboration on an issue. In fact, JCCI linkages extend through the gamut: strategic, structural, functional, and participatory.

Program Planning

Program planning, broadly, occurs through the JCCI Board of Directors. By this, I refer to permanent new initiatives facilitated through JCCI staff, such as the Race Relations Report . For efforts that come out of study implementation, such as marketing a Daddy Bootcamp for infant mortality prevention, the individual subcommittees drive them. Still, each subcommittee strategy is compiled into the implementation plan that comes back to the JCCI Board of Directors for approval.

Process and mediating factors

Of the identified process/mediating factors affecting the impact of a community indicator program, ones described here from the Jacksonville case include *leadership* (individual, organizational, issue), *cyclical processes and institutional design*, *leverage*, *community ethos*,

non-judgmental problem-solving, and the *reputation* of the hosting organization(s) and its *resilience* to change. Some of these elements came into play in particular stages of the development of the community indicator program, while others are in the background. *Leadership* is manifest in a variety of ways and takes different roles in the community improvement process for JCCI. Clearly, the organizational leadership of JCCI is the reason that Jacksonville has this reflective process for understanding community issues. Even so, because the data review and study process is driven not by JCCI staff but by stakeholders and citizens, individual leadership can significantly impact the depth of issue examination. Prior to the JCCI Board of Directors selecting any issue, there is also leadership in advocating for the issue to be selected. For example, advocates petitioned the JCCI Board of Directors to select infant mortality for two years before it was chosen (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11). While the trend had been a concern in the indicators, JCCI was not certain it could be a "community" issue. The advocate's insight and leadership around the issue has prompted the issue to become a study topic.

As indicated, JCCI has institutionalized *cyclical processes* not only in indicator development and review, but also for in-depth study and implementation. Specifically, the indicator review occurs on an annual basis at regular intervals and is integrated into JCCI's institutional structures. Also noted, the issue studies occur every year on a selected topic, with the whole process including implementation taking three years. This systematic review process ensures sufficient monitoring of trends of existing indicators and opportunity for adding new indicators.

Both community culture and *capacity/leverage* played a smaller role in Jacksonville than in the other cases. Jacksonville did not have a distinctive ethos around community improvement echoed by different interviewees. By observation, however, there seemed to be an undercurrent of activism. While this was the primary spirit detectable, JCCI is a citizen's organization; those involved with the organization are likely not representative of the whole of Jacksonville or its culture. As for capacity-building, the ability for JCCI to leverage a *particular* entity such as a university or funding source did not play a significant role.

> One of the challenges we have is that we don't have a research university in town, but we are starting to do some collaborations with research centers in University of Florida at Gainesville. (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

While this may prove to be a suitable solution to having access to specialized research, Jacksonville has managed to incorporate in-depth examination into its efforts regardless. JCCI tends to diversify not only its funding, but from whom it draws support.

An interesting and important aspect of the indicator program in Jacksonville is its ability to target a problem without resistance or fear of criticism from those already working on it. The importance of a non-punitive approach to performance data is in the performance management literature, but it was not clear that this concept might be scaled up to community level data. The reputation and the sustained work of JCCI have much to do with this collective problem-solving approach in the community, rather than blame. This suggests that sustained work is important to establishing the trust necessary for the response to identifying a community problem to be non-defensive.

6.5 Bringing about Change and Community Indicators in Jacksonville

Infant Mortality – a facilitated change and a thwarted effort

This section describes an initiative to reduce infant mortality headed by the JCCI, including two separate efforts – one for reducing the impact of food deserts, and one for sex education. While the effort around reducing food deserts produced several undertakings, the effort to reform sex education was quashed at the policy level. I identify key points and processes in each effort for the purpose of better understanding how change might be facilitated through this CIP.

In 2007, following the review of the most recent Quality of Life indicators report (JCCI[1] 2007), the JCCI identified several trends of concern. Under the Health category, one was the high rate of infant mortality, which had been "red flagged" since 2005 in the report (JCCI 2008). Jacksonville had one of the highest rates of infant mortality in Florida, Florida had one of the highest rates in United States, and the United States has a rate higher than nearly any industrialized country (JCCI 2008; JCCI[3] 2010).

The Race Relations Progress Report in 2007 also highlighted the issue, as the disparity between minority and white infant mortality was substantial (JCCI[2] 2007). The Healthy Start Coalition in Jacksonville had been working on the infant mortality issue for some time and the numbers were still discouraging.

> The more we looked at the lack of improvement in infant mortality and our ability to impact that rate, the more the board and staff (of Healthy Start Coalition) recognized that it would take community level interventions, education, and awareness if we were going to move the needle. (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11)

The Healthy Start Coalition discussed the issue with the mayor's office and nominated the issue as a study topic for JCCI for the past two years. In both cases, it was at first seen as a private or health care issue, not a community issue (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11).

In 2007, infant mortality was finally chosen as one of the finalists sent to the JCCI Board of Directors for review; there were three that year: infant mortality, juvenile justice, and education (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11; Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011). The selection of infant mortality was directly tied to an analysis of the indicators, and its on-going unfavorable trending (Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011). It also helped that the aide from the mayor's office who sat on the selection committee was the one to forward it for the list of finalists that year. "In order to be relevant, you want to pick something that the mayor's office is also interested in (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11)."

Following the selection of the finalists, each of the topics have "champions" from the selection committee that make a presentation of their case to the JCCI Board. The Healthy Start Coalition and Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies made the case for infant mortality. Initially, the JCCI Board was not convinced that infant mortality was something that a community effort could have an impact on (Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011).

> The board didn't jump on it right away, especially the chair. They didn't know what JCCI could add…they didn't think they could do anything. Our pitch was that it is a "sentinal indicator of community health" and the community doesn't know how bad it is. (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11)

The JCCI Board ultimately selected the issue because "virtually no one had ever heard of infant mortality as a problem" (Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011) in the community. Even the affected populations did not know that there was anything abnormal about the rate of infant death in their community (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11).

The Study Committee convened in the summer of 2007 and began their work that fall. Committee members held about four months of weekly hearings and focus groups with input from community members and local, state, and national experts.

> The study did everything I wanted it to do and more. It got in new people and new attention to the issue. It did a masterful job in synthesizing the information. They (JCCI) had resources to bring cutting-edge experts to the community…It definitely ratcheted infant mortality up on the radar of every part of the city. It unified effort and funding around the issue. (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11)

In June of 2008, the process yielded findings and a set of fifteen recommendations for the Implementation Task Force.

JCCI began forming the Implementation Task Force toward the end of the term of the Study Committee. They generally select the chair of the Task Force from the Study Committee participants. For the chair, JCCI wants someone that has shown to be passionate about the issue, with perseverance to carry through the long process. The Implementation Task Force was assembled in the summer of 2008. As noted, subcommittee structure and development depends on the study; in this case, the task force broke into five subcommittees to address the different recommendations.

Achievements for the Implementation Task Force occurred over the full implementation period, which is somewhat unusual.

> The majority of the successes that the task forces have happen in the first year out of the two years…maybe even six months. There are a number of reasons for that – including initial enthusiasm. For infant mortality, it didn't necessarily hold. Success that they had with hospitals had to develop. They had to go through an educational process – so they didn't get momentum until the second year. (Jacksonville_Interview^2 5/05/2011)

There were a number of successes by the task force, including the work on the food deserts and a variety of social marketing efforts. The task force had, however, one conspicuous obstructed effort – sex education in the schools. One less obvious success in the Infant Mortality efforts in Jacksonville is the dialogue and collaboration between groups; groups that had never interacted before the JCCI study are now working together on the issue (Jacksonville_Interview^2 5/05/2011).

Reducing the Impact of Food Deserts – a facilitated effort

The pre and during-pregnancy health of the mother, including proper nutrition and exercise, are critical to the health and well-being of the infant. Some of the more specific information that came out of the Infant Mortality Study was the observation that the zip codes that had the highest rates of infant mortality in Jacksonville, also were low-income, predominantly black neighborhoods. These areas were largely "food deserts," with no full-service grocery stores. Combined with the limited access to transportation that is associated with poverty, access to a healthy diet by expectant mothers in these areas is difficult. (JCCI 2008)

One of the recommendations identified by the Study Committee to impact infant mortality was to reduce the impact of food deserts in these areas.

