

Mapping Prisoner Reentry: An Action Research Guidebook

Second Edition

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research for safer communities



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Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	I
CONTENTS	II
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	IV
INTRODUCTION	1
SECTION 1: WHY MAP PRISONER REENTRY?	3
PRISONER REENTRY IN CONTEXT	3
<i>Housing</i>	3
<i>Employment and Income</i>	4
<i>Substance and Alcohol Use</i>	4
<i>Health</i>	4
<i>Families and Children</i>	4
WHY MAP PRISONER REENTRY?	6
<i>Where Are Prisoners Returning?</i>	6
<i>What Are the Characteristics of Areas with High Concentrations of Releasees?</i>	6
<i>Are Resources and Services Accessible to Those in Need?</i>	8
<i>Are Reentry Programs Succeeding?</i>	8
THE REENTRY MAPPING NETWORK: AN ACTION RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP	10
SECTION 2: CREATING REENTRY MAPS	14
OBTAINING REENTRY DATA	14
<i>Identifying Data Sources</i>	14
<i>Deciding What Data to Request</i>	16
<i>Overcoming Barriers to Data Acquisition</i>	19
<i>Interpreting the Data</i>	21
OBTAINING CONTEXTUAL DATA	23
<i>Sources of Contextual Data</i>	23
<i>Primary Data Collection</i>	25
CREATING MAPS	27
<i>Geocoding Accurately</i>	27
<i>Communicating Effectively with Maps</i>	30
<i>Types of Maps</i>	31
<i>Avoiding Common Mapping Pitfalls</i>	35
SECTION 3: USING REENTRY MAPPING TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY WELL-BEING	39
BUILDING A REENTRY MAPPING PARTNERSHIP	39
<i>Leadership</i>	39
<i>Involving Other Stakeholders</i>	40
<i>Potential Partners</i>	41
THE REENTRY MAPPING INITIATIVE	48
<i>Convening the Partnership</i>	48
<i>Setting Priorities</i>	48
<i>Guiding Mapping and Analysis</i>	50
<i>Disseminating Findings and Initiating Change</i>	51
<i>Creating a Sustainable Reentry Mapping Partnership</i>	51
USING ANALYSIS RESULTS TO INFORM ACTION	53
<i>Promoting Community Education and Awareness</i>	53
<i>Guiding the Planning and Implementation of Reentry Initiatives</i>	57
<i>Influencing Public Policy</i>	58
<i>Improving Service Delivery</i>	60

CONCLUSION	62
REFERENCES	63
APPENDIX A: THE REENTRY MAPPING NETWORK CASE STUDIES.....	67
RMN SITE CASE STUDIES	68
<i>Denver, Colorado.....</i>	<i>68</i>
<i>Des Moines, Iowa.....</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Hartford, Connecticut.....</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>Indianapolis, Indiana.....</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Louisville, KY.....</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>Milwaukee, WI.....</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>Oakland, CA.....</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>Providence, RI.....</i>	<i>94</i>
<i>San Diego, California.....</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Seattle, Washington.....</i>	<i>104</i>
<i>Washington, D.C.....</i>	<i>108</i>
<i>Winston-Salem, NC.....</i>	<i>111</i>
THE REENTRY MAPPING NETWORK MODEL.....	117
<i>Technical Assistance to RMN Partners.....</i>	<i>117</i>
<i>Web Site and Email Group.....</i>	<i>118</i>
<i>Conference Calls.....</i>	<i>118</i>
<i>Cross-Site Meetings.....</i>	<i>119</i>
ASSESSMENT OF THE REENTRY MAPPING NETWORK.....	120
SUMMARY	122
APPENDIX B: RESULTS OF RMN PARTNER SURVEY	123
APPENDIX C: POTENTIAL DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS DATA	126
APPENDIX D: SAMPLE DATA REQUEST.....	130
APPENDIX E: SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.....	131
APPENDIX F: SAMPLE REENTRY ASSET MAPPING PROTOCOL (WINSTON-SALEM)	134
APPENDIX G: SAMPLE REENTRY POLICY BRIEF (HARTFORD).....	137

Executive Summary

The Reentry Mapping Network (RMN) is a collaborative effort by community-based organizations and the Urban Institute, designed to create community change through the mapping and analysis of neighborhood-level data on prisoner reentry. RMN partners collect and analyze local data related to incarceration, reentry, and community well-being, and work with their communities, local organizations, and policymakers to develop strategies for addressing prisoner reentry in their regions. This guidebook provides information on how interested parties can understand and address prisoner reentry at the local level through mapping and data analysis. It outlines the concepts and methods underlying the RMN and the experiences of the RMN partners so that other jurisdictions can learn from these experiences and create more successful reentry strategies in their own communities. The guidebook presents this information in three sections:

Section 1: Why Map Prisoner Reentry?

The challenges associated with prisoner reentry are wide-ranging. Mapping can provide valuable information on how prisoner reentry is affecting local communities, and the extent to which existing resources and services are addressing the needs of reentering populations. The RMN employs an action research approach, partnering with community members and local stakeholders to access and analyze reentry data, create effective maps, and develop plans for improving reentry-related outcomes.

Section 2: Creating Reentry Maps

Maps depicting the concentration of released prisoners in the local area are the foundation of any reentry mapping initiative. Reentry mapping partnerships must access data on returning prisoners from state departments of corrections (DOCs) and other criminal justice agencies. This reentry information is supplemented with contextual data on the communities to which prisoners return, as well as data on the services and resources available to meet the needs of former prisoners. After analyzing these data, reentry mapping partners create maps and other products that convey information on the dynamics of prisoner reentry to the public. For maps to be useful, they must follow good design principles to ensure they effectively communicate information and are easy to interpret.

Section 3: Using Reentry Mapping to Promote Community Well-Being

The purpose of obtaining, analyzing, and mapping data on prisoner reentry is to provide information to the public, government officials, policymakers, service providers, former prisoners, and others on the local dynamics of prisoner reentry. These stakeholders can then draw on this information to improve and refine local policy, service delivery, and community responses to reentry. A reentry mapping initiative should form a partnership of local stakeholders, to guide this process of disseminating reentry mapping to improve communities. The partnership can advise on the research, analysis, and production of maps and other products; educate community members and important stakeholders about the findings; and devise and implement strategies to respond to prisoner reentry based on the information gained in the project. A diverse partnership, representing a range of community and institutional perspectives and resources, is ideal, and strong leadership is needed to keep the activities of the partnership coordinated.

Introduction

The importance of understanding and addressing prisoner reentry at the community level cannot be overstated. With 656,000 prisoners released from state and federal correctional institutions each year,¹ the return of these prisoners to their neighborhoods and communities poses significant challenges. These include increased public safety concerns and the limited availability of jobs, housing, and social services to meet the needs of returning prisoners. Moreover, today's intense cycle of arrest, removal, incarceration, and reentry, frequently followed by rearrest and reincarceration, has had a disparate impact on a relatively small number of communities around the country. Over the past decade, a rising number of released prisoners have returned disproportionately to major metropolitan areas. Providence, for example, makes up 17 percent of Rhode Island's population, but more than a third (36 percent) of the people released from Rhode Island prisons in 2003 returned to Providence.² Within Providence, the effects of incarceration and reentry were even more concentrated, with half of the sentenced offenders coming from 5 of the city's 25 neighborhoods. Similar concentrations have been observed in several other major metropolitan areas. These studies have also documented that the communities receiving the highest concentrations of returning prisoners are often among the least able to provide the support needed by these prisoners for successful reintegration.³

Given the significant impact prisoner reentry is having on local communities, it is particularly important to have a clear spatial understanding of the characteristics of reentry at the local level. Mapping is one of the most powerful means of capturing important concentrations, patterns, and spatial trends in data, especially as they relate to community well-being.⁴ Maps graphically illustrate underlying concentrations and patterns that clarify the ways in which social phenomena, such as prisoner reentry, affect communities. Accordingly, strategies to tackle problems resulting from prisoner reentry can be more effective when they are informed by the mapping of such information as the locations of returning prisoners, reentry services and resources, and parole offices.

Mapping any local phenomenon, however, requires local data. Institutions in a number of cities have successfully built data systems detailing numerous indicators of community well-being that have served to engage their community in local policymaking and community development.⁵ Applying this model to the issue of prisoner reentry, the Urban Institute established the Reentry Mapping Network (RMN), a group of jurisdictions applying a data-driven, spatial approach to prisoner reentry.

The goal of the RMN is fourfold:

1. To develop a better understanding of the dynamics and correlates of prisoner reentry at the local level;

¹ Harrison and Beck (2005).

² Rhode Island Family Life Center (2004).

³ La Vigne and Kachnowski (2003); La Vigne and Mamalian (2003); La Vigne and Thompson (2003).

⁴ Kingsley et al. (1997).

⁵ Bailey (2000).

2. To engage local stakeholders and practitioners in developing strategies to address reentry-related challenges;
3. To facilitate greater coordination and collaboration among state and local agencies and organizations around this work; and
4. To promote peer learning on how communities can use data to identify and address incarceration and reentry-related challenges.

The purpose of this guidebook is to describe the concepts and methods underlying the RMN, so that other jurisdictions can learn from these experiences and replicate the network's efforts in the interest of crafting more effective and successful reentry strategies at the community level. This guidebook specifically documents the strategies employed by the twelve earliest partners in the RMN, based in Denver, Colorado; Des Moines, Iowa; Hartford, Connecticut; Indianapolis, Indiana; Louisville, Kentucky; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Oakland, California; Providence, Rhode Island; San Diego, California; Seattle, Washington; Washington, D.C.; and Winston-Salem, North Carolina (see appendix A for detailed case studies of each of these twelve sites).⁶ The first section outlines the history and key concepts of mapping prisoner reentry and describes the origins of the RMN and how it operates. The report then offers guidance on the development of a data-driven, community-based prisoner reentry effort. Specifically, the guidebook describes the steps associated with collecting, mapping, analyzing, and presenting corrections data. The report then discusses the identification of potential partners in the community and outlines strategies to engage these partners in efforts to inform policymaking and community-building efforts. It offers detailed information on how to use maps and analysis results to aid in the development of reentry programs and policy efforts, and presents strategies for building collaborations that are sustainable over time.

Throughout the guidebook, efforts are made to provide concrete examples from the RMN sites' experiences. It is hoped that these examples, along with a "how to" approach to reentry mapping, will provide practical and useful information to communities throughout the country that are interested in developing more informed and effective local responses to prisoner reentry.

⁶ The experiences of the two newest RMN partners, Atlanta, Georgia, and Chicago, Illinois, are not included in this guidebook. Both of these sites began their projects in fall 2006.

Section 1: Why Map Prisoner Reentry?

Any initiative to map prisoner reentry must begin with a consideration of why such mapping is valuable for a given community and what purposes it can serve within broader discussions of criminal justice policy and general community well-being. Exploring such considerations at the start can guide and focus the efforts of the reentry mapping team, and will also enhance their ability to convince potential partners of the importance of the effort. Below is a brief discussion of the issue of prisoner reentry, as well as some ways in which local mapping and data analysis can enhance our understanding of the topic.

Prisoner Reentry in Context

The process of prisoner reentry has far-reaching implications, not just for the individuals being released from prison and their friends and families, but also for the neighborhoods and communities to which they return. To many casual observers, “prisoner reentry” may appear to be simply a new name for something that has been occurring since the first prisoners were incarcerated in this county over three centuries ago. Indeed, roughly 95 percent of people incarcerated in state and federal prisons are eventually released.⁷ Yet prisoner reentry today presents new and greater challenges for a number of reasons. First, prisoners are being incarcerated and released at historic volumes. Approximately 656,000 people were released from state and federal prisons in 2003 alone,⁸ a fourfold increase in the past two decades. The sheer magnitude of released offenders has a direct impact on public safety when one considers the odds of their reoffending: On average, two out of every three released prisoners will be rearrested and one in two will return to prison within three years of release.⁹ Reentering prisoners face a range of challenges that can inhibit their efforts to reintegrate as functioning community members and to avoid recidivism.¹⁰ These challenges include housing, employment, drug and alcohol addiction, health problems and access to healthcare, and family reunification.

Housing

The housing options for former prisoners who cannot rely on family and friends are limited. Federal law prohibits many former prisoners from entering public housing and other federally funded housing programs. Instead, they must rely on halfway houses, homeless shelters, housing programs, or the private market, where affordability and availability may be highly restricted. One study found that 11 percent of prisoners returning to New York City from 1995 to 1998 entered a homeless shelter within two years of their release.¹¹ Homelessness is not new for some returning prisoners: A 1997 study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that roughly 13 percent of prisoners who were scheduled to be released in the next year had been homeless at some time during the year prior to their arrest.¹²

⁷ Hughes and Wilson (2005).

⁸ Harrison and Beck (2005).

⁹ Langan and Levin (2002).

¹⁰ For an overview of the challenges of prisoner reentry, see Travis (2005) and Travis, Solomon, and Waul (2001).

¹¹ Metraux and Culhane (2004).

¹² Mumola (2000).