> **Recommendation 3**. To eradicate food insecurity and "food deserts,"…City of Jacksonville should encourage fully-stocked grocery stores to locate in zip codes and neighborhoods with high infant mortality rates through tax and other incentive packages so that nutritious food is available, accessible, and affordable to residents to encourage well-balanced diets, lower obesity rates, and better birth outcomes. (JCCI 2008)

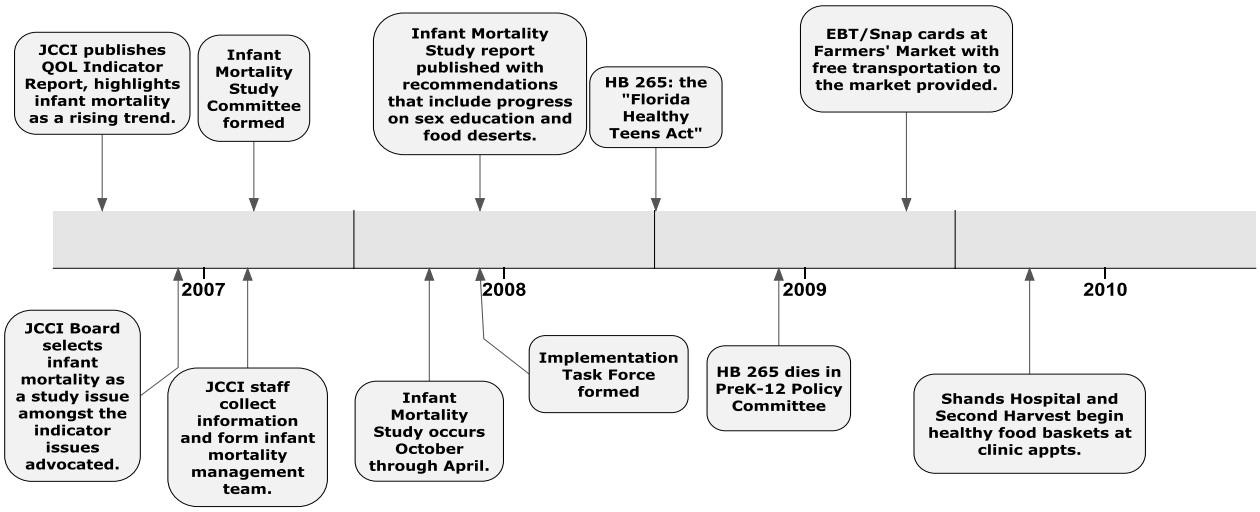
While the recommendation of the Infant Mortality Study was specifically around the City of Jacksonville's role in incentivizing neighborhood planning that serves the local residents, the Implementation Task Force subcommittee for this issue took a broader approach(JCCI[3] 2010). The subcommittee recognized other approaches that could provide better access to healthy food more quickly. The primary outcomes within their implementation timeframe are those alternative approaches to addressing food deserts.

Rather than trying to change the built environment in a short time period, the focus was on access to healthy food. Access took several forms. For instance, in November 2009, the subcommittee was able to get the largest farmers' market in Jacksonville, the Beaver Street Farmers' Market, to take EBT/Snap cards (food stamps) (Jacksonville_Interview[1] 5/02/2011; Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11). Although Beaver Street Market is located within one of the key low-income areas, the Jacksonville Transit Authority and the Second Harvest Food Bank partnered to advertise a free trolley service to the market for those in other disadvantaged parts of the community (JCCI[3] 2010). Thus, they not only brought the women to the food

(rather than the food to the women), but they also made it more accessible by providing alternative payment options.

In April of 2010, another undertaking of the subcommittee was *Nutrition for Mothers, Nourishment for Babies Healthy Food Program*. This was a partnership between Shands Hospital and the Second Harvest Food Bank to distribute healthy food baskets when expectant mothers come in for their prenatal checks at the Shands OB/Gyn Clinic (Jacksonville_Interview[1] 5/02/2011; Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11). The program couples the food basket with a brief nutritional program while they await their appointment (JCCI[3] 2010).

Figure 6.4 Reducing Infant Mortality Initiative



Sex Education – a thwarted effort

Teen pregnancies are generally high-risk pregnancies, as teen mothers are less prepared to support their child through development. (JCCI 2008) One of the recommendations identified by the Study Committee to impact infant mortality was to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy through better health education in the schools.

> **Recommendation 5**. The Duval Delegation should support state legislation to expand evidence-based sex education for all students in public school to include a comprehensive curriculum taught by certified teachers that is age appropriate and medically accurate, including facts on contraception and how to avoid sexually transmitted infections. (JCCI 2008)

This was understood as a difficult task, as it would require a change at the state level, as Florida statutes for sex education are abstinence-based (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11; Jacksonville_Interview[6] 5/05/2011; JCCI 2008).

The local state legislator on the Florida House Education Policy Council agreed to shepherd HB 265 Education in Public Schools Concerning Human Sexuality: creating "Florida Healthy Teens Act," (JCCI[3] 2010) introduced January of 2009. It was referred to the PreK-12 Policy Committee in February of 2009, where it was indefinitely postponed and died in committee in May of 2009. The cultural climate in Florida is too limited for comprehensive sex education (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11; Jacksonville_Interview[6] 5/05/2011)

Table 6.4 JCCI Infant Mortality Initiative

Supposition: Community indicators facilitated change in Infant Mortality Rate			
Events / Observation	**Process-Tracing Test for Causation**	**Integration Category**	**Concepts from literature and inductively added**
JCCI publishes QOL Indicator Report, highlights infant mortality as a rising trend – "red flag"	Hoop; passed		▪ Cyclical process ▪ Institutional design
JCCI Board selects infant mortality as a study issue amongst the indicator issues advocated.	Hoop; passed	Structural Functional Participatory	▪ Leadership ▪ Well-respected organization ▪ Deliberation for goal-setting ▪ Learning Forums
JCCI staff collect information and form infant mortality management team.	Straw in the wind		▪ Capacity
Infant Mortality Study Committee formed	Straw in the wind	Strategic Structural Participatory	▪ Citizen and Stakeholder Engagement ▪ Learning Forums ▪ Well-respected organization ▪ Capacity builder/leverage ▪ Institutional design
Infant Mortality Study occurs October through April.	Straw in the wind	Structural	▪ Non-judgmental, shared problem-solving ▪ Deliberation for goal-setting
Infant Mortality Study report published with recommendations that include progress on sex education and food deserts.	Hoop; passed		▪ Leadership ▪ Stakeholder involvement/ linkages ▪ Non-judgmental, shared problem-solving
Implementation Task Force formed	Straw in the wind	Strategic Structural Functional Participatory	▪ Citizen and Stakeholder Engagement ▪ Capacity builder/leverage ▪ Leadership ▪ Institutional design
HB 265: the "Florida Healthy Teens Act"	Hoop; passed	Strategic Structural	▪ Well-respected organization
HB 265 dies in PreK-12 Policy Committee	Hoop; ***failed***	Strategic Structural	▪ Community ethos (state)
EBT/Snap cards accepted at Farmers' Market with free transportation to the market provided.	Smoking gun; passed	Structural Functional Participatory	▪ Stakeholder Engagement ▪ Capacity builder/leverage ▪ Linkages of initiative
Shands Hospital and Second Harvest begin healthy food baskets at clinic appts.	Smoking gun; passed	Structural Functional Participatory	▪ Capacity-builder/leverage ▪ Stakeholder Engagement ▪ Linkages of initiative
Infant Mortality Rate goes down and key stakeholder working on the issue says that it would not have happened without JCCI	Double decisive – ***passed***		

Food desert

Sex education

Underlined = quality was needed, but missing or negative

6.6 Discussion

As the oldest and perhaps most venerable community indicator program in the country, many programs have drawn from the lessons of Jacksonville. That said, there is still much to understand about the complex process of community improvement, the role that an indicator program can play in this process, and the role of contextual factors.

> They have an incredibly well thought through process. You can't just take it somewhere else, but it works here.
> (Jacksonville_Interview[6] 5/05/2011)

Amongst other things, some key contextual factors came to light in this case. One aspect of JCCI and its position in Jacksonville is the way it began. As mentioned, this established credibility for problem-solving in the community early on. Furthermore, JCCI has managed to establish a culture of learning throughout the community over time, perhaps due to this beginning. This means that its annual indicator report highlighting problems in the community does not bring the equivalent amount of deflection or defensiveness that it might in other communities.

Jacksonville uses their community indicators as indicators are often intended, as a surveillance system for community well-being. As noted in this chapter, Jacksonville has been able to routinize its processes so that they quickly detect unfavorable trends. From that, JCCI *begins* their work; they do not assume that they know what they need to know to have an impact on the trend.

> It helps to have a systems perspective on this. The indicator serve as the light on the dashboard that tells you that something is wrong with the car. You have to do a diagnostic at that point.
> (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)

JCCI's approach may be due to the fact that their community studies *preceded* the indicators. The indicators and studies together, however, are a natural marriage; it allows them to begin to unpack what the indicator trends mean, while ensuring that community studies are selected based on real problems rather than what bubbled to the surface. This mechanism, combined with the critical annual examination of the indicator data, is unique amongst the cases and key for developing a true understanding of the causes of problems.

Jacksonville also uses the community indicators for the purpose generally adopted by all of the CIP cases examined – to get attention. Raising awareness itself has an impact on community will, local funding priorities, and local norms (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11). As noted by JCCI staff and partners involved in the Infant Mortality Study:

> The greatest contribution they (JCCI) always have is raising the awareness within the community of the problem they are trying to deal with. (Jacksonville_Interview[5] 5/06/2011)
> People weren't really that aware of the infant mortality issue prior to JCCI highlighting it. If you don't work in a sector…you don't know. (Jacksonville_Interview[6] 5/05/2011)
> JCCI's involvement was a watershed for this whole field. It is a community issue now, like it never was before. It also benefitted them to show them that their studies can work on complex problems like this. (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11)

The latter comment underscores the notion that although JCCI has been using this process to draw attention to issues for over two decades, they may still not be using it to its fullest potential. They had only begun in 2001 to articulate a theory of change (Swain 2001).