Employment and Income

Many former prisoners have unstable employment histories and lack job skills. According to a study published in 2003, between 21 and 38 percent of state prisoners were unemployed just prior to their arrest.¹³ Among those who were employed prior to arrest, more than one-third reported monthly incomes of less than \$1,000. Approximately 40 percent of state and federal prisoners in 1997 had not completed high school or attained a GED.¹⁴ Adding to these barriers, formerly incarcerated people are faced with a decreasing availability of low-skill jobs, are legally prohibited from certain types of jobs, and often lack the identification documents necessary to secure employment.

Substance and Alcohol Use

Many prisoners have a history of substance and alcohol abuse, and continue to struggle with these problems upon release. A 1999 study reports that roughly 40 percent of prisoners were admitted for drug-related convictions.¹⁵ Nearly two-thirds of prisoners reported a history of substance abuse, and half reported being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at the time of their arrest.

Health

Released prisoners suffer disproportionately from health-related problems and can pose health risks to their family members, intimate partners, and communities. Prisoners experience infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, and tuberculosis (TB) at rates five to ten times higher than those of the general public,¹⁶ and 16 percent are estimated to suffer from mental illness.¹⁷ Health problems can also hinder a released prisoner's ability to secure employment.

Families and Children

More than half (56 percent) of state prisoners are parents of minor children.¹⁸ Maintaining contact during incarceration and reuniting with family members upon release can pose significant challenges. Former prisoners may have lost custody of their children during their incarceration, and may be faced with a complex legal process before reunification is even possible. Child support obligations add to these difficulties: One study of the Massachusetts prison and parole population found that nearly 25 percent of prisoners owed an average of \$17,000 in child support arrearages upon release.¹⁹

¹³ Harlow (2003).

¹⁴ Harlow (2003).

¹⁵ Mumola (1999).

¹⁶ Hammett, Roberts, and Kennedy (2001).

¹⁷ Ditton (1999), cited in National Commission on Correctional Health Care (2002).

¹⁸ Mumola (2000).

¹⁹ Thoennes (2002).

Unfortunately, returning prisoners are less prepared for the challenges of reentry than in previous years, with a smaller share of prisoners taking part in educational and substance abuse treatment programs.²⁰ These challenges are compounded by the fact that prisoners return disproportionately to metropolitan areas,²¹ and within those areas, they are often concentrated in a handful of neighborhoods that are among the least able to provide support and assistance.²² Incarceration and reentry are significantly altering the social and economic landscapes within these neighborhoods. Knowledge of the spatial patterns of reentry is critical to ensuring that sufficient and effective support is targeted to the communities where the costs and consequences of incarceration and reentry are experienced most acutely. We now turn to a discussion of how mapping and analyzing reentry related information can be useful in the development of community-level prisoner reentry efforts.

²⁰ Lynch and Sabol (2001).

²¹ Lynch and Sabol (2001).

²² La Vigne and Kachnowski (2003); La Vigne and Mamalian (2003); La Vigne and Thompson (2003).

Why Map Prisoner Reentry?

Clearly, prisoner reentry is an important phenomenon affecting individuals and communities in many ways. However, the patterns and spatial distribution of reentry are not well understood. Prior research provides some general information on reentry patterns, but targeted mapping efforts can provide a more detailed illustration of the reentry phenomenon at the local level and can enable local policymakers and service providers to develop more effective interventions. The utility of reentry mapping is best illustrated through the types of questions it can help answer.

Where Are Prisoners Returning?

Analyses of prisoner reentry that are limited to the county or city level may obscure important patterns and trends occurring within the community. More detailed mapping and analysis can help identify areas that experience high concentrations of returning prisoners. For example, mapping the last known address of released prisoners can pinpoint concentrations within cities and neighborhoods, down to the city block. This information can provide local policymakers and community organizers with the capacity to target intervention efforts and resources in the areas that need them most. Because the use of geographic information system (GIS) software enables spatial analysis across a variety of variables of interest, one can map not only where prisoners are returning, but also what types of prisoners are returning to specific neighborhoods. For example, one could map released prisoners based on whether they are under post-release supervision, as those under supervision are more likely to be monitored and to be connected with programs and services than their counterparts who are released unconditionally. This difference can have implications for service delivery, in that service providers may want to target geographic clusters of unsupervised releasees, and maps can help them do this.

What Are the Characteristics of Areas with High Concentrations of Releasees?

Identifying and responding to the challenges of prisoner reentry requires an understanding of the nature of the communities to which prisoners return. Thus, examining neighborhood indicators of both basic demographics and community well-being (such as educational attainment, income, use of public assistance, race, place of birth, language, ancestry, marital status, infant mortality, single-parent households, housing tenure, vacant housing, voter status, etc.) can aid in the development of a measure of community resources, which indicates the extent to which communities are equipped to address reentry challenges. The maps in figure 1 on the following page, for example, clearly illustrate that many of the neighborhoods most affected by reentry also have high poverty rates. These findings are consistent with other research identifying evidence of “spatial injustice,” whereby the poorest members of society are disproportionately affected when prisoners are released to their communities.²³

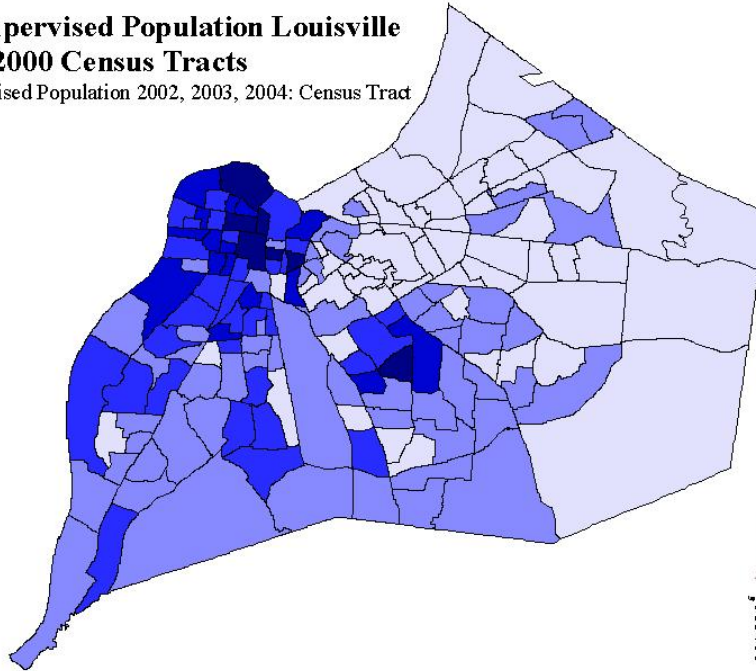
²³ Rengert (1989).

Figure 1: Prisoner Reentry and Household Income in Louisville

**Re-Entry Supervised Population Louisville
2000 Census Tracts**

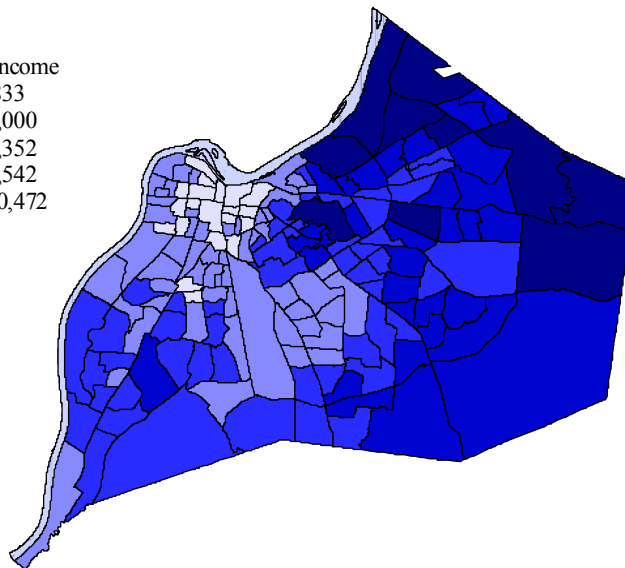
Re-Entry Supervised Population 2002, 2003, 2004: Census Tract

- 4 - 26
- 27 - 53
- 54 - 87
- 88 - 143
- 144 - 246



**Median Household Income Distribution
Louisville, Kentucky 2000 Census Tracts**

- Ohio River
- \$6,086 - \$21,833
- \$21,834 - \$35,000
- \$35,001 - \$49,352
- \$49,353 - \$73,542
- \$73,543 - \$110,472



Are Resources and Services Accessible to Those in Need?

One of the most useful applications of spatial analysis as a policy tool is the generation of maps to guide resource allocation. Mapping the location of released prisoners in conjunction with the services available to them can illustrate the match between ex-offender needs and service availability. Such mapping may detect a “service delivery mismatch,” in which services exist but are not easily accessible to their target clients. Figure 2 on the following page illustrates one such example: In Hartford, the locations of substance abuse treatment, educational opportunities, and other services for former prisoners generally correspond to the areas with the highest concentration of former prisoners. However, there seems to be a lack of services in an area in the northern part of the city (circled in red on the map) which has a high concentration of returning prisoners.

Another example that illustrates how reentry mapping might guide resource allocation is the need for safe and affordable housing for returning prisoners. Some prisoners have no housing available to them after their release and have no remaining ties to family and friends who might assist them. These housing challenges are exacerbated when prisoners return to their old neighborhoods only to find that there are no shelters or affordable housing options for them. Mapping the locations of shelters, halfway houses, and other affordable housing in relation to where inmates return can illustrate the extent of unmet housing needs and provide guidance in choosing appropriate sites for new housing options for returning prisoners.

Mapping can also inform law enforcement and parole efforts to mitigate the public safety risks associated with high concentrations of released prisoners. For example, mapping gang activity within the community and gang affiliation among released prisoners may help in pinpointing those who are at greatest risk of committing violent crimes after release. The type of reentry interventions that will benefit this subgroup of active gang members may differ from the interventions that are most successful for the general population of releasees.

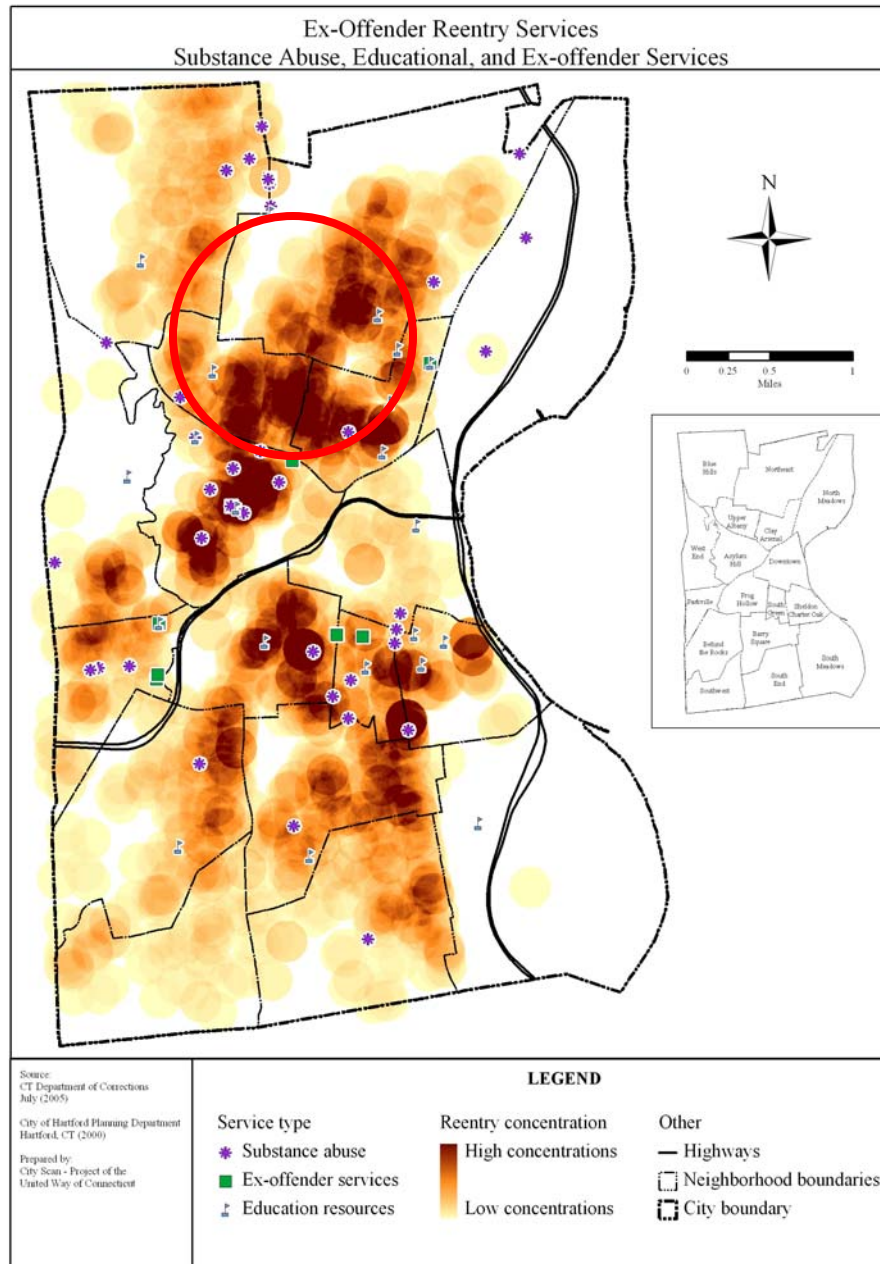
Are Reentry Programs Succeeding?

Mapping can also serve as a tool for assessing the effectiveness of intervention efforts. For example, if an intervention involves attracting businesses to a community with high concentrations of returning inmates, mapping the change in employment rates over time can provide evidence that the new businesses are having a positive impact on employment compared with other areas in the city. While this information cannot provide a basis for definitive causal inferences, it can indicate whether or not a targeted effort may have produced the desired outcome.

The potential applications of reentry mapping outlined above underscore the importance and value of understanding the effects of incarceration and reentry on communities. It is important to note, however, that maps themselves are not the end goal of a reentry mapping program. On the contrary, the maps should be used in concert with other analysis tools to help launch a community conversation, to engage stakeholders, and to generate support for the creation of new resources and the targeting of existing ones. The promise that mapping holds for developing

effective responses to prisoner reentry is what led to the development of the Reentry Mapping Network, the history and structure of which is described in the following section.

Figure 2: Prisoner Reentry and Services for Returning Prisoners in Hartford



The Reentry Mapping Network: An Action Research Partnership

In recent years, mapping has become an increasingly popular tool in the fields of law enforcement and criminology, as well as local planning and policy development. In many cases, these mapping efforts are conducted within an “action research” framework. Action research diverges from the traditional research model by producing research that addresses problems of practical importance and is more thoughtful about the connection between research and practice.²⁴ To increase the efficacy of the resulting research, action researchers partner with the people who are directly affected by the problem under study to collaboratively design, implement, and interpret the research.²⁵ The action research model is mutually beneficial, in that researchers can produce more well-informed findings and are more likely to see their research having an impact on practice, while community efforts can be strengthened by the involvement of a partner with research and analysis capacities. Research partners can contribute technical expertise, academic knowledge of the problem, or knowledge of best practices and possible solutions from the literature. Both parties—the researchers and the action partners—present each other with new perspectives and insights on the research topic.

In the mid-1990s, a new model for local action research emerged. Organizations in several communities throughout the country began to assemble neighborhood-level data and help community actors apply this information to motivate positive change in distressed areas and aid in program and policy development.²⁶ In order to learn from each other and promote the model to other cities, these organizations joined together with the Urban Institute in 1996 to form the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP).²⁷ Using data on various conditions and trends at the neighborhood level to identify spatial patterns of problems and opportunities, the NNIP partners have engaged their communities on issues ranging from welfare reform to vacant housing to public health.²⁸

In an effort to apply this successful NNIP model to the topic of prisoner reentry, in 2001 the Urban Institute developed the Reentry Mapping Network, a partnership working to strengthen the capacity of communities to understand and address local problems related to prisoner reentry. The Urban Institute designed the network to support sites in the use of mapping and data analysis to explore the local dynamics of reentry. The RMN also assists and advises sites on the development of community strategies to address the challenges accompanying reentry. Partners were selected based on a review of their existing data collection and analytic capabilities, the reentry issues they planned to explore, and their experience working with community organizations and local agencies to develop action agendas. The RMN partners joined the network in phases, with the first six beginning work in 2002, followed by a second phase of six partners in 2004, and a third phase of two partners who joined in 2006. Summaries of the RMN

²⁴ Gilmore, Krantz, and Ramirez (1986); Lewin (1946).

²⁵ McEwen (1999).

²⁶ Bailey (2000).

²⁷ Currently, there are 27 NNIP partners: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Camden, Chattanooga, Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Des Moines, Grand Rapids, Hartford, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Louisville, Miami, Milwaukee, Memphis, Nashville, New Orleans, Oakland, Philadelphia, Providence, Sacramento, Seattle, and Washington. For more information on NNIP, see <http://www.urban.org/nnip>.

²⁸ Kingsley (1999).

partnerships are included in figure 3 below, and a detailed case study of each site can be found in appendix A.

The experiences of the first twelve RMN partners form the basis for the remainder of this report, which is designed to guide the replication of the RMN approach in other communities. This guidebook is also informed by previous research on prisoner reentry, mapping, community engagement, and action research models. It is important to note that there is no definitive model or set of processes for creating a reentry mapping partnership. As one can observe from the diverse experiences of the RMN partners to date, an organization interested in reentry mapping must craft its own strategy that is responsive to local conditions. Also, no predetermined sequence of processes exists; in a successful reentry mapping project, obtaining, analyzing, and mapping data, and efforts to develop partnerships and engage the community will move forward simultaneously.

Figure 3: Summary of Reentry Mapping Network Sites

Denver, Colorado (joined 2004): The Piton Foundation leads the RMN project in Denver. The Piton Foundation's community partners participate in a community advisory committee that provides advice and perspective on the analysis and maps that are created for the project, and creates strategies for dissemination of the findings and for community engagement. The committee identified five priority areas to focus both the research and the community outreach: employment, housing and homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, and family.

Des Moines, Iowa (joined 2002): The Child and Family Policy Center (CFPC) in Des Moines is the lead partner for the local RMN project. The CFPC received and analyzed address-level data for the prison, parole, probation, and jail populations in Polk County. The CFPC has provided maps and data in support of several local reentry planning coalitions and has produced reports on the employment challenges facing former prisoners in Des Moines.

Hartford, Connecticut (joined 2004): The Hartford RMN partner is the Community Results Center of the United Way of Connecticut (UWC). Their data analysis focused on individuals on parole in Hartford as of July 1, 2005. The UWC produced four prison reentry policy briefs on reentry in general, reentry and education, reentry in relation to housing and homelessness, and women returning from prison.

Indianapolis, Indiana (joined 2004): The United Way of Central Indiana (UWCI) and the Local Learning Partnership of *Making Connections–Indianapolis*²⁹ led the RMN project in Indianapolis. Their analysis focused on the disparate impact of reentry on different Indianapolis neighborhoods and the service opportunities this presents for UWCI agencies. Their research has also helped to inform the ongoing work of the *Making Connections* initiative in Indianapolis.

²⁹ *Making Connections* is a national program sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. It focuses on providing support to families and communities in targeted neighborhoods by enhancing social connectedness, linking residents to local resources and services, and strengthening community members' financial well-being.

Louisville, Kentucky (joined 2004): The Community Resource Network (CRN) is the lead RMN partner in Louisville and also serves as the Local Learning Partner to *Making Connections–Louisville*. Early in the RMN project, the CRN connected with a community-wide planning effort called the Justice Reinvestment Planning Project. The CRN produced an analysis describing the formerly incarcerated population in the Louisville area and the existing services at the state, local, and neighborhood levels that serve this population.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin (joined 2002): The Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee’s Neighborhood Data Center is the lead RMN partner in Milwaukee. The Data Center provides data analysis and mapping support for local nonprofit organizations. For the RMN project, they were able to obtain time series data on prisoners returning to Milwaukee neighborhoods. The Data Center is working with *Making Connections–Milwaukee* to disseminate the data and maps. These organizations have also generated interest in reentry mapping in Milwaukee by demonstrating its benefits to local service providers.

Oakland, California (joined 2002): The Urban Strategies Council (USC) is the lead Reentry Mapping network partner in Oakland. The USC is dedicated to community building advocacy. Early in the project, the USC received zip code–level data for 1998 and 2000 for Oakland regarding parolees’ location at release. Later, they were able to obtain address-level parolee data. The USC has been participating in Oakland’s Community Reentry Service Provider Network and has been producing a weekly reentry newsletter, *California Police and Prison News*.

Providence, Rhode Island (joined 2002): The Providence Plan and the Rhode Island Family Life Center were joint reentry mapping partners in Providence, along with the Rhode Island Department of Corrections. The partnership analyzed address-level data on people awaiting trial, people who have been sentenced, and people on probation and parole. Their maps and analysis were used in a community education campaign and two successful public policy initiatives. They have also analyzed service access for the formerly incarcerated and created an online referral database.

San Diego, California (joined 2004): The San Diego County District Attorney’s office, in conjunction with the San Diego Association of Governments, lead the Reentry Mapping Network project in San Diego. They have convened a local reentry roundtable to develop relevant responses based on the analysis and findings from their reentry maps and data.

Seattle, Washington (joined 2004): Public Health–Seattle & King County is the lead RMN partner in Seattle-King County. They have assessed patterns of prisoner reentry in the White Center/Boulevard Park neighborhoods and explored disparities by race, immigration status, and socioeconomic status. They are working with community partners to identify and improve services for released prisoners in the community.

Washington, D.C. (joined 2002): NeighborhoodInfo DC leads the reentry mapping network partnership in Washington, D.C. Established as a collaboration between the Urban Institute and the Washington DC Local Initiatives Support Corporation, NeighborhoodInfo DC provides community-based organizations and residents in the District of Columbia with local data and analysis they can use to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. NeighborhoodInfo DC is mapping patterns of reentry in Washington, D.C., and focusing on obtaining better data on organizations providing services for former prisoners. NeighborhoodInfo DC has partnered with the Faith-Based Reentry Initiative, a collaboration of 40 churches in Washington, D.C., that provide mentoring and service referrals for returning prisoners, to obtain data and disseminate analysis and mapping results.

Winston-Salem, North Carolina (joined 2002): The Winston-Salem Reentry Mapping Network project is managed by the Center for Community Safety (CCS), a public service and research center of Winston-Salem State University. CCS works with the Faith Seeds Reentry Coalition in addressing the challenges of high concentrations of returning prisoners in Winston-Salem's Northeast neighborhood. Maps and other analyses from CCS are helping the Faith Seeds Reentry Coalition plan for the creation of a Reentry Network Center, a one-stop community-based service coordination center for former prisoners in northeast Winston-Salem.

Atlanta, Georgia and Chicago, Illinois (joined 2006): The Emory University Office of University-Community Partnerships in Atlanta and the Metro Chicago Information Center in Chicago will start reentry mapping partnerships in their respective communities in September 2006.

Section 2: Creating Reentry Maps

The centerpiece of the Reentry Mapping Network initiative is its use of maps as a tool for communicating information on prisoner reentry. While traditional data analyses, charts, graphs, policy briefs, written reports, and other products all play an important role in disseminating information on reentry, maps are a unique and powerful tool for communicating this information. Maps can make the spatial dynamics of reentry immediately apparent in a way charts and graphs cannot. The following section explores the process of obtaining, analyzing, and mapping data on prisoner reentry.

Obtaining Reentry Data

The essential prerequisite to mapping prisoner reentry is acquiring accurate and useful reentry data. These data are almost always obtained from a government agency or other outside source. The reentry mapping partnership must build a working relationship with the data source, which often involves navigating data confidentiality and other political issues. The partnership also has to determine what types of information it wants and how existing data can fill those needs. Determining what data exists and how data can be used can actually be quite a complex task, as it may not initially be clear what data fields are valuable. Corrections databases are generally designed to manage offender populations rather than to inform research, and thus the structure of the dataset and the accuracy of the data can be less than ideal for reentry mapping. These and related issues involved in obtaining reentry data are discussed in detail below.

The RMN partners had a range of experiences obtaining reentry data. The time it took for sites to have their data in hand varied, from relatively immediate success at securing data in Winston-Salem to a process that lasted over a year in Oakland and Milwaukee. Application of some of the lessons learned by the RMN partners, which are included below, can help improve the process of obtaining reentry data for other sites.

Identifying Data Sources

The most common source of data on returning prisoners is the state department of corrections (DOC), which supervises prisoners serving time for felony convictions. Other sources of reentry data include city or county DOCs, which supervise jail inmates awaiting trial or serving time for misdemeanor convictions; state parole or community corrections agencies, which oversee prisoners released to some form of supervision; and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, which manages prison inmates convicted of federal-level offenses.³⁰

Most RMN partners were interested in data on state prisoners returning to their communities—a much more sizable population than federal prison returnees—and thus worked with the corrections agencies in their states to access information on these individuals. Although specific contacts varied by site, RMN sites found that the information technology and the research and statistics offices within the DOC or community corrections agency tended to have the most

³⁰ While this is an important data source, we have been unable to identify a reentry mapping effort that has obtained and utilized Federal Bureau of Prisons data.

familiarity with the data systems used to extract information on returning prisoners. For example, in the Milwaukee RMN site, the information technology office of the Wisconsin DOC was the key data contact, while in Washington, D.C., the Office of Research and Evaluation of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) provided data to the RMN partnership.

The data providers in many RMN cities were quite receptive to sharing their data for use in reentry mapping efforts. In Providence, the DOC's enthusiasm about having a new partner to assist with achieving their research and analysis goals helped to expedite fulfillment of the data request. Building a positive working relationship with the data source is crucial. The amount of investment required to build these relationships will vary from site to site. The department of corrections may be more willing to provide data if the request comes from a well-organized reentry mapping partnership with clear goals and strong connections to and involvement with reentry issues in the community.