Beginning to look within this case at the two efforts within the Infant Mortality initiative, the effort to bring comprehensive sex education to the schools met an early demise. Policy at a

higher level, in this case the state level, hindered local attempts to address perceived shortcomings in health education. As with the Quincy case, many of the local factors for change were in place; the constraints lay at a level beyond their control. While this does not mean that all such local efforts would be fruitless, it does indicate that the strength of these types of effort and the sphere of influence remain local.

7 Discussion

The preceding chapters provided a description of three CIPs launched and developed in small, medium, and large sized cities, and their position in the process of a community improvement effort. This chapter provides a summary of important observations within and across the three cases (Table 7.1) and revision of the CIP heuristic based on those observations. Noteworthy, there appeared to be different strategies for operation in each CIP, though collaborative alliances was a theme threaded throughout. These collaborations, in part, provided the capacity leverage necessary to carry out implementation around an initiative. Also, contrary to the CIP heuristic, "deliberation for value alignment" did not occur at the citizen level for any of the cases.

Table 7.1 Overview of Research Design for Observations

Observation within Cases			
Quincy (context A)	**Syracuse (context B)**	**Jacksonville (context C)**	**Outcome**
This section describes the contextual factors unique to **Quincy** that facilitated the program or the Childhood Obesity Initiative. Facilitated change: YMCA funding for Exercise program	This section describes the contextual factors unique to **Syracuse** that facilitated the program or the CNY 85 Initiative. Facilitated change: CNY85	This section describes the contextual factors unique to **Jacksonville** that facilitated the program or the Infant Mortality reduction Initiative. Facilitated change: Improved access to food – "food deserts"	**CHANGE**
What was different in Quincy in the "no change" scenario? Thwarted effort: School Lunch	What was different in Syracuse in the "no change" scenario? Thwarted effort: Cultural District	What was different in Jacksonville in the "no change" scenario? Thwarted effort: Sex education	**NO CHANGE**

Observation across Cases
Are there observations or differences regarding the way the "change" outcome was manifest in the different contexts? Were the factors of interest the same? Did the factors of interest (and any added) interact differently based on the context? If so, what are some of the possible intervening influences?

7.1 Observation within Cases

This section outlines features specific to each individual CIP case that were important to a successful initiative. Although specific to an individual case, it does not necessarily imply that such factors are all contextually bound. For example, Quincy's ABC intentionally established itself as a CIP very early in its development. While not context-driven, the intentionality was unique to the birth of the Quincy program.

Quincy

ABC in Quincy was the youngest of the CIP cases. Unlike the other CIPs, however, it began with a solid, formal coalition between three strong organizations. The involvement of the United Way, the Adams County Health Department, and the University of Illinois Extension provided ABC with instant credibility, and in that respect it was similar to Jacksonville. That credibility enabled ABC to build collaborations around issues relatively easily, which was part of its eventual implementation strategy.

Also unique to the Quincy program, ABC formed around data and indicators from its inception. It was aware of its own identity as a budding CIP and became involved with the Community Indicators Consortium very early in its development. This gave ABC exposure to "best practices" that included Adopt an Indicator and Leadership Delegations. From this, ABC was able to be strategic about its development, becoming effective reasonably quickly.

Several contextual factors were also at play in the success of the ABC program. As a small community in a fairly isolated part of the state, Quincy is a place with diffuse social networks

and a strong culture of collaboration. This provided a setting where momentum on an issue could be built without a large staff. Further, significant funders such as the MGJ Foundation are well-connected to promising community projects in a small community. This ensured ABC had considerable resources for capacity building relative to most newly-formed organizations.

As part of the Childhood Obesity Initiative, there were two efforts born within this same context. One showed success and one was thwarted early in its efforts. When looking at the factors in play, two significant differences stand out: the successful effort engaged the critical stakeholders at the onset and the outcome was within the sphere of influence of those involved. In particular, if ABC had involved the school district early in the school lunch effort, they would have known the resource and policy limitations within which the district operates. While this would not have changed the outcome unless they wanted to work on a longer project to influence state policy, ABC collaborators would have known the policy environment ahead of mounting a subcommittee. In contrast, the exercise effort developed involving those with the greatest influence on the issue; they did not emphasize a single arena (i.e. school), but rather an outcome (i.e. movement). As a correlate, the school lunch effort might have emphasized “eating habits,” giving more flexibility to solving the problem.

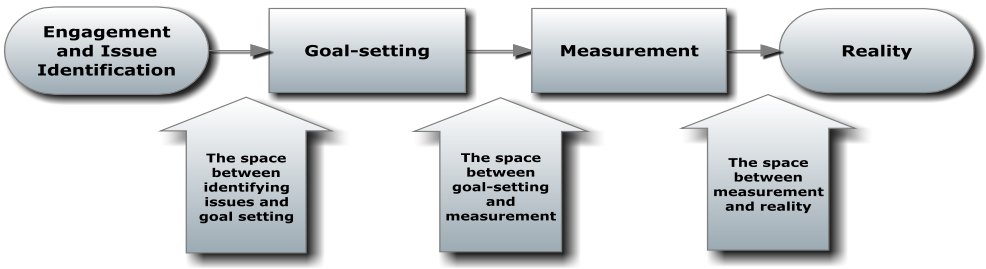
Syracuse

Syracuse is a bit of an anomaly among the three cases; although it had been in existence for over five years, it was still emerging as a full-blown program at the beginning of my observations. By this, I mean that while the indicator data was being produced, it was not integrated into the work of an initiating organization. Furthermore, although there was some

consistency through the university, partnerships changed over time, as did the lead organization. Nonetheless, the Syracuse program provided rich insights into the development of a CIP and some of the factors from the literature, and the indicators were a catalyst for changes in the regional community foundation.

The Syracuse program highlighted certain issues concerning the CIP model for change and factors from the literature better than any of the cases – specifically, engagement and representation and the meaning of a citizen agenda. Perhaps because engagement occurred in a distinct phase without regard to indicator development, the disconnect between engaging the citizenry in issue identification and the indicators themselves was conspicuous. The engagement process preceding the indicator development in Syracuse was more far-reaching than the other cases, but to imply this might result in an indicator system that would convey community concerns would be misleading. Even with the best intentions and good implementation for representative engagement processes, metrics reflective of the results is a thorny problem. Measurement is inexact even when there exists data regarding the issue of interest and one can access it. Much can be lost in translation or in the methods of expression

Figure 7.1 The Multiple Information Divides of a CIP



at each stage. If Community Indicator Programs indeed want to serve as a reflection of the citizen-agenda, these *multiple* divides (see Figure 7.1 below) must be kept in mind and revisited. Over time, the gaps may be reduced; this might occur through improvements in measurement, availability of data, cyclical processes that provide on-going communication regarding citizen concerns. If not, being cognizant of the divides allows for conscientious interpretation.

Contextual factors that were part of the Syracuse experience included the ethos of the region, discussed earlier. Distinct from Quincy and Jacksonville, the culture of Syracuse resembles reticence. Given the general reluctance toward getting involved, social networks do not appear to be as diffuse in Syracuse as in places of strong collaborative tendencies. One person, such as the leader of FOCUS or of CNY Vitals, has tended to serve as the hub to pull the others together. Such a situation limits the possibilities of connection, but also makes the program less resilient in that it is dependent on that leader remaining. Still, with the CNY Vitals becoming institutionalized into the structures of the CNY Foundation, many concerns around resilience are mitigated.

Neither the Jacksonville nor the Quincy cases had a strong university campus influence, as noted in Chapter 5; however, a significant exogenous factor to the program in the Syracuse case was the presence of Syracuse University. The CIP program, protracted in its evolution or not, unquestionably would not have had the continuity it did without the substantial contributions of the university. It also would not have the capacity for annual data updates that will now be provided by the Maxwell School students. Whether or not CNY Vitals would have

been a possibility without the history of program partnerships is not clear. What is clear is that the greatest stabilizing force throughout the program was the capacity provided by the Maxwell School partners.

This case had particular limitations with regard to *within* case comparison that the two other cases did not. First, the activities forwarded occurred through two different organizations: FOCUS and the CNY Community Foundation. The organization context (capacity, networks, etc.) and approach to each was therefore quite different. In addition, they are different types of efforts: one is essentially a planning initiative and the other a funding policy. The example may still provide useful information regarding operating in a context such as Syracuse, but they would be general observations. Further, from a causal, process-tracing perspective, neither example is particularly strong. While each initiative provides temporal precedence and correlation with the CIP, neither rule out that the final outcome would not have occurred without the indicator program.

Even so, there are observations that can be made across the two initiatives in Syracuse. The Cultural District effort by FOCUS was not data driven, at least not overtly. As noted in the description, Syracuse was in need of downtown revitalization and the approach had been used elsewhere. Data, however, was not used directly to drive the argument or to help better understand the issues around revitalization. In the case of the Foundation, funding initiatives for CNY85 are now to be data- informed by design. Athough CNY Vitals is now housed within the Foundation, the community indicators did not begin with the Foundation nor did the pursuit of developing CNY Vitals begin with the Board of Directors. In the end, however, the

Foundation Board of Directors *did* decide to use the indicators as a funding determinant. I am convinced that as the CNY Vitals program "ripens," there will be more initiatives more obviously facilitated through the indicators.