The reentry mapping partners can also draw on existing relationships with corrections agencies to facilitate access to data. In Louisville, for instance, the Community Resource Network was fortunate to have the recently retired executive director of the Kentucky State Parole Board assist them in their data acquisition efforts. If a government agency is a key player or even leader of the initiative, obtaining data can be relatively painless, and may only require running a data query in a system the agency already has access to, as was the case in San Diego.

If the DOC is not already involved in the reentry mapping partnership, staff members may be willing to provide data if they are invited to participate at some level. This could involve formal participation in the ongoing discussions and decisions of the partnership, or simply receiving the maps and other analytic products of the reentry mapping partnership. If a reentry mapping partnership is able to analyze reentry data in a way that is helpful to the DOC, the DOC may be more willing to commit staff resources to extract data that would otherwise be difficult to access. For example, the Center for Community Safety in Winston-Salem was able to overcome the initial reluctance of corrections officials to provide a full set of data by giving these officials maps that displayed the limited data that the DOC was initially willing to release. The North Carolina DOC saw the value of the CCS's work and agreed to provide a full dataset and to provide updates of those data on a regular basis. In Oakland, the Urban Strategies Council created a data dictionary for the state corrections dataset, and provided it to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). The CDCR did not have a codebook for their data, and, in providing something useful to the CDCR, the Urban Strategies Council built capital that has resulted in access to CDCR staff for assistance in interpreting the data.

While these positive working relationships helped the RMN partners obtain and understand the data, a willing partner does not automatically translate into the quick transfer of data. As was the case in Des Moines and Hartford, an antiquated data management system can complicate a data provider's ability to pull the necessary data from its database. RMN partners also noted that even when a data provider is highly cooperative, the agency may have other data requests or priorities that slow the process.

Staff turnover within the data source agency is highly likely, and can help or hinder data access. In Oakland, turnover worked in the reentry mapping partnership's favor, as it resulted in new

CDCR staff who were more amenable to providing the Urban Strategies Council with data. Several RMN partners had the opposite experience: the departure of key contacts from their DOCs made it difficult to proceed with data analysis because interpretation questions were left unanswered. Access to individuals knowledgeable about and supportive of the reentry mapping project is important for acquiring data, but these relationships should also be formalized in data-sharing agreements or IRB-approved data requests, to mitigate the effects of staff turnover.

Deciding What Data to Request

Before requesting data from the appropriate agency, a reentry mapping partnership team should carefully consider what population of returning prisoners they are interested in studying, what time period they are concerned with, and what data items they hope to receive. It is important to determine if the partnership is interested in prison releasees, jail releasees (who may have substantively different reentry challenges), or both. Partners must also decide whether they will include data on individuals who are unsupervised after release as well as those who will be subject to some period of post-release supervision. In some states, nearly all prisoners are released to some form of supervision, whereas in other states significantly fewer prisoners are supervised after release.³¹ Partnerships should also keep in mind that post-release supervision takes different forms and may include parole, probation, and other forms of community supervision. These different types of post-release supervision statuses have implications for the types of data that should be included in the analysis, as well as the source of those data. Although a full set of data on both supervised and unsupervised released prisoners would provide the most complete picture of the returning population, it is possible that the DOCs will only have some portion of the data available. By determining the populations of interest in advance, partnerships can negotiate for the most relevant data given these potential data limitations.

Most RMN partners set out to obtain a dataset of all those prisoners released from custody during the most recent calendar year. However, given the structure of their respective DOCs' databases and certain restrictions on the type of data they collect, the RMN partners profiled in this guidebook ended up with very different datasets, each of which has its share of advantages and disadvantages:

- 1. Release data over a specific time period.** The primary advantage of requesting data on all those released during a given period of time (typically, the most recent fiscal or calendar year) is that it represents a discrete set of data for the specific population of interest, providing tremendous value for analyzing and understanding current spatial patterns of reentry. These data are desirable because they provide a snapshot of the characteristics and locations of the population of interest in a way that is relatively easy to analyze. However, the dataset only depicts those most recently released from prison, and that information becomes outdated relatively quickly, requiring subsequent data requests in the future.
- 2. Cross-sectional data on current correctional populations.** This approach is similar to the first, but less specific in that it includes all individuals on supervision at a given point in time

³¹ The national average of the portion of prisoners released to supervision is 82 percent, but the number varies greatly from state to state. California, for example, releases almost all its prisoners to supervision, while less than half of prisoners released in Florida and Massachusetts are under supervision (Travis and Lawrence 2002).

regardless of when they were released. Unless the data include a field describing when the person was released, the file cannot be manipulated to create an accurate depiction of current spatial patterns of reentry. Instead, the location of new releasees is mixed with the addresses for former prisoners who have been on supervision for some unknown period of time. It is also important to bear in mind that the group of people on supervision may be substantively different from former prisoners not on supervision, in terms of offense type, time served, and other characteristics. As a result of these factors, maps may depict different spatial concentrations than those produced by analyzing locations of recently released prisoners, and may in turn have implications for how the maps inform service provision. If services are designed specifically for recently released prisoners, such maps may lead to erroneous decisions as to where such services should be located. On the other hand, some services—such as substance abuse treatment centers—may be designed to serve a broader former prisoner population, in which case these data would be useful in guiding site location decisions.

- 3. Longitudinal data on correctional populations.** A third option for reentry-related data is to obtain a series of datasets on correction populations over time. The only RMN site to use this approach was Milwaukee, which obtained biannual data snapshots of all sentenced persons who were incarcerated or on post-release supervision from 1997 to the present. The extraction of such a complex, multiyear dataset required significant planning and effort by DOC staff. The advantage of this approach is that it yields a powerful dataset for tracking the reentry population over time. However, significant time and effort are required to obtain, manage, and analyze the data, which can stall momentum early in the project.

Once the reentry mapping partnership has decided on the who and the when for their analysis, they can turn to the what—what data fields should be requested from the DOC? The prisoner's release address is the key piece of data needed for mapping, and it is critical that data analysts understand the source of the address data. Reentry mapping partnerships should seek to obtain a street address for each individual. However, due to confidentiality concerns, data requestors may have to settle for records with the census block group or even the census tract list as the location for the returning prisoner. In these cases, the data requestor should still attempt to obtain records for each individual, rather than summarized records for the whole block group or tract. Individual records offer much more flexibility to analyze data in a variety of ways and can also be linked by a unique identifier to track reentry patterns over time. For example, while NeighborhoodInfo DC only received the census tract location of each released prisoner, rather than his or her exact address, they did receive records at the individual level and will be able to match their 2004 dataset to future release data.

In the ideal case, the DOC will be able to provide data on the address to which each prisoner plans to return after release, although in some cases these data are collected only for those released to supervision. It is important to verify the frequency with which address information is updated and whether the dataset accounts for released prisoners who were subsequently reincarcerated. The least desirable data source is that for which only the individual's pre-prison address is available. While reentry partners have been known to use these data as a proxy for release addresses when no better data are available, these addresses are likely to be inaccurate given that close to half of released prisoners end up residing in neighborhoods different from the

ones they lived in prior to incarceration.³² Research has also found that a small but noteworthy share of former prisoners move frequently after release.³³ As a result, the addresses provided by the DOC (whether pre-incarceration or post-release) should not be viewed as an exact representation of the permanent locations of former prisoners.

In addition to address information, reentry mapping partnerships should seek additional information maintained by departments of corrections about released prisoners in order to better understand the nature of the returning prisoner population. Some variables of interest may include demographic data (e.g., age, race, and gender), criminal history, educational level, employment and substance abuse history, and in-prison program participation. Some DOCs possess rich sources of data collected through risk management or classification surveys conducted with inmates. The Denver RMN site was able to obtain data from the DOC's Level of Supervision Inventory (LSI), a standardized risk and needs assessment tool designed to pinpoint areas of need and concern for individual inmates. The LSI data covered a huge range of information on each inmate's criminal history, education and employment, financial background, family and marital issues, alcohol/drug problems, emotional and personal concerns, and attitudes and orientation. Milwaukee's dataset included information on released prisoners' program needs, work skills, and risk for drug and alcohol problems. Appendix C contains an extensive list of variables reentry mapping partnerships may seek to obtain, along with any confidentiality restrictions that may accompany those data. Reentry mapping partnerships should receive input from stakeholders in the partnership to help guide decisions about what data variables would be most useful to them.

A reentry mapping partnership should also think carefully about what geographic areas they are interested in analyzing, and what regions should be included in their data request. Some RMN partners obtained release data for the entire state, which proved useful for generating comparisons between the local reentry population and the statewide reentry population. Analyzing data for the entire state can, however, require significant additional time and resources. Yet requesting too little data can also cause problems. The United Way of Connecticut (UWC) only requested reentry data for the city of Hartford, and later determined it would have been more informative to have data for the entire county or region. Hartford being a small city, much of what happens there is closely related to what happens in the surrounding county, and the UWC's analysis was limited by not having data for these areas. They also found it difficult to engage the broader community, since many local organizations target their efforts throughout the greater Hartford area, not just the city of Hartford. Reentry mapping teams should consider the investment required to analyze regions beyond their immediate local areas, and the added value such analyses might supply. Data requests require an investment in time on the part of the DOC to process and deliver the data. If a partnership has to go back and request additional data because their initial request was incomplete, they risk damaging relationships or being turned down altogether.

³² La Vigne and Parthasarathy (2005). Other studies have attempted to use police data on the location of arrest as a proxy for release address. This is a highly flawed approach for a number of reasons, chief among them that arrest location is not a reliable indicator of where a person lives at the time of arrest, much less where they would return after serving time in prison.

³³ La Vigne and Parthasarathy (2005).

Overcoming Barriers to Data Acquisition

Obtaining data may be as easy as making a request over the phone or via e-mail to a contact at the department of corrections. It is much more likely, however, that significant work must be done by the reentry mapping partnership to address data confidentiality concerns and other data access issues. Typically, DOCs and other data providers are willing to work with reentry partnerships to negotiate such data requests. Despite this openness, the actual delivery of data can take months. In addition to negotiating the data access and confidentiality issues already mentioned, the complexity of the data request and the sophistication of the agency's data management system will determine the length of time for the request to be filled. In Winston-Salem, for example, the project's success in obtaining data quickly may have been closely related to the relative simplicity of their data request as well as the level of sophistication characterizing the DOC's management information system. In contrast, the Data Center in Milwaukee requested a complicated multiyear dataset, which involved significant planning and effort by the DOC.

To protect the confidentiality of the information about released prisoners contained in the requested datasets, DOCs and other corrections data providers may require reentry mapping partnerships to have their data request reviewed by an institutional review board (IRB). An IRB is a group of statisticians, researchers, community advocates, and others that ensures that a research project is ethical and that the rights and identities of study participants are protected. All universities and most research organization have IRBs, and any research project funded by the federal government must be reviewed by an IRB. Several of the data requests submitted by RMN partners had to be reviewed and approved by the data provider's institutional review board to ensure that necessary steps were taken to safeguard sensitive personal data. In some cases, data requests were approved after negotiating data sharing agreements that were not subject to a separate IRB review process. Either way, the review and approval process frequently took longer than anticipated.

The IRB review process requires researchers to set forth a series of protocols for ensuring that the rights and privacy of research subjects will be protected. For example, when the Center for Community Safety (CCS) in Winston-Salem submitted their data request to the North Carolina Department of Corrections Human Subjects Review Committee, they outlined steps they would take to protect the confidentiality of data. These included provisions ensuring that:

1. All staff handling the data sign and abide by a staff confidentiality pledge;
2. All sensitive computerized records be transmitted via secure means (e.g., CDs shipped via FedEx, not e-mail);
3. All materials be stored in locked file cabinets or stored in password-protected files on password-protected hard drives using PGP brand disk encryption software;
4. Access privileges and passwords be made available only to the appropriate staff members; and
5. The project director conducts unannounced checks to ensure that all project staff complied with this data security plan.

The data request made by the CCS also included strategies to assure that the data would not be presented in such a way that the identity of individuals could be determined. Specifically, CCS only mapped data that had at least five observations per unit of analysis so that outside parties could not identify specific individuals. For example, if there were only one or two released prisoners of a particular race/ethnicity (e.g., Asian) or age category (e.g., below 18 or above 65) for a neighborhood or census block group, identifying the individual by name could be relatively easy. Appendix C details potential solutions for confidentiality issues on a variable-by-variable basis.

It may be possible to obtain aggregated data that pose few or no confidentiality concerns. These data could be helpful in describing spatial patterns of reentry in a general way, as a precursor to receiving more specific data necessary for producing a detailed analyses. This may be important for maintaining momentum in reentry mapping partnerships that face long delays in receiving data. In Oakland, for example, the USC received zip-code-level data for parolees before eventually getting address-level parolee data more than a year later. Similarly, prior to receiving longitudinal address-level data in Milwaukee, the Data Center received limited data about returned prisoners on supervision that lacked detail on supervision type or status. Nonetheless, these preliminary datasets allowed the partners to produce maps useful to community planning efforts, although they should only be viewed as stop-gap measures to hold partnerships over until more detailed data become available.