Jacksonville

Jacksonville is a revered program among CIPs and for good reason. There is a genius to the JCCI process that cannot be taken in at first blush. Some elements are relatively easy to identify, such as the well-established process that includes identifying indicator trends of concern, organizing and carrying out a community study on the trend, and implementing recommendations through a citizen-stakeholder task force. Beyond the institutional design elements, there are elements that are less easily identified, nearly intangible, yet critical to the success of JCCI.

Although well-established, studied, and possibly replicable, the JCCI community change process includes components that may work in Jacksonville because the citizens and organizations of Jacksonville allow them to work. Previously mentioned, the process by which JCCI selects a study topic consists of: suggestions from the community at large; a review of the community indicators; a review of nominations by the staff; a review of nominations by the Topic Selection Committee; arguments made to the JCCI Board of Directors by issue advocates; and selection of a topic by the JCCI Board of Directors. As noted by one of the participants, an advocate might nominate their topic over several years before it is selected (Jacksonville_Interview[9] 5/04/11). When a topic *is* selected, JCCI, through its process, achieves an impressive rallying around *that* issue. In effect, the JCCI study process has built into it the acknowledgement of Mouffe's view

of consensus, “provisional hegemony” (p756), in that the goal is *temporarily* the community-wide goal (Mouffe 1999). This allows for groups that were forwarding differing agendas to support an issue that is not theirs, understanding that their issue may be the next chosen. The source of collective endeavor is a collective agenda, which JCCI manages to achieve at a significant scale.

Among the cases, the JCCI Study Process is unique and the most critical aspect of their process that is replicable elsewhere without taking into account context. While stakeholder dialogue was part of all of the cases studied, JCCI was the only CIP to have formal structures in place for the explicit purpose of uncovering the contributing processes to the indicator at issue. In effect, JCCI treats the community indicator as a performance measure (of community QOL), and the Study Process as an evaluation to acquire more/new information about the cause-effect relationships. This is in keeping with distinctions between the uses of metrics and evaluation in the literature (Blalock and Barnow 2001). Although such research will likely not identify everything of import, without such a process the collaborators will make many assumptions regarding how to affect change. Furthermore, even if a topic had already been studied several years earlier, the cause-effect relationships may have shifted over time.

Because of JCCI’s long history in the community, there are certain contextual elements that are difficult to categorize as endogenous or exogenous to the program. JCCI has the distinction of being the oldest CIP in the country, so many residents in Jacksonville have grown up with the information provided by JCCI in the background of the debates in their community. This has

created a relationship around data in the community that is palpable and a role for JCCI that is well-defined.

In particular, Jacksonville seems to have a culture of problem-solving that, as noted in Chapter 6, is supportive of existing efforts rather than reproachful. Organizations working on an issue will frequently advocate to have their issue taken up by JCCI and highlighted, rather than trying to conceal their failures. "The red flag isn't *we blame you* … it is *how can we help*?" (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011)" It is not clear whether, after more than 25 years of indicator-oriented community problem-solving, JCCI *created* this culture within Jacksonville or whether that culture in Jacksonville created JCCI. Regardless, the ability to be able to highlight a particular issue without stakeholders becoming defensive and raise it to the level of a community issue is part of the wisdom of this CIP.

JCCI often describes itself as the "neutral convener" in the community (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011). Undeniably, it holds that position, which is instrumental to JCCI's ability to assemble all of the major stakeholders and many interested citizens around an issue. That role, however, cannot just be claimed by an organization. The community must bestow it. It is unclear whether JCCI was conferred that position at its inception following the Amelia Island Conference, or if it earned that position from the citizens of Jacksonville over time. The question is an important one, as how a CIP is initiated may have significant bearing on its immediate effectiveness.

The Infant Mortality Study identified a number of recommendations for the Implementation Task Force to advance. The two within case efforts examined in the Jacksonville context were the effort to increase access to healthy food options (address food deserts) and broaden sex education to help reduce teen pregnancy. Similar to the Quincy CIP experience, the successful effort engaged the critical stakeholders at the onset and pursued an outcome that was within their sphere of influence. While in another state policy environment, the latter effort might have been successful as well, pursuing enabling legislation at the state level was beyond the sphere of influence for the CIP effort.

7.2 Observations Across Cases

This section discusses key themes across the cases that were present, though they manifest themselves differently. In all of the cases in this research, the role of the indicators was foremost as a *signal* or a warning sign to the community. Behn (2003) noted that the purposes of data, such as performance measures, are many; he identifies eight. The scale at which CIPs operate relegates these purposes to only a few – to motivate, promote, or celebrate. While CIPs can engage in other uses of data such as facilitating learning and improvement, community-level information is only brought to a level that is actionable when systems are in place to deconstruct its meaning.

Deliberation and goal-setting; engagement and representation

Fertile areas for examination of these CIP cases occur around deliberation, collective agenda, and goal-setting, which also have implications for engagement and representation. As noted in the literature, the process of engagement and deliberation is thought to provide a forum for

the reconciliation of diverse values and produce in participants concern for the public interest (Pateman 1970; Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995; Hanna 2000; Putnam 2000; Fung 2004). Although included in the *Creating a citizen agenda* portion of the CIP model was broad citizen engagement and deliberation, empirically that did not happen in any of the cases examined. There was no actual deliberation across interests at the level of the general citizenry; citizens were frequently involved in issue identification, but prioritizing tended to occur at the level of the stakeholder. Just because an ideal is unrealizable, however, does not mean it does not have value; it provides something to measure against.

In Quincy and Jacksonville, the CIPs mixed citizen and stakeholder engagement at the onset of pursuing an issue such as childhood obesity or infant mortality. Although the JCCI process included bids and deliberations for prioritizing an issue, these activities occurred either within the Topic Selection Committee or in front of the JCCI Board of Directors. The Topic Selection Committee does contain general citizenry, but it is not clear from this research whether stakeholder presence meant that they dominated the conversations. In the case of the infant mortality issue selection, it certainly had stakeholder sponsorship. In Quincy, citizens were involved in issue-identification, but prioritization (or goal-setting) was primarily stakeholders.

Broad based citizen engagement only occurred in the Syracuse case, though at the time it was unconnected to an existing CIP. Yet despite the broad reach of the engagement process itself, or perhaps because of the broad reach, there was no deliberation among citizens for the community goal-setting. Ranking occurred through an anonymous voting process that did not have the same level of representation as did the engagement process. On-going engagement

activities through the CNY Foundation may provide opportunities for vetting indicators and incorporating local knowledge, but there is no indication that deliberative citizen forums for goal-setting would be part of that process.

Why was there a lack of citizen-level deliberation and what are the potential implications? There may be a variety of reasons that deliberation at this level did not occur, not the least of which is the practicality of such an endeavor. Another perspective is that there are inherent tensions between a form of engagement that addresses participation barriers and one that provides for achieving value alignment. Value alignment is thought to occur between those with disparate viewpoints through dialogue (Mutz 2006), while addressing participation barriers often requires ensuring engagement occurs in a familiar setting of "like" individuals (Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995). The extensive engagement process in Syracuse was possible in part due to the facilitators going *to* the citizens, rather than vice versa (Syracuse_Interview[2] 4/6/2011). In this case, by sending facilitators into the community, the visioning process in Syracuse involved populations that might not ordinarily have input. Theoretically, the process of goal-setting in a deliberative forum might lose those with lesser education or civic skills, diminishing the potential to hear different perspectives and connect with diverse backgrounds during the engagement process. What does this mean for citizen voice? Essentially, "voice" on an issue without a significant citizen forum depends on the representation of various interests and their ability to wield power or argue a case.

As noted in the literature, there are examples of value alignment occurring at the neighborhood level (Cohen and Rogers 2003; Fung 2004). Pragmatically, however, the approach (nominating,

Topic Selection Committee debate, case argument to the Board of Directors) of JCCI in Jacksonville may be the closest thing to community-level deliberations with mixed interests. While not fully addressing power issues (Cohen and Rogers 2003), this process includes a role for general citizenry and acknowledges the role of conflict in setting a community agenda (Mouffe 1999). In a sense, it *is* the provisional hegemony consensus in that there are competing interests that are beaten on the way to identifying the community focus around an issue. Again, it seems to work in Jacksonville in part because participants understand that, by design, the winner is *temporarily* the community focus; competing interests will have their opportunity again.

For Syracuse and Quincy, the aspect of prioritizing competing community priorities is still evolving. Both essentially prioritize within stakeholder issue groups; this is good for mobilizing action (Mutz 2006), but not as good for making the issue a community-wide effort. While Jacksonville has prioritization within the issue group for implementation strategies, issue prioritization still has a community-level focus. Syracuse, by way of CNY Foundation, will likely establish a community-level focus through rotating funding priorities. It is not yet clear what role citizens and stakeholders will have in establishing those priorities. For Quincy, it is not yet clear whether there will be ranking across the issue groups; emphasis on childhood obesity happened defacto because other issue groups had not yet gained momentum.