While an IRB will address confidentiality concerns, questions about who has rights to use the DOC data and the products produced by the reentry mapping partnership's analyses of those data are best answered in a memorandum of understanding. A memorandum of understanding, or MOU, is a formal, written agreement between two research parties that outlines the parameters of a specific project and the role of each party in regards to that project. Some RMN sites entered into MOUs with the agencies who supplied their reentry data (mainly state departments of corrections). These MOUs outlined the nature of the reentry mapping project, and provided detailed guidelines regarding ownership of the DOC data and products based on that data, and how the data and research findings could be used and shared with others. MOUs may also outline a formal process whereby the data provider can review the products a reentry mapping partnership creates. A sample MOU is provided in appendix E.

Another limiting factor in accessing reentry data is availability of specific variables of interest. In some cases, the department of corrections may not have access to the data being requested, such as individuals' previous incarceration records. In other cases, the data may be available, but cost prohibitive to obtain due to the time that would be required to extract the data. In addition, staff turnover and antiquated data systems sometimes limit access to data. Despite these concerns about data availability, reentry mapping partnerships should not limit their data requests. Presenting the department of corrections with a complete "wish list" of the data needed for the reentry mapping partnership can serve as the starting point for more specific discussions with corrections officials about what data are available and obtainable. (Appendix D includes an example of such a wish list, which was used by the Center for Community Safety in its original request for data from the North Carolina DOC).

Interpreting the Data

Each variable in a dataset usually has important background and contextual information needed to accurately interpret it, such as the meaning of variable value codes and the dates certain fields were entered. In some cases, this information is compiled in a data dictionary or codebook; if such a book exists for a partnership's dataset, they should make every effort to acquire it from the data provider. Regardless of whether they have a codebook or not, reentry mapping partnerships should establish in advance, to the extent possible, that they will need additional support from their data provider to interpret the data. Below are specific interpretation issues that arose in the data received by Reentry Mapping Network partners. Sorting through issues such as these will result in a cleaner and more accurate database for use in analyses:

- **If a person is released from prison twice during the period of time covered by the data, are two records included in the data, or just one?**

There are pros and cons to each approach. Including both records is an accurate measure of the number of people released from prison during a given period. Identifying the share of released prisoners who, over the course of a year, cycle in and out of prison is a good proxy for the “revolving door” trends observed in many states across the county. This approach, however, overestimates the number of unique individuals who are released. For the purposes of planning for service provision and identifying concentrations of returning prisoners within a community, it is usually preferable to only include the record representing the most recent release of an individual.

- **If data on past offenses are provided, how are cases with multiple offenses coded?**

Typically, corrections data providers supply information on the most serious offense of conviction, as well as multiple data fields indicating the other conviction offenses, if any. Both the most serious offense and the other conviction fields are useful for reentry mapping, particularly if one is interested in measuring the number of released prisoners who were convicted of drug-related crimes. Because many more serious crimes are committed along with drug crimes (e.g., aggravated assault in combination with drug trafficking), all conviction fields should be requested and obtained to conduct this type of analysis.

- **How are probation, parole, and other supervision statuses designated?**

In some states, there are multiple means of releasing individuals from prison, including early release on parole, expiration of sentence, and various forms of split sentences (e.g., “shock probation,” for which an offender is sentenced to a short period of incarceration followed by a term of probation supervision in the community). Each of these types of release has implications for the challenges and resource requirements of prisoners returning to the community.

- **How are race and ethnicity coded?**

Correctional agencies can code race and ethnicity in a variety of ways, and often the way these attributes are coded can create analysis problems. Whereas the U.S. Census

accurately defines race separate from ethnicity,³⁴ Hispanic is often miscategorized as a race and thus presents problems for individuals who might identify themselves as, for example, both black and Hispanic. Data obtained from providers who do not conform to the Census's approach are likely to depict an inaccurate race/ethnic composition of the correctional population being studied. It is therefore critical to understand how race and ethnicity are coded.³⁵

- **How often are records updated? Are multiple databases used to generate the complete dataset? If so, when are data fields and databases updated?**

As mentioned earlier, corrections data are often collected to support the primary mission of the agency, which is to house and monitor prisoners safely and securely. Unfortunately, from a research perspective, that viewpoint means that data fields are often simply overwritten when updated or not updated throughout the prisoner's tenure in the system. For example, educational level at the time of admission could be different from that at the time of release.³⁶ Likewise, a prisoner's marital status or number of children could change during the course of incarceration. It is therefore critical that reentry mapping partners verify with data providers which fields are updated and when (if at all) those updates occur.

- **How are missing values coded in the dataset and how should they be interpreted?**

Administrative datasets frequently contain missing values for some records, which may be coded as "missing" or simply left blank. In addition, many RMN partners received datasets that were generated by merging data from two or more databases. In this situation, the existence of records in some databases and not others will create records in the final dataset that have empty fields. Missing values make analyzing and interpreting the data more difficult. Researchers should determine whether to include missing cases in statistical analyses, and must ensure that their software packages treat missing values properly. Some software packages used to manage and analyze data assign default codes to missing data values.

- **Did the data provider's data collection or data entry techniques or software change significantly during the time period covered by the data request?**

Changes in how data are collected or coded can have a tremendous impact on how the data should be interpreted. If codes or classifications used to identify inmate characteristics were changed, it is important to find out how the change was applied across the dataset so that comparisons are consistent across data entered at different times. If new data items were added, researchers should be aware of when the new data collection was implemented so that records for which no data was collected can be identified and excluded from analyses of these new variables.

³⁴ For more information about how race and ethnicity are coded in the decennial census, visit <http://www.census.gov>.

³⁵ The National Neighborhood Change Database project has developed a methodology for coding data sets with multiple race categories for individuals. A description of the methodology can be found in Tatian (2003).

³⁶ In Maryland, for example, 13 percent of released prisoners increased their educational level during their most recent term of incarceration (Visher et al. 2003).

Obtaining Contextual Data

To gain a full picture of prisoner reentry in a given community, a reentry mapping team will need data about the neighborhoods to which prisoners are returning. This contextual data includes basic demographic information, such as income and employment levels, as well as more detailed information, such as the locations of service providers and potential employers. Mapping contextual data provides insight into the ways neighborhood conditions may impact a returning prisoner's chances of success or failure. The specific datasets that must be assembled depend on the reentry mapping partnership's priorities and analysis plan. This section describes some of the types of data that are most commonly used in reentry mapping, provides guidance on identifying sources for those data, and discusses some potential problems related to using the data.

Many organizations in cities across the country already collect and manage several types of contextual community-level data that they and others use on a regular basis in local research and policy projects. Members of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP), for example, have built such data warehouses using many of the data sources outlined below.³⁷ Eleven of the twelve RMN partners had already developed comprehensive warehouses of contextual data about their communities prior to beginning their reentry mapping work, and the twelfth, CCS in Winston-Salem, was in the process of developing similar data capacity. Reentry mapping partnerships will benefit greatly if they are able to include in their stakeholder group a local research organization that has already compiled contextual community data. This organization could be a nonprofit group or a local university's urban planning or GIS department. However, the inclusion of an organization with an existing collection of community data is not necessary for a reentry mapping effort to succeed. Provided that the research team includes at least one staff person with a background in community-based research and GIS, contextual data such as those outlined below can be obtained specifically for the reentry mapping project.

Sources of Contextual Data

Demographic Data

The U.S. Census Bureau is an excellent source of information that provides comprehensive data on indicators of community well-being. The census provides baseline information about neighborhoods, including population demographics such as age, sex, race, ethnicity, marital and family status, children, and education level, as well as characteristics of communities, such as employment rates and percentage of renter-occupied units. The Census Bureau maintains a web site where this data can be downloaded free of charge (<http://www.census.gov/>). The primary drawback of using census data is that neighborhood-level data are collected only every 10 years (most recently in 2000), and thus do not reflect important changes in neighborhoods that occur between data collection periods.

³⁷ For more information on NNIP, see <http://www.urban.org/nnip>.

Caution should be exercised in using outdated census data that might not accurately describe current neighborhood characteristics. However, this problem is being addressed in part with the Census Bureau's recent launch of the American Community Survey (ACS). The goal of the ACS is to provide current demographic and socioeconomic data on an annual basis.³⁸ In the meantime, some researchers have found private vendors such as Claritas (<http://www.claritas.com/>) and Geolytics (<http://www.geolytics.com/>) to be a useful source of annual demographic data estimates.

RMN partners have used census data to highlight differences between neighborhoods with a high concentration of returning prisoners and those with fewer returning prisoners. In Des Moines, for example, the CFPC has used census data to highlight challenges that neighborhoods with high concentrations of returned prisoners face in addressing prisoner reentry, including high unemployment and poverty rates.

Boundary Data

In addition to census data, information about communities can often be obtained from city or county planning departments or multi-jurisdictional councils of government. These data sources include some of the basic data needed to create maps, such as data on neighborhood boundaries and the locations of bus routes and other transit stops, schools, and police and fire stations. The best place to start looking for this information is on the local city or county government's web site. In some cases, these data can also be obtained from the local university research center or other local research organizations.

Service Provider Data

The majority of RMN partners collected some data on local service providers, either by accessing existing databases or by building their own. Many communities have multiple printed and electronic databases listing service providers, and some have automated information and referral systems (I&R or 211 systems) that offer comprehensive details on providers. The local United Way or other service provider umbrella agencies can also be a useful source of this information. In addition, some state corrections departments maintain data on services for former prisoners, and several vendors maintain databases available on a per-record fee schedule. In all these types of service provider datasets, information about organizational and program-related goals, target populations, client-eligibility criteria, services offered, fees, and programmatic capacity for each available service are desirable if available. This information can be mapped to identify service delivery gaps and overlaps, and potentially can be used to prepare or expand upon a service directory as a resource for returning prisoners.

Data from individual service providers about their clients can also be useful in better understanding the former prisoner population and in planning for their return. For example, a food kitchen, homeless shelter, or employment training center may note in their client files whether a client is a convicted felon. These data can be used to estimate how services are accessed and used, and in some cases outcomes for these clients can be tracked. As with the department of corrections, these data are extremely sensitive, and any request for the data should

³⁸ More information on the American Community Survey can be found at <http://www.census.gov/acs/>.

be vetted by an institutional review board and include a detailed plan to guarantee data security and the protection of clients' privacy. Once those protocols are in place, obtaining data from service providers should be relatively easy, particularly if the reentry partnership offers to produce maps detailing where service provider clients reside, which can be used to help target their services.

An important caveat about obtaining and mapping service provider data, however, is that these data require the appropriate level of detail to discern between the locations of service provider headquarters or administrative offices and the locations of clinics, transitional housing, and other places that represent the points of delivery to former prisoner clients. Without this information, one could map all addresses related to a service provider and erroneously conclude that services are available in areas where they do not actually exist.

Local, State, and Federal Agency Data

Other existing datasets from government agencies can be pursued to address particular priority issues for reentry mapping partnerships. For example, to fully analyze the housing needs of returning prisoners, data about the housing stock can be obtained from the city or county assessor's office in many communities. To fully analyze the employment needs of returning prisoners, recent employment statistics can be obtained from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://www.bls.gov/>). In addition, data about new construction projects or other potential employment opportunities can often be obtained from a city or county office of planning, or potentially the local workforce development council. For most issues, a local government office as well as one or more local nonprofits can be contacted as potential data providers and stakeholders.

Primary Data Collection

Although many types of contextual data are readily available to reentry mapping partnerships, some may find it necessary to collect additional data themselves. Methods for primary data collection are well documented in a number of existing manuals and guidebooks.³⁹

The reentry mapping partnership in Winston-Salem was interested in collecting information about the location of churches, day care centers, and other assets, as well as abandoned and vacant housing (deficits), in certain neighborhoods. The Center for Community Safety partnered with the Urban Institute and the local community to develop and implement a survey protocol. The survey team, which included formerly incarcerated people and neighborhood residents, walked the streets in the neighborhoods of interest to physically observe and record the location of assets and deficits, information which was later entered into an asset database. See appendix F for more information on collecting data on local assets.

Reentry mapping partnerships may also want to collect data on prisoner reentry that cannot be found in administrative datasets. The Denver RMN partnership determined that they wanted a fuller picture of the barriers to successful reentry than could be obtained from the administrative data alone. They decided to field multiple surveys of people on parole and raised funds to

³⁹ See, for example, chapter 4 in Tatian (2000).

support this work. The goal of the primary data collection efforts is to identify what strategies might improve reentry outcomes for different populations and under different conditions. The surveys are currently being implemented, and more detail on these efforts can be found in the Denver case study in appendix A.

Creating Maps

Creating maps that effectively and accurately communicate information is part art and part science. Mapmakers must make judgments about color schemes and graphics while also applying statistics and sound geographic principles to the maps they produce. This section offers advice on how to avoid common pitfalls in creating maps and how to choose the right type of map to communicate your data most effectively.