Dialogue, Integration, and Collaboration

Also drawn from the literature and incorporated into the CIP heuristic was the notion that dialogue fosters learning from data and information (Moynihan 2008): deliberation across

diverse interests offers the opportunity for value alignment (Mutz 2006); and deliberation among like interests offers the opportunity for problem-solving (Moynihan 2007) and action (Mutz 2006). Dialogue around the data or information within stakeholder groups occurred in Quincy and Jacksonville. As noted, for Syracuse the CNY Foundation was in the process of establishing structures around the data for review and dialogue. In these cases, the dialogue was important not only for understanding the information and deconstructing the complexity around an indicator (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011), but also for building the collaborations around action on an issue.

The practitioner community has been urging an agenda of linkages with government performance measures for community indicator programs (CIC 2007). Linkages were envisaged differently in the *Creating a responsive governance* section of the CIP heuristic, and supported by the cases. All three cases indicate that a successful CIP *is* well-integrated in the local governance, though none had links to municipal benchmarking. Structural integration, which would include the formal linkages to government performance measures, is likely less important than other types of integration for a CIP to focus on. The backbone of much of the CIPs' most fruitful activities were in the areas of participatory or functional integration.

Strategic integration was also important to all of the CIPs; at the local level, all of the cases had involvement from the mayor or an envoy of the office. In the case of FOCUS and the Cultural District effort, enabling policy at the local level was realized. In enabling policy at the state level, however, strategic integration for CIPs was less successful. Two of the CIP undertakings supporting the larger local initiatives failed at the state or federal policy level. The Jacksonville

and Quincy efforts both made good progress with local governance, but some endeavors required change at higher policy levels. This illustrated that some issues that are pressing locally may not be easily solved or influenced from a local level. Generally, the sphere of influence for a CIP is at the neighborhood, city, or county level. Moving outside of that arena, the data and community mobilization both become less effective.

Collaborative enterprise was at the core of all of the CIP cases. Some of the collaborations were inherent in the organization itself, such as Quincy; other collaborations were fluid and influenced by a particular effort, such as Jacksonville. All of the cases, however, were somewhat of a hybrid with regard to these formal and informal structures. All had structurally permanent collaborative partners, and all had areas where partners or citizens would temporarily engage functionally around a particular issue. Although with variations between cases, this hybrid approach appears to provide the stability and continuity necessary for an organization to establish routines around data and build organizational credibility. It also allows the flexibility for responsively assembling the essential partners, standard and atypical, around a specific issue.

Capacity and Leverage

A common factor also present across all of the CIP cases was the importance of leveraging the capacity of the organization. In this regard, collaboration also played an essential role. Another important aspect, at least for Quincy and Syracuse, was technical and funding assistance. Given the scale at which these programs function, none of them, regardless of the city size, had the staff or resources to carry out implementation activities without assistance.

As noted in Chapter 4, ABC in Quincy was fortunate to have an ally in the Marion Gardner Jackson Foundation (MGJF). This provided financial support not only for permanent staff, but also for technical assistance. While the technical assistance was aimed at ABC itself, it was devised with the intention of a *training the trainers* model. ABC collaborators learned impact evaluation and logic modeling, and then trained partner organizations in the techniques to leverage overall effectiveness in the community.

As noted in Chapter 5, FOCUS and the CNY Foundation in Syracuse were fortunate to have an ally in the Maxwell School of Syracuse University as the city's prolonged birth of a community indicator program materialized. The Maxwell School provided on-going technical assistance throughout the different iterations of the community indicators. Furthermore, the hours of student assistance that will be dedicated to ensure data integrity and annual updates make the CNY Vitals a possibility.

As a more established program, Jacksonville has had a longtime partnership with both the City of Jacksonville and the United Way of Northeast Florida. These partnerships give JCCI leverage to ensure substantial involvement from the private and nonprofit sectors. Although JCCI has substantially more resources directed to its indicator project and implementation efforts, it is still wholly reliant on collaborating funders, citizens, and organizations for the implementation of their recommendations around a study issue. An interesting point related to capacity is that with increased resources, JCCI would not increase the number of study and implementation projects that it does; they would add greater depth to their current activities (Jacksonville_Interview[3] 5/03/2011). This is because JCCI is savvy enough to realize that the

community's capacity itself is limited – too many community-wide conversations at the same time means that nothing is a priority.

7.3 Summary of Key Findings

In reviewing the cases, a number of key points regarding community indicator programs emerge. The within case observations are intended primarily to provide potential insight into CIPs that are similar in context or scale. I note that there are particular observations, such as Jacksonville's study process, that, while unique to that case, should be replicable. Across the cases, some observations are made that may be generalizable. The number of cases examined is too small to make any such claims, but I have tried to incorporate relevant observations made across cases and those made within case that do not seem context dependent into the CIP heuristic.

Within Case

Below is a summary of major points identified from the within case observations:

- Diffuse social networks can provide stability and sustainability to a budding effort, especially in smaller communities; (from Quincy)
- How a CIP is "born" influences credibility and influence as the neutral convener and ability to form critical collaborative partnerships; (from Jacksonville)
- Stakeholders and affected populations need to be involved early in initiatives, both to increase likelihood of success and to ascertain the CIP's possible level of influence. (from Quincy and Jacksonville)
- If representing and informing a citizen agenda is part of the CIP mission, multiple divides on the way from citizen concerns, indicators, and reality must be kept in mind; (from Syracuse)

- Deliberative learning forums with differing interests and issues are necessary – without them, *governance* (not just government) will continue to think and function within their individual sectors around community issues; (from Jacksonville and Quincy)

- Indicators do just that, they *indicate* something. The details of what is being indicated can only be known through a process of discovery. A study process, such as that used by JCCI, provides an opportunity to get past the assumptions around an issue and uncover cause-effect relationships in that community at that time. (from Jacksonville)

Across Case

Below is a summary of the major points identified in this discussion from observations across the three cases:

- At the scale at which a CIP attempts to operate, citizen-level deliberations for creating a citizen agenda are not feasible. Approximations of a collective agenda might be formed through a variety of processes that include: nominations, data review, public debates, and voting. (from all three cases)

- CIPs work at a scale and desire change at a level that requires them to have an effective means to leverage their capacity. This might be done through funding, volunteers, or access to expertise, but must include collaborations. (from all three cases)

- Stakeholder engagement in the CIP is important for both issue inquiry and implementation. On-going and ad-hoc involvement are both necessary, one to the surveillance and problem-solving work of the CIP and the other for addressing specific issues. (principally Jacksonville, but elements from all three cases)

- CIPs serve as the coordinating center of collaborative implementation, though the institutional design of the CIP and the size and ethos of the community may vary considerably. (from all three cases)

Additional Comments

I identified the Jacksonville Community Study process as a singularly important element for a variety of reasons. Contrary to Innes and Booher (2010), I have found that information *can* motivate action without being actionable information.

> …for knowledge to *motivate action*, it not only has to be tailor-made to particular times, places and conditions, but also that dialogue has to be a crucial part of both developing and using it. Influential information has to be seen to "fit" the situation, and it has to be both understood and trusted by those who are to act on it. (Innes and Booher 2010) p 144 *(emphasis added)*

Communities seem to scramble to address issues based on insufficient information, but for knowledge to motivate *appropriate* action, it needs to fit much of the criteria outlined above. Using JCCI's "light on the dashboard" analogy, they note that the light indicates that a diagnostic is necessary to determine what the light means. It motivates action, but the information it provides is not sufficient to know what to do. Thus, JCCI uses the Community Study process. Taking this analogy a bit further, that "light on the dashboard" (indicator) will not mean the same thing in a Ford as it does in a Subaru. Furthermore, it will not mean the same thing in a one-year old Ford as it does a ten-year old Ford. The information behind the indicator has general, contextual, and temporal implications. The point to take away is that an indicator serves the purpose of surveillance, getting attention, and problem-identification; they are not tools for problem-solving – that occurs as part of a larger process or program. Those roles of the indicator *do* facilitate change, but they only do so when implementation structures are in place.

8 Implications for CIPs and Planning

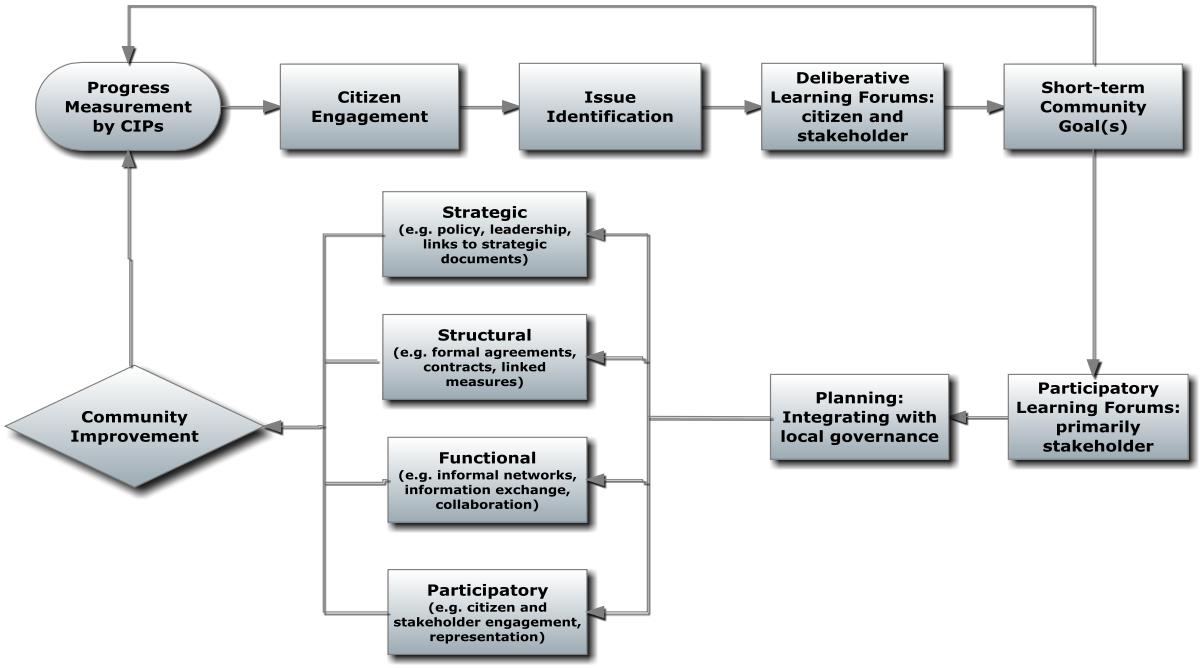
Forester describes the work of the planner as attention-shaping (Forester 1987). Essentially, that is a key reason why many communities around the country have launched Community Indicator Programs – to draw attention and get people involved in important issues. Other key uses have included providing a means for citizens and governance to monitor local trends and for citizens to have greater voice in community development priorities. As noted in the discussion, they are not tools for problem solving independently. Fundamentally, however, communities do not just want a way to help identify and get people motivated about local problems; they want a way to increase the ability of their community to organize resources to *respond* to local problems; they want resilience. When local improvement occurs using community indicators, there is much more at play than indicators; it is a systems approach around an issue for local governance and community involvement – *a community resilience system (CRS)*.

In this section, I identify the implications to both CIPs and planning of some of the case observations from the discussion. I then outline some areas for future research. Planning and community indicators have a future together that is not yet well defined. By identifying some existing and potential roles for planning within the CRS, this research begins to suggest an outline to this unclear relationship.

8.1 Implications for Community Indicator Programs and Planning

Implications of this research are many for communities with existing or developing community indicator programs. As noted, indicators can have an impact when they are they are part of a system. Below, I have modified the CIP heuristic (Figure 8.1), which I will now refer to as a CRS, as it better reflects what is happening empirically when community indicators are effective in bringing improvement.

Figure 8.1 Modified CIP Heuristic – a community resilience system (CRS)



Based on the information from the cases, key differences from the original concept include:

- Learning forums for value alignment (deliberative) at the community scale occur with a mix of representatives, not just the general citizenry;
- Community goal(s) or the collective agenda must be singular or few in number;
- Community collective agenda must be short in duration;

- Learning forums for action (participatory) and unpacking the complexity of an issue (the Study Process) also occur with a mix of representatives, though representatives must have the same purpose in mind;
- Integration happens as part of planning for implementation, occurring in a variety of ways, formal and informal.

Capacity, and role as the convener and collaborative center

The ability of the organization or collaboration to leverage their capacity through assets in their community was a key factor in all of the cases. Although capacity of the organization was an original consideration, a broader conception of capacity was inductively added. Implications for the development of community indicators and a CRS include the importance of reading the local culture and considering community resources broadly. Does the community have a "join in" ethos? What do the social networks look like; are they diffuse or are there just a few hubs? For smaller communities with few resources in particular, fostering diffuse connections around a nascent project provides greater assurance of continuity of the effort following transitions, as well as greater access to community assets.

The primary means for the CRS to harness the assets of the community, as noted in the Discussion in Chapter 7, is to be able to serve as a convener of collaborative efforts around an issue. For existing CIPs, this may mean critically looking at the roots of the organization and determining the best way to move forward to earn that position if it was not their birthright. For partners launching a CIP, implications would include examining their community context and determining what constellation of partners would let them take that title (of neutral convener) relatively quickly. In Quincy, for example, the alliance of the University of Illinois

Extension, the Adams County Health Department, and the United Way unintentionally provided the necessary constellation of partners, while establishing the role of the convener was intentional when JCCI was created in Jacksonville.

To date, public planners have not played a strong part in the community indicator movement. Internal versions of indicators, without similar collaboration and citizen engagement structures, such as Citystat (Behn 2006), occasionally grace municipal government or planning departments. If not municipal benchmarking efforts, they tend toward general indicators without implementation structures and have neither the same intent nor capacity for being a catalyst for change. Planning does have a role to play in community indicators as a CRS. Public planning may help to launch a CRS, but its appropriate role is as a collaborator; it should not try to assume the lead or usurp it from another organization.

Institutional design: Learning and Cyclical processes

The institutional design of the CRS for the community indicators can affect the outcome dramatically. This was part of the original conception of the CIP heuristic and verified as an important feature to ensure that community problem-identification and analysis is on-going. The performance management and participatory democracy literatures underscore that forums for dialogue are imperative to value alignment and learning; these case studies support that such forums are necessary at the scale of community data as well. Implications from this finding are reflected in the CRS in changes to the deliberative and participatory learning forums. The deliberative forum for value alignment and community agenda setting now includes stakeholders; the participatory learning forum is where the Study Process occurs (Figure 8.1). If

an indicator effort is to have a role in the community's ability to respond to problems, its resilience, then it needs to have a system that is not just cyclical but also includes such forums.

The Study Process/ participatory learning forum, as the stage of investigation and fact-finding around a local issue, is a critical part of the system design. Since cause-effect relationships may vary not only across contexts but also in the same context over time, the study process provides an opportunity to uncover these relationships and temporal changes in them. Further implications for CIPs include not only ensuring that investigation is part of the process, but also finding creative ways to support this critical part of the process when resources are limited.

As noted from the cases, what gets examined, how strategies are developed, and sometimes the likelihood of progress on the issue very much depends on who is sitting at the table. As Jacksonville illustrated, there may be many things unknown about the nature of the problem. Assembling the *unusual* suspects (e.g. for infant mortality one of the solutions included physical planning) for both a study and implementation process provides a new lens to solving the problem. Implications for initiatives from the CRS process is that planners should cast as broad a net possible for engagement at the beginning of the study and implementation processes.

Engagement, visioning, and measurement

Engagement in the CRS was important, but functioned differently than imagined from the findings borrowed from democracy literature and the performance management literatures. Engagement is an area of the CRS for which the planning profession has much to offer, and effective engagement is a vital ingredient in both the learning forums and convening stakeholder groups. Planning not only can provide expertise regarding engagement processes

and potential issues, but local public planning staff may also provide links to institutional structures, such as neighborhood associations. As with the case of Syracuse, establishing on-going connections to neighborhoods provides the potential for: 1) gaining local knowledge on budding community issues that may not be currently or properly measured as part of indicator revisions; 2) information exchange that allows residents and stakeholders to see when progress is being made – reducing the lag between change and public perception; and 3) maintaining channels of communication for when an *ad hoc* response that includes neighborhood residents is necessary to address a particular community issue. Opportunities for planners to collaborate and provide expertise in the engagement processes, therefore, would include initiating the CRS and on-going connections to the community.

Visioning too has long been a province of the planning field. Creating a set of community goals (or value alignment) from a visioning process is a tricky proposition, with or without the addition of community indicators. Understanding the divides moving from engagement to measurement to what happens "on the ground" is important as data is interpreted and decisions are made. As noted, a system for the community indicators that includes cyclical processes can provide continuous opportunities to revisit data accuracy, consistency, and community values. Roles for the planning community include: assisting in moving from identifying community concerns to choosing a community issue; and assisting in developing locally appropriate methods for capturing engagement information, coding, and categorizing it. Finally, by being cognizant of limitations of engagement strategies and measurement, planners can provide a voice for conscientious interpretation of the data and help to effectively communicate to its limitations to different audiences.

8.2 Closing Comments and Future Research

Successful Community Indicator Programs, with their accompanying systems of implementation as a CRS, have shown an ability to elicit program and community improvement. Important to their effectiveness, as noted, is their status as a convener. To take that role, the hosting organization preferably has a separate identity from a municipal government and planning and is perceived as a neutral entity, such as a nonprofit. With their roots in citizen voice and civil society, community indicators in a CRS can provide the information and structure to help communities be more resilient and responsive to change.

There are many directions for research regarding planning and the CRS. The following are some directly related to this study:

- This research suggests several points of insertion for the expertise of planners in the CRS of community indicators. Future research could include examining the role of the planner at these points in detail, particularly neighborhood planners in the forwarding and implementation of a particular initiative. The role of public planning in the individual initiatives forwarded by the CRS will vary by topic, but the established structures of the CRS would be relatively stable. When public planning is not a significant part of the CRS, why not? I suspect that the less internal capacity that the CIP has, the more important it is for public planning to be involved in the different stages of the CRS.