Geocoding Accurately

Before one can create a map, it is first necessary to “geocode” the address data to be presented on the map. Geocoding is the process of assigning geographic coordinates (longitudes and latitudes) to street addresses. While all GIS software has built-in geocoding capabilities, issues of data quality associated with incomplete or inaccurate street numbers, names, and/or zip codes can present problems. Datasets likely must be cleaned before geocoding can begin. Address fields may contain errors, omissions, duplications, or other problems that staff may need to manually fix so that the data is able to be geocoded. Once the data is cleaned, a mapper will typically start by using the built-in geocoder associated with whatever GIS software is being employed. This step is followed by “batch geocoding” or manual geocoding of the remainder, which involves reviewing each troublesome address individually to clean the data and determine the correct address and location.

Where Can I Learn How to Map?

While this guidebook recommends that reentry mapping novices team up with local experts (e.g., universities or nonprofit data centers) to obtain mapping assistance, it may not be possible or desirable to do so. In fact, some reentry mapping partnerships may determine that having in-house GIS expertise is important for project sustainability. Fortunately, several affordable training options are available. Software vendors such as ESRI and MapInfo offer training workshops throughout the country for a fee (see <http://www.esri.com/> and <http://www.mapinfo.com/>). Beginning mappers can also take advantage of the workshops offered through the National Institute of Justice’s (NIJ’s) Crime Mapping Research Conference or the NIJ-funded Crime Mapping and Analysis Program in Denver, Colorado. For a comprehensive list of mapping training and tutorial options, see <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/maps/resources.html>.

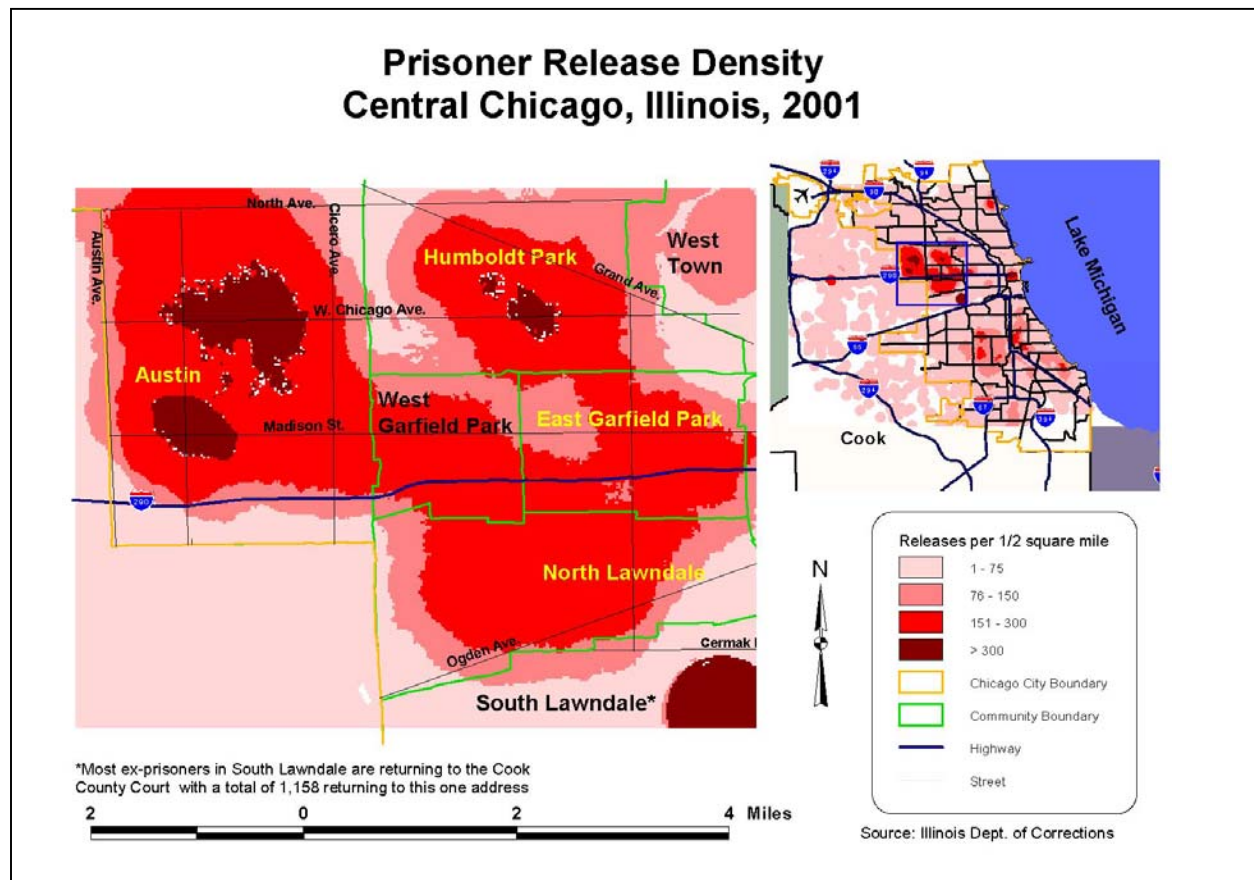
The importance of effective geocoding cannot be overstated. Oftentimes, novice mappers will simply run the GIS software’s batch geocoding function and leave it at that, with no concern about what share of addresses are actually depicted on the map. Thus, it is always important to make note of the “geocoding hit rate”—the percentage of all addresses that were confirmed as accurate and depicted on the map. Hit rates of 95 percent or higher are desirable, and anything below 80 percent should be viewed skeptically. This is particularly true because it could be that an entire share of cases at one specific location is missing—for example, all those prisoners who are released to a specific transitional center may not have been geocoded if the DOC simply

recorded the name of the center with no street address. This would result in a map that is spatially biased, misrepresenting the concentrations of released prisoners.

Even when the hit rate is high, the locations on the map may not be accurate. For example, some addresses may be inaccurately geocoded to locations in industrial areas, water bodies, or other places that are unlikely to be the location of a residence. Thus, it is usually recommended that the mapper take a random sample of point locations and check them to determine whether they appear valid. In the future, the use of geographic positioning systems (GPS) in corrections may make this step unnecessary, as GPS is used more often for prisoner tracking.⁴⁰

In other cases, addresses may be geocoded correctly but may not represent individual residences. The mapper should make note of “repeat addresses”—those addresses to which multiple released prisoners are returning—and then attempt to identify those that are associated with significant numbers of released prisoners. Common sites for repeat addresses include halfway houses, transitional centers, homeless shelters, jails, and INS detention centers. Some of these repeat addresses are legitimate sites of prisoner reentry, while others, like jails or detention centers, do not represent reentry, but instead indicate transfer within the criminal justice system.

Figure 4: Repeat Addresses and False Concentrations of Returnees



⁴⁰ See Karappunna (2005).

In some cases, the mapper may determine that a repeat address should be eliminated from the map because it does not accurately depict reentry. Mappers typically keep repeat addresses associated with halfway houses and transition centers, however, as they can help inform conversations about service delivery for former prisoners.

In the example illustrated in figure 4 above, Urban Institute researchers mapped the addresses of all prisoners released to Chicago in 2001 and produced a density map that depicted an unusual concentration in the southeast part of the city, where one address alone was associated with 1,158 released prisoners. A quick check of the address revealed that it was the location of the county jail, where “released” prisoners were transferred to await other pending charges. Those data points were subsequently removed from the file because it was decided that they did not depict the true residential locations of returning prisoners.

The methodology used by the Seattle RMN site for tracking repeat addresses is outlined in figure 5.

Figure 5: Geocoding Repeat Addresses in Seattle

Before geocoding, addresses were cleaned by correctly parsing street, city, and zip fields. As part of the address cleaning process, addresses representing certain kinds of facilities such as homeless shelters, transitional housing facilities, the INS/BICE detention center, and common apartment complexes were identified.

A “Place” field was created to preserve the name of the location if it was included in the address field. For example, names such as “Union Gospel Mission” or “Seadrunar” (Seattle Drug and Narcotic Center) were frequently entered in address fields. Specific group quarters that appeared in the address files multiple times were assigned a “Place ID” and saved in a “Places” database. An attempt was made to assign these places to one of the following categories:

- Apartment
- Condo
- Day/Evening Program
- Drop-In Center
- Drug Treatment
- Homeless
- Hotel/Motel
- INS/BICE
- Jail/Law Enforcement
- Low Cost/Subsidized Housing
- Mobile Home
- None
- Nursing Home
- Residential Drug Treatment
- Shelter
- Transitional Housing

Addresses for which the only information entered was “Homeless,” “Transient” or some variation were tagged as “Homeless.” These did not include records with blank addresses which were tagged as “No_addr.” Also excluded were known homeless shelters which were tagged as “Shelter.”

*Communicating Effectively with Maps*⁴¹

When creating maps depicting prisoner reentry and related data, it is critical to first ask a series of questions that will help guide both the content and presentation of the map. The first question is, who is the audience? Is it the general public, the department of corrections, a meeting of service providers, or some combination of these stakeholders? Understanding the audience will help to guide the level of detail and amount of information to include. An equally important question to ask is, what is the purpose of the map? Is the purpose to depict the distribution of released prisoners across a county, the precise locations of service providers, or a summary of socioeconomic data in a neighborhood? Determining the purpose of the map ahead of time can help prevent the inclusion of unnecessary or irrelevant information, which can often result in a cluttered map that is difficult to interpret.

Once the audience and purpose of the map are agreed upon, the next question to consider is, what information must be included and at what level of detail? Is it necessary to include offense information? Demographics? Is street-level information required or would major arteries suffice? A general rule of thumb is that the map should depict only those data that are necessary to get across the intended message. When using contextual data, the mapmaker should take care to present information that is specific and useful. For example, there is little to be gained from a map of release locations laid over a general bus transit map, but a map of bus lines that provide direct access to potential employment opportunities or drug abuse treatment facilities could be very helpful.

Assuming the above questions are asked and answered, the next decision is what type of map to make. The most common options are point maps, thematic or “choropleth” maps, and density maps.⁴² Each of these maps has its share of advantages and disadvantages; while there is no “right” map to use for all occasions, some work better for some types of data than for others. Your map choice will also depend on scale and context.

⁴¹ This section provides general tips on creating maps that communicate clearly and effectively, as well as a cursory overview of the types of reentry maps that can be made. For more detailed guidance on map-making principles, see Heywood, Cornelius, and Carter (1998) and Harries (1999).

⁴² Another common type of map, a graduated symbol map, depicts data using symbols that vary in size based on the value of the data items. This type of map is most commonly used in nationwide maps and therefore is not illustrated in this guidebook.

Types of Maps

Point Maps

Figure 6: Example of a Point Map



The most rudimentary type of map to produce is referred to as the “pin,” or point, map. Each point on the map represents a single entity. The advantage of the point map is that it provides very detailed information regarding the geographic location of the subject being mapped. For example, a point map of returning prisoners would enable one to see precisely where they are living within a particular neighborhood.⁴³ However, point maps also have a number of disadvantages. First, it may not be desirable to display certain data at this level of detail if it threatens to violate confidentiality protocols (e.g., if a pin map revealed the identity of a juvenile

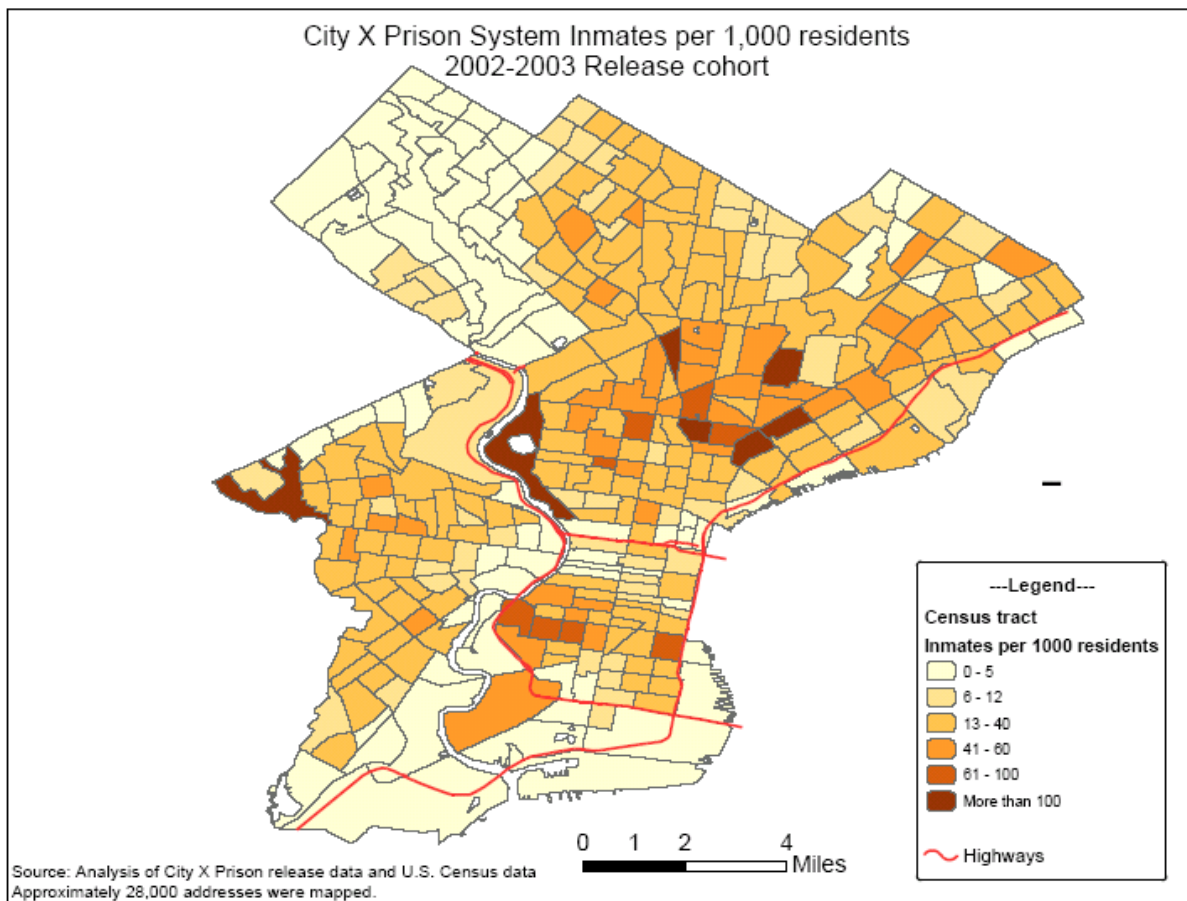
⁴³ Most GIS software estimates the exact location of an address on a given street block based on the range of addresses on that block. Therefore, the point locations are not accurate below the block level.

offender). Point maps are also undesirable when mapping a large amount of data, because the result will be too many points overcrowding the map so that no patterns can be discerned. Furthermore, point maps mask the locations of repeat addresses; because multiple points at the same location are simply layered directly on top of one another, one point on the map could represent hundreds of cases. Typically, point maps are not recommended for reentry mapping because the disadvantages outweigh the advantages.