- As noted from the findings, stakeholders are highly involved in the agenda setting, problem solving, and implementation in the CRS. Does stakeholder presence in the deliberative forums mean that representative stakeholder groups dominate the conversations? If so, does it change the outcomes? What are approaches to ensure adequate voice during the topic selection process to those populations with the greatest participation barriers? Do these approaches vary significantly with the size of the community?

- Social networks play an important role in the capacity of the CRS to bring about change. Another area for exploration includes analyzing social networks in this setting. Social

network analysis of a CRS carrying out a study and implementation process for an initiative in a variety of differently sized cities would provide information in more detail on the role of networks and their form, and how they are impacted by scale.

- Since many community problems, whether health, environment, or education, are geographically and disproportionately concentrated in areas of poverty, how might that affect the way we think about what representation looks like for deciding community priorities? How might that affect the institutional structures for community resilience and problem solving?
- Does stakeholder presence in the deliberative forums mean that representative stakeholder groups dominate the conversations? If so, what, if any, are the implications?

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10 Appendix 1 – List of Interviews

Due to privacy constraints, I am only able to supply positions of the interviewees.

Quincy

Quincy_Interview[1] : former Univ of IL Adams Co Extension Director
Quincy_Interview[2] : ABC staff
Quincy_Interview[3] : University of Illinois Adams Co Extension staff 1
Quincy_Interview[4] : ABC staff
Quincy_Interview[5]: former Adams Co Department of Health staff
Quincy_Interview[6] : United Way of Adams County Director
Quincy_Interview[7] : Mercantile Bancorp, Inc.
Quincy_Interview[8]: Tri State Health Coalition Director
Quincy_Interview[9]: YMCA of Adams Co. staff
Quincy_Interview[10]: University of Illinois Adams Co Extension staff 2
Quincy_Interview[11]: former University of Illinois Department of Public Health
Quincy_Interview[12]: YMCA of Adams Co. Director
Quincy_Interview[13] : City of Quincy Planning and Development staff
Quincy_Interview[14] : former University of Illinois Adams Co Extension Director
Quincy_Interview[15] : ABC staff
Quincy_Interview[16] : Adams Co Department of Health staff
Quincy_Interview[17] : YMCA of Adams Co. staff
Quincy_Interview[18] : YMCA of Adams Co. staff

Syracuse

Syracuse_Interview[1]: FOCUS Greater Syracuse, Executive Director
Syracuse_Interview[2]: FOCUS Greater Syracuse, Board 1
Syracuse_Interview[3]: FOCUS Greater Syracuse, Board 2
Syracuse_Interview[4]: Parsons Engineering
Syracuse_Interview[5]: Syracuse University Maxwell School Community Benchmarks Program, Director
Syracuse_Interview[6]: CNY Community Foundation, Vice President
Syracuse_Interview[7]: FOCUS Greater Syracuse, Executive Director
Syracuse_Interview[8]: Syracuse University Maxwell School Community Benchmarks Program, Director
Syracuse_Interview[9]: Syracuse Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Director
Syracuse_Interview[10]: FOCUS Greater Syracuse, Board
Syracuse_Interview[11]: Onandaga Community College, Professor
Syracuse_Interview[12]: CNY Community Foundation, Vice President
Syracuse_Interview[13] : CNY Community Foundation, Program Officer
Syracuse_Interview[14] : CNY Community Foundation, Program Officer

Syracuse_Interview[15] : Syracuse University Maxwell School Community Benchmarks Program, Director

Jacksonville

Jacksonville_Interview[1]: JCCI, Program Director
Jacksonville_Interview[2]: JCCI, Program Director
Jacksonville_Interview[3]: JCCI, President and CEO
Jacksonville_Interview[5]: JCCI, Program Director
Jacksonville_Interview[6]: Healthy Babies Coalition of North Florida, Educator
Jacksonville_Interview[7]: JCCI, Program Director
Jacksonville_Interview[8]: University of Florida, physician
Jacksonville_Interview[9]: NE Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Executive Director

11 Appendix 2 – Interview Script

11.1 Introduction/Warm-up

Greet the person, state your name, and restate purpose of interview:

1. *"I am interested in how indicator programs are used to facilitate community change. Indicator Programs are collections of measures, like (name of local program), used to monitor economic, environmental and social trends in a community."*
2. *"Can you briefly tell me your relationship to XX program?"*
3. *"How did you come to be involved with XX program?"*

11.2 Questions about Program

I will use the following leading questions in quotes to begin the conversation. I will then listen and probe for the following general topics below. I will allow the interviewee bring up tangent information, as they feel it is relevant to the discussion. Some of these questions will not be applicable, depending on the interviewee.

1. *"How was the program formed?"*
    a. *Did the program form due to citizen concern around a particular issue?*
    b. *Was there a community event that sparked the initiation of the program?*

2. *"How does the program operate?"*
    a. *What is the role of the staff in developing and implementing initiatives?*
    b. *What is the role of the board in developing and implementing initiatives?*
    c. *What is the role of partner groups in developing and implementing initiatives?*
    d. *Describe the program's role in community initiatives. Does the program tend to take the lead on initiatives, follow another group's lead, or act as a convener of groups, or another approach?*
    e. *Are there any key community issues that were discovered or brought to public awareness from the indicators themselves?*

3. *"Who would you identify as **individuals** that provide leadership for this program? Has the leadership changed over time?"*

a. *Who led the inception of this program? What was the role(s) of the person(s) in the development of the program?*

b. *Who are the key persons keeping the program thriving? Are they the same, or have they changed over time? What has changes/lack of changes in the leadership meant to the program?*

c. *What is/has been the leadership style(s) of key persons in the program's history?*

4. *"Who would you identify as **organizations** that provide leadership for this program (besides the organization itself)? Has the this changed over time?"*

    a. *Were there key partner groups from the beginning? Was the whole program a coalition of organizations or a single organization? If a coalition, is the program still considered a coalition or has a particular group formed or taken the lead?*

    b. *What is the leadership style(s) of key organizations?*

    c. *Who are the partner groups? Track their involvement.*

11.3 Questions about Citizen Engagement

(some of these questions will not be applicable, depending on the interviewee)

1. *"Did the program have any formal or informal participation process when it was being formed? If yes, please describe them."*

    a. *Who was involved in the architecture of the engagement processes? Who planned it? Who facilitated it?*

    b. *How were individuals and groups selected and solicited for input? Where were the meetings held?*

    c. *What were the demographics of the attendees? Where any groups particularly under-represented? If yes, was that mitigated in any way?*

2. *"If the program did NOT have participation processes when it was formed, why not?"*

    a. *If they wanted to have engagement processes, but could not for capacity reasons – ask them what they think the implications of not having it are? Who would the interviewee have liked to involve?*

    b. *Ask the interviewee what they think the pros and cons of engagement are?*

    c. *Would they have done things differently in retrospect? What?*

3. *"Does the program have any formal or informal **on-going** engagement processes? If yes, please describe them."*
    a. Are engagement activities regular or irregular?
    b. Who is involved? Are there targeted groups? Are there efforts to broaden the reach of the engagement and ensure representation? If so, what?
    c. What were the demographics of the attendees for on-going engagement?

11.4 Closing

1. *"Is there anything else you want to tell me about XX program?"*

I will summarize major points or messages from the conversation (what really stands out) and ask interviewee if these are correct. I will allow time for response, and make corrections as necessary.

2. "Thanks so much for your time and your willingness to provide information for my research"

After the Interview

- Immediately after the interview, I will make notes to myself regarding insights or further questions about the program sparked by the interview.
- As soon as possible, I will listen to the tape (if applicable) and write a summary of what I learned regarding the categories of interest. I will use the language of the interviewee, or note otherwise as applicable. I will add categories or factors to my interest topics if they are deemed relevant to the policy/programmatic change of interest.