Thematic Maps

Thematic maps, also known as “choropleth” maps, are useful for depicting information across an entire jurisdiction. They are also the only option to employ when the data being mapped is already aggregated above the address level, such as information by census tract, police beat, and voting district. Thematic maps can also be an appropriate choice when one intentionally wants to mask the specific locations of cases or individuals, such as when mapping victimization data to ensure confidentiality. Another advantage to this type of map is that it enables the layering of information so that relationships between two data sources can be compared (e.g., a point map of addresses of returning prisoners overlaid on top of a thematic map depicting rates of unemployment across a community).

Figure 7: Example of a Thematic Map



The final advantage to thematic maps is that, because they employ aggregate data, they are well suited for depicting rates versus volumes. The distinction between rate and volume can be critical for the mapping of released prisoners. For example, if one is preparing a map of released prisoners to help inform whether adequate services exist in the areas closest to where most released prisoners live, mapping the volume, or raw number of released prisoners, is the appropriate choice. But if one were exploring the extent to which a neighborhood experiences the impact of reentry, it might be more appropriate to map the number of released prisoners per 1,000 residents. In Providence, the difference between volumes and rates was significant: the Upper South Providence neighborhood received fewer returning prisoners than the West End neighborhood, but had almost three times the rate of returning prisoners as West End (see figure 8).

Figure 8. Number and Rate of Prisoners Returning to Providence Neighborhoods, 2004

Neighborhood	Number of returning prisoners	Rate per 1,000 residents
West End	168	10.2
Upper South Providence	144	29.0
Lower South Providence	70	12.2
Elmwood	91	7.9

The disadvantages to thematic maps involve the modifiable areal unit problem (MAUP), wherein address data that are aggregated to a larger unit can mask concentrations within the unit.⁴⁴ Another potential problem with this type of map is that GIS software typically uses arbitrary value breaks (as shown in the legend) to identify different ranges of data. While the map designer has the option of choosing a number of ways to make those value breaks, each can change the interpretation of the map.⁴⁵

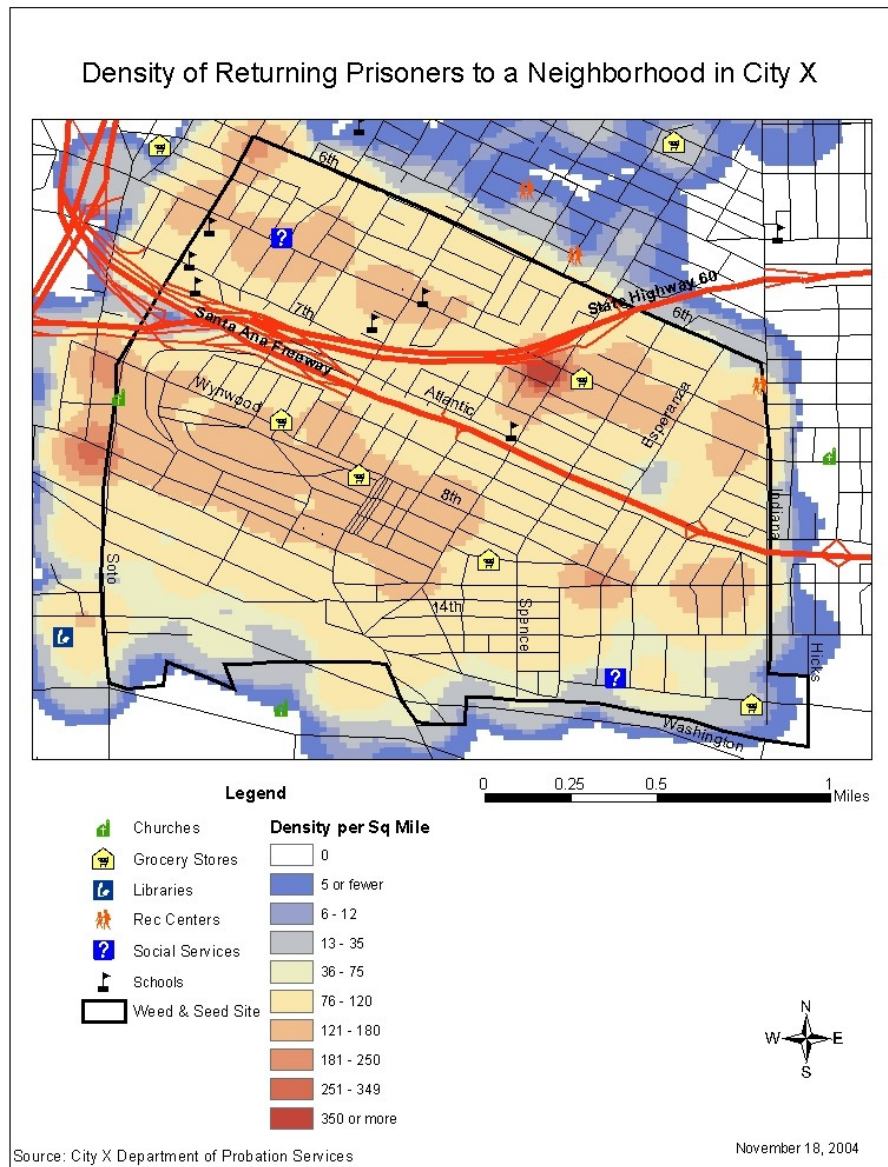
Density Maps

The final type of map that may be used to display data on prisoner reentry is the density map, which is sometimes referred to as a “hot spot” map. The density map employs GIS software that transforms address-level data into small pixels, and interpolates those data across the geographic landscape being mapped. Because it is derived from a point map, this map enables the depiction of multiple incidents at the same address. It also provides for a cleaner display than the point map and allows for the layering of additional information similar to that described in the discussion of thematic maps.

⁴⁴ For a more detailed description of MAUP and how it can affect map interpretation, see Professor Jerry Ratcliffe’s discussion and listing of related references at <http://www.jratcliffe.net/research/maup.htm>.

⁴⁵ For more information on this point, see Monmonier (1991).

Figure 9: Example of a Density Map



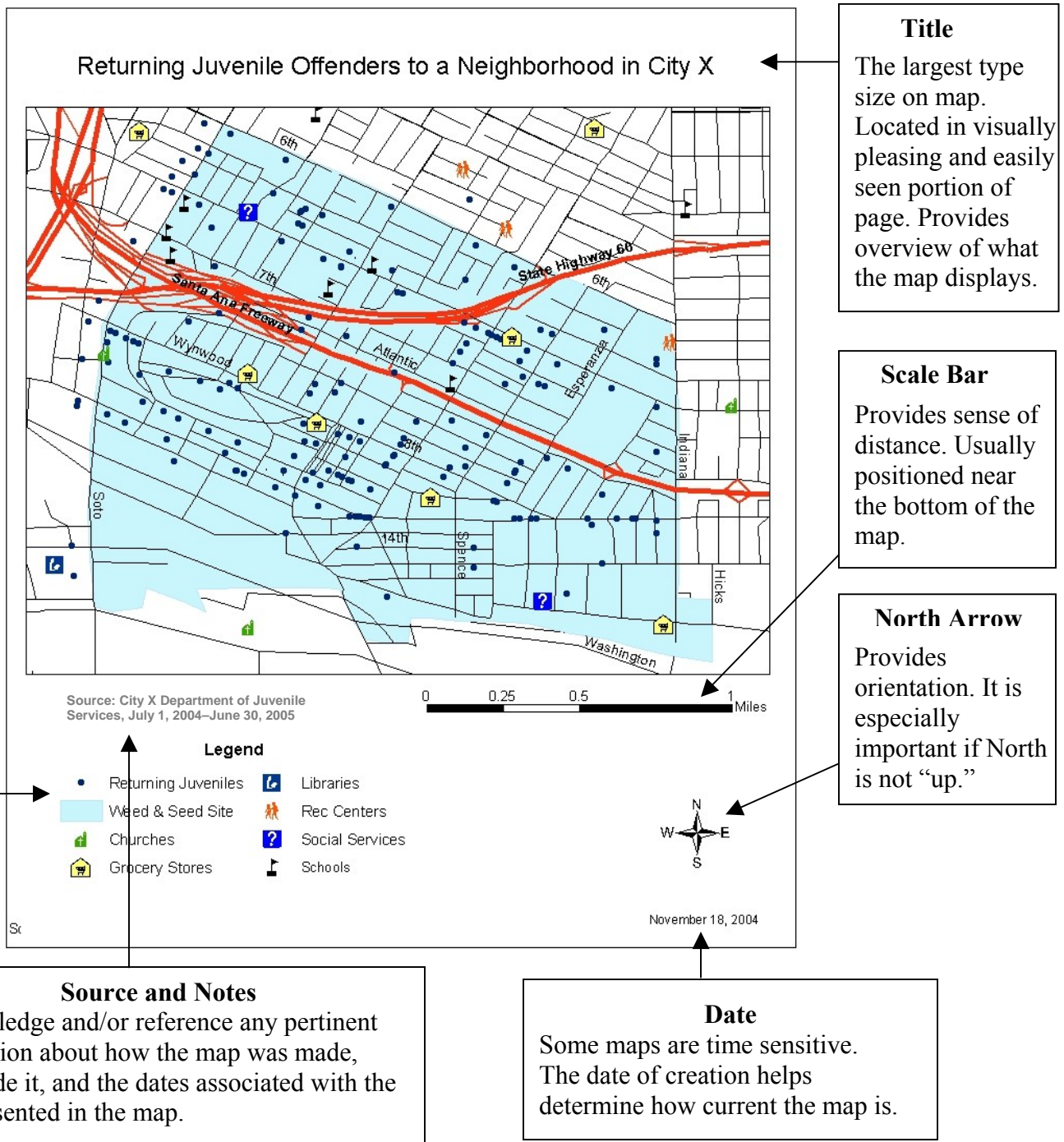
There are, however, disadvantages to this type of map. First, the “smoothed” surface generated by the GIS software gives the impression that points exist in places where there are actually no data. Second, the production of density maps requires the map designer to choose the density function and bandwidth used to generate the surface. The default values employed by the GIS software may not always be an appropriate choice, and modifications to these choices can change the resulting surface rather significantly, revealing or masking concentrations depending on the parameters employed.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ For more information on selecting the parameters for a density map, see Williamson et al. (1999).