12 Appendix 3 –Lists of Indicators from Case Study Reports

1. 2010 Alliance for Building Community (Adams County / Quincy) Community Indicators

Education

1. Educational attainment
2. School enrollment
3. Preschool enrollment
4. Per pupil spending
5. Feeling safe at school, home, and in neighborhood
6. Intention of high school seniors to pursue higher education

Environment and Recreation

1. Miles of trails
2. Acres of green space in city
3. Acres of green space in county
4. Access to recreation
5. Tons of material recycled

Health

1. Percentage of uninsured adults
2. Percentage of two year olds immunized
3. Percentage of adults meeting the recommended guidelines for exercise
4. Percentage of adults at risk for binge drinking
5. Percentage of county residents overweight or obese
6. Percentage of county residents who do not fill prescriptions due to cost
7. Percentage of county residents who do not go to the doctor due to cost

Income

1. Median household income
2. Per capita income
3. Percentage of county residents living below poverty level
4. Percentage of county children living below poverty level
5. Percent of personal income from non-labor sources
6. Percentage of households with public assistance
7. County average hourly wage for renters (estimated)
8. Unemployment Rate

Demographics

1. Population

2. Number of households
3. Average household size
4. Average family size
5. Percent of households with children under 18
6. Percent of households headed by single mothers
7. Median age
8. Percentage male; percentage female
9. Ethnic percentages
10. Percent below 18
11. Percent over 65

2. 2010 Onondoga County / Greater Syracuse Community Indicators

Aging

1. Population Living in Poverty
2. Percent with Disability
3. Senior Housing Options in Onondaga County
4. Nursing Home Beds per 1,000 Seniors
5. Number of Medicare Enrollees
6. EPIC Enrollment
7. Senior Mortality

Culture & Recreation

1. Art Grants
2. Recreation
3. Parks Attendance
4. Volunteer Hours

Economy

1. Labor Force
2. Employment
3. Unemployment Rate
4. Employment Percentage by Sector
5. Employment and Percent Change by Industry
6. Net New Business Growth by Size
7. Median Annual Income
8. Per Capita Federal Spending in Onondaga County
9. Sales Tax Revenue
10. Cost of Living Index

Education

1. Educational Attainment
2. School Enrollment
3. Per Pupil Spending
4. Attendance
5. Suspension Rate
6. Graduation Rates
7. LEP Rate
8. English and Mathematics Regent Exams
9. English Language Arts Exam
10. Mathematics Exam

Environment

1. Pesticide Use
2. Recycling Rates
3. Per Capita Municipal Solid Waste
4. Population Density
5. Toxics
6. Air Quality
7. Water Violations
8. Water Quality
9. Water Treatment Levels

Government

1. Expenditure by Sector
2. Deficit per Capita
4. Active Voters
5. Medicaid Eligible
6. Number of TANF Individuals
7. Online Access

Health

1. Access to Physician Care
2. Physician Practice Settings
3. Appropriate Hospital Care
4. The Uninsured
5. Obesity
6. Diabetes
7. Smoking
8. Asthma
9. Sexually Transmitted Diseases
10. Cancer Incidence Rates
11. Cancer Detection

12. Cancer Mortality Rates
13. Leading Causes of Death
14. Mortality Rates
15. Infant and Maternal Mortality Rates

Housing

1. Age of Housing Structure
2. Median Rental Values
3. Percentage of Renter-Occupied Units
4. Homeownership Rate
5. Rental Vacancy Rate
6. Homeowner Vacancy Rate
7. Median Home Sale Price
8. Foreclosure Rates
9. Number of Homes Sold
10. Public Housing Authority Inventory

Public Safety

1. Violent Crimes
2. Property Crimes
3. Domestic Violence
4. DWI Incidents
5. Drug Crimes
6. Service Calls

Transportation

1. Centro Ridership
2. Centro Miles Traveled
3. Hancock Air Passengers
4. Average Commute Time
5. Gasoline Sales
6. Bridge Ratings

Youth

1. Percentage of Families with Children Living in Poverty
2. Children Admitted to Foster Care
3. Percentage of Children Receiving Public Assistance
4. Reports of Children Abused/Maltreated
5. Registered Child Care Centers
6. Serious Child Care Violations
7. Adolescent Pregnancies
8. Early Prenatal Care
9. Low Birth Weights
10. Youth Arrests

3. 2010 Quality of Life Progress Report for Jacksonville and Northeast Florida

Achieving Education Excellence

Key Indicators

1. Public high school graduation rate
2. Kindergarten readiness

Supporting Indicators

3. Third graders reading at grade level
4. Tenth graders reading at grade level
5. Per pupil expenditures
6. School safety incidents per 1000 students
7. Higher education degrees awarded

Additional Indicators

8. Students absent 21 days or more
9. Public school first grade promotion
10. Tenth graders at grade level in math
11. Public high school dropout rate
12. HS graduates ready for college (reading)
13. HS graduates ready for college (math)
14. Satisfaction with public education
15. Exceptional students receive diploma

Growing a Vibrant Economy

Key Indicators:

1. Total employment (2009)
2. Unemployment rate (2009)
3. Per capita income (2008)

Supporting Indicators:

4. Adults with bachelor's degrees or higher (2009) 27.3%
5. Households paying >30% for housing (2009) 42%
6. Downtown residents 2,704
7. JAXPORT tonnage (millions) (2010) 8.1
8. Bed tax and sales tax collections (millions) (2009)

Additional Indicators:

9. Total taxable value of real property (2009)

10. Recipients of public assistance: TANF (2010)
11. Recipients of public assistance: Food Stamps (2010)
12. Average monthly JEA utilities costs (2009)
13. New housing starts (2009)
14. Average annual wage (2009)
15. Unemployment benefit claims (2009)

Preserving the Natural Environment

Key Indicators:

1. Days the Air Quality Index is "good" (2009)
2. Average daily water consumption (gallons) (2009)

Supporting Indicators:

3. Streams meeting dissolved oxygen standard (2009)
4. Streams meeting bacteria standard (2009)
5. Residential recycling (pounds per person) (2010)
6. Acres of conservation/preservation land (2009)

Additional Indicators:

7. Gallons of motor fuels sold per person (2010)
8. New septic-tank permits issued (2009)

Promoting Social Wellbeing and Harmony

Key Indicators:

1. Is racism a local problem? (2010)
2. Births to single mothers (2009)
3. Birth to mothers without high school degree (2009)

Supporting Indicators:

4. Do you volunteer? (2010)
5. Foster children per 1,000 children (2010)
6. Homeless count per 100,000 people (2010)
7. Philanthropy given to federated campaigns (2009)

Additional Indicators:

8. Have you personally experienced racism? (2010)
9. Volunteer more than 7 hours per week? (2010)
10. Births to teen mothers per 1,000 teens (2009)
11. Subsequent births to teen mothers (2009)
12. Children of divorcing parents (2009)
13. Foster care children reunited <12 months (2010)
14. Foster care children adopted < 24 months (2010)

Enjoying Arts, Recreation, Culture

Key Indicators:

1. Public and private arts support per person (2009)
2. Public performances and events (2009)

Supporting Indicators:

3. Musical performances attendance per 1,000 (2009)
4. Museum attendance per 1,000 people (2009)
5. Zoo attendance per 1,000 people (2009)
6. Attendance at sports events per 100,000 (2009)
7. Park expenditures for activities/maintenance (2009)
8. Library circulation per person (2010)

Sustaining a Healthy Community

Key Indicators:

1. Infant mortality rate per 1,000 (2009)
    - White (2009)
    - Black (2009)
2. People without health insurance (2009)

Supporting Indicators:

3. Cancer deaths per 100,000 people (2009)
4. New HIV cases (2009)
    - White (2009)
    - Black (2009)
5. STD reports per 100,000 people (2009)
6. Suicide rates per 100,000 people (2009)
7. Seniors (65 and older) (2009)
8. Youth (10-19) (2009)

Additional Indicators:

9. Early prenatal care (2009)
10. Newborns with healthy birthweights (2009)
11. Seniors feel safe in their neighborhoods (2010)
12. HIV/AIDS-related deaths per 100,000 (2009)
13. Packs of cigarettes sold per person (2009)
14. Lung cancer deaths per 100,000 people (2009)
15. Heart disease deaths per 100,000 people (2009)
16. Local health care seen as good or excellent (2010)

Maintaining Responsive Government

Key Indicators:

1. Voter turnout (2010)
2. Satisfaction with basic city services (2010)

Supporting Indicators:
3. Racial diversity of elected officials (2010)
4. Gender diversity of elected officials (2010)
5. Neighborhood organizations (2010) 602
6. Can you influence local government? (2010)
7. Keeping up with local government news (2010)

Additional Indicators:
8. Voter registration (2010)
9. Satisfaction with public-safety services (2010)
10. Can you name two City Council members? (2010)
11. Elected leadership rated high quality (2010)
12. School Board leadership rated high quality (2010)

Moving Around Efficiently and Safely
Key Indicators:
1. Commute times of 25 minutes or less (2010)
2. Average weekday JTA bus ridership per 1,000 (2009)

Supporting Indicators:
3. Total JIA passengers (millions) (2009)
4. Serious bicycle accidents per 100,000 (2009)
5. Average weekday miles of JTA bus service (2009)
6. Motor vehicle accidents per 1,000 people (2009)

Additional Indicators:
7. JTA bus headways within 30/60 minutes (2009)
8. Average weekday Skyway ridership (2009)
9. Nonstop flights destinations at JIA (2009)
10. Average available seats on airplane flights (2010)

Keeping the Community Safe
Key Indicators:
1. People feel safe in their neighborhood (2010)
2. Index crimes per 100,000 people (2009)

Supporting Indicators:
3. People report being victims of a crime (2010)
4. Juvenile delinquents per 1,000 youth (2009)
5. Murder rate (2009)
6. Child abuse reports per 1,000 children (2009)

Additional Indicators:

7. Police-call response times (2009)
8. Rescue-call response times < four minutes (2009)
9. Fire-call response times < four minutes (2009)
10. Juvenile alcohol/drug arrests per 1,000 youth (2009)
11. Domestic violence crime reports (2009)
12. Domestic-violence-related homicides (2009)
13. Violent deaths per 10,000 youth (2008)