Figure 10: Essential Elements of a Map

The following six items are essential for every map created, especially for those distributed to other organizations during meetings and conferences. Maps in PowerPoint presentations can be modified to fit the screen better; however these elements are still important to include:

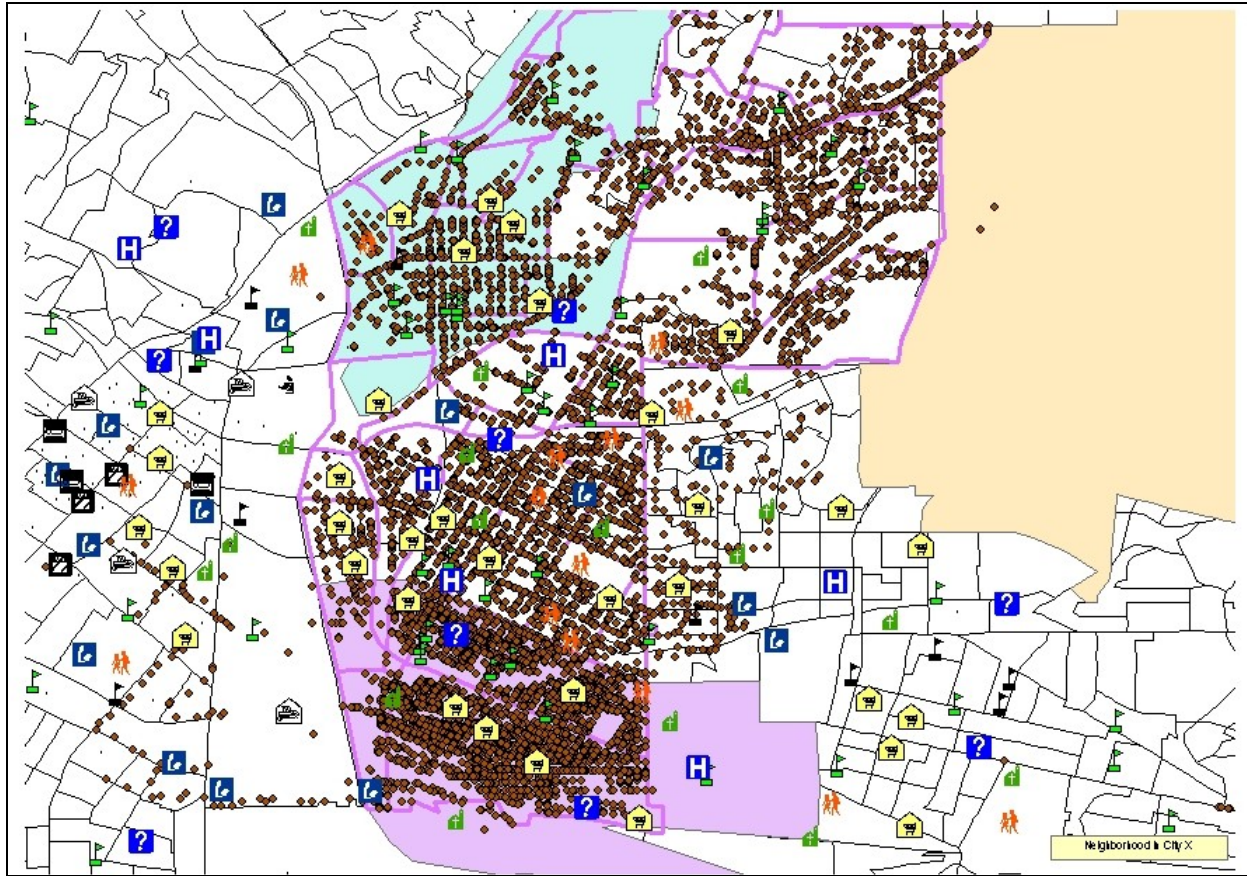
- ▶ Title
- ▶ Legend
- ▶ Scale Bar
- ▶ Date
- ▶ North Arrow
- ▶ Source and Notes



Avoiding Common Mapping Pitfalls

No matter what type of map one employs, there are certain basic principles of map production that should be followed to ensure that the map communicates clearly and effectively. Novice mapmakers often fall victim to mapping too much data (the “everything but the kitchen sink” approach). As figure 11 illustrates, too much detail makes the map difficult to interpret, often masking spatial patterns and relationships.

Figure 11: Example of an Ineffective Map



Clearly, the map in figure 11 does not communicate effectively for a number of reasons:

- The general purpose of this map is unclear because there is no title or legend.
- The viewer is unable to determine what the points, other symbols, shaded areas, or lines symbolize.
- It is difficult to see all the symbols because there are so many points and overlapping symbols.
- The area and data displayed are not appropriate for the use of a point map.
- The colors used are visually jarring.

While the above example illustrates what can happen when one maps too much data, it is equally problematic when not enough information is included on a map. A standard guiding principle of map making is that any map created should have sufficient information so that it can serve as a stand-alone document. The user should be able to understand the map without any accompanying text and also know the source of the data presented on the map and who created it. This is important, as maps are often widely disseminated and can easily be taken out of context without this accompanying information (see figure 10: Essential Elements of a Map).

Color is another important decision when creating a map, as it can often influence the user's understanding of the map. One basic example is the depiction of rivers and forests. Typically, rivers are colored blue and forests are colored green. If a mapper colored rivers gray and forests red, then the user could mistake the rivers for roads and forests for urban areas. Another important point about color is the way it is used with thematic maps. When mapping quantities, darker colors or gray shades should be employed for higher values and lighter colors for lower values. Shades and colors should also be selected so that each category is easily discernable from the others. Map colors should be complementary rather than visually jarring (see figure 12). Map designers often consult a web site called Color Brewer (<http://www.colorbrewer.org/>) for assistance in choosing the best color scheme for a map.

Figure 12: Example of Poor Map Color Scheme



In this map, poor color and symbols have been used. For example, the ocean should be blue, not orange, and streets should be plain lines rather than a symbol typically reserved for railroad tracks. Symbols for hospitals, grocery stores, and libraries are too large and dwarf the rest of the map.

Mapmakers should also be aware that colors can convey meanings. For example, density maps came to be known as “hot spot” maps by crime analysts and police officers who generated and used density maps of crime. Given the name and the nature of the data being mapped in this context, crime hot spots are typically depicted in shades of red. Depicting the concentrations of returning prisoners in red, however, may carry with it the unintended message that these returning prisoners are a threat or that they will generate crimes in the neighborhoods to which they return.

As with color, the shapes and patterns of symbolism chosen to depict various types of data on a map can also influence viewers’ perceptions of what is being communicated. Using a “+” to depict locations of schools, for example, may confuse viewers who assume the cross is associated with the location of a church. Thus, symbols should bear some natural relation to the feature being represented. While there are many built-in symbols available in GIS software, these symbols should be used with care so that they do not detract from the map’s main purpose. Symbols also should be of appropriate size so as not to dwarf other data on the map. The symbols are too big for the size of the map in figure 12, and clutter the map without providing helpful information.

Section 3: Using Reentry Mapping to Promote Community Well-Being

Obtaining, analyzing, and mapping data on prisoner reentry, as described in section 2, is not the only goal of a reentry mapping partnership. The purpose of these mapping activities is to provide information to the public, government officials, policymakers, service providers, and local residents, including former prisoners and their families, on the local dynamics of prisoner reentry. The ultimate goal of any reentry mapping effort is to improve and refine public policy, service delivery, and community responses to reentry. The process of using reentry mapping to engage communities and inform local policy and practice will vary based on the resources available to a partnership and the local context surrounding their work. Nonetheless, there are some common issues that arise in any effort to use reentry mapping research as a springboard for local action. The following section explores some of these issues, outlining the process of identifying interested stakeholders, building partnerships, and working with these partners to disseminate research findings and use the findings to improve policy and practice.

Building a Reentry Mapping Partnership

To produce useful research and effectively apply that research toward community improvement, an action research initiative on prisoner reentry must involve multiple local partners with a range of resources and capabilities. Both the “action” and the “research” capacities must be represented in the reentry partnership, and the partnership should include organizations and individuals with a diverse set of perspectives and interests. The success of any collaborative initiative will depend on who is involved and what resources they can contribute, as well as how these individuals and groups come together and work as partners.

Leadership

A reentry mapping project requires leadership to convene the project, recruit stakeholders, build momentum, and coordinate the activities of the partnership. Following the action research framework, a reentry mapping initiative is most likely to succeed if its leadership includes a research and a community/action component. In some cases, an organization may have strengths in both areas and can singularly serve as the lead agency. For example, the Urban Strategies Council in Oakland had both the research staff and the community connections necessary to lead the reentry partnership from its beginnings. In other cities, two or more organizations with complementary capabilities may partner to lead the project, as was done in Providence, where The Providence Plan (research) and the Rhode Island Family Life Center (action) worked as co-leaders.

Another model, common among the RMN sites, is the partnering of a research organization with a community coalition to jointly lead the mapping efforts. Winston-Salem’s Center for Community Safety partnered with a faith-based reentry coalition, while the Community Resource Network in Louisville linked up with a community-wide reentry planning initiative that was just forming. In areas without a reentry coalition or history of community organizing around reentry, a research partner may have to recruit local stakeholders and community members to

create a reentry coalition. For example, the Piton Foundation in Denver convened a community advisory committee, which involved several local organizations interested in the issue, to guide and utilize its reentry mapping work. Creating such coalitions can be challenging, as can generating community-based momentum to address reentry. The Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee was able to bring key service providers to the table over the course of its project to review maps and guide analysis, but to date no external community-based group has taken leadership or ownership of the issue.

Equally important to having one or two lead organizations is the need for an early champion for the reentry partnership. This champion could take the form of a charismatic individual (such as the head of an agency or service provider) or an influential foundation or advocacy group. The nature of the champion is less important than the fact that some individual or organization with power, influence, and connections is on board to help get the ball rolling and encourage other key stakeholders to participate.

Involving Other Stakeholders

Once leadership determines that they are interested in pursuing a reentry mapping project, they should begin work to bring other stakeholders into the partnership. In the next section, we outline several groups that are connected in some way to prisoner reentry issues and therefore may wish to become involved in a reentry mapping initiative. The stakeholders that can contribute to an initiative's success will differ in each local context. Organizations that are interested in collaborating, dedicated to addressing reentry issues, and able to devote time and resources to the project will obviously make better partners. Partnerships with a broad, diverse array of members have a greater range and depth of perspectives, resources, and expertise to draw on, and can create more comprehensive, multi-dimensional strategies.

A reentry partnership that does not involve former prisoners or members of the communities most affected by incarceration and reentry will likely find itself lacking expertise and legitimacy. It is also important that the partnership include individuals with a background in or familiarity with prisoner reentry issues, and those who can connect the research findings to crucial funding, program, and public policy decisions that affect former prisoners. Also critical for the partnership is the involvement of an organization or individual with expertise in creating maps and working with neighborhood-level datasets.

The leaders of a reentry mapping initiative can recruit partners by drawing on their existing networks and relationships, as well as inviting local reentry stakeholders to a kickoff meeting to explain the project and how these stakeholders can participate. The RMN leadership must highlight for potential partners—especially those who may not currently be involved in working on reentry issues—why the topic of reentry and this project specifically are relevant to their organization's mission and goals. Presenting preliminary maps that illustrate the relationship between reentry and other measures of community well being is often an effective method for explaining the purpose of the project and demonstrating the utility of mapping for understanding reentry.

The earlier in the reentry mapping process that stakeholders become involved in, or at least aware of, the initiative, the more likely they are to feel ownership over the results. However, RMN partners frequently found that additional organizations became interested in partnering after they observed early results of the project. Because of this ongoing influx of new stakeholders, it is important to periodically evaluate the stakeholders involved in the partnership to determine how various constituencies are being represented.

Excluding key organizations or constituencies from the process can create problems if the involvement of those entities is needed later to implement policy, programming, or community changes. However, in some cases, excluding certain groups for a period of time may be a strategic choice. In Winston-Salem, the community coalition that guided much of the project excluded service providers in the initial stages of its work, to develop a plan that reflected the goals of community members and the formerly incarcerated. While this strategy was effective in attracting grassroots participation, it did make it more difficult for the coalition to involve service providers later in the process. Decisions about who to include in the partnership must involve the careful weighing of the benefits and drawbacks of each possible path.

When exploring the possibilities for partnership, a reentry mapping team should carefully consider the overlap between its own goals and those of a potential partner. Many RMN sites made strategic choices about how to conduct their projects, choices which may or may not be compatible with another organization's work. For example, in Oakland the Urban Strategies Council (USC) declined to take a position on issues related to sentencing and incarceration regulations. This was done to maintain the positive relationship with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation that was necessary for access to both data for research and inmates for programming. This choice was appropriate for the USC's goals, but may not have been compatible with the methods or purposes of other stakeholders, even though the end vision of better outcomes for the formerly incarcerated was shared by all parties.

Potential Partners

Figure 13 lists reentry stakeholders who may be important partners in a reentry mapping project. More details on these potential partners and what each can bring to a reentry initiative are outlined below.

Figure 13: Potential Partners for a Reentry Mapping Initiative

- *Community Members and Groups*
- *Corrections Agencies*
- *Law Enforcement*
- *Nonprofit Research and Policy Organizations*
- *Policymakers*
- *Service Providers*
- *Victims Advocates*
- *Universities*
- *Related Initiatives*

Community Members and Groups

Community stakeholders include former prisoners and their families, residents of neighborhoods with high rates of incarceration and reentry, local businesses, public representatives, faith-based organizations, and other individuals and organizations affected by prisoner reentry. These are the groups that experience the challenges of prisoner reentry on a day-to-day basis in the community, living and working with formerly incarcerated people. As such, the reentry mapping partnership should encourage their participation as much as possible. For example, the community advisory committee that guided the work of the Denver RMN partnership included residents of *Making Connections–Denver* neighborhoods (some of the Denver areas most affected by incarceration and reentry) and representatives from community-based organizations that provide direct assistance to people returning from prison, in their efforts to reintegrate successfully.

Community stakeholders can offer important perspectives on reentry and ideas for change. These groups will undoubtedly play a role in advocating for and implementing policy, program, and community responses that are proposed by the partnership. Any of these community stakeholders, or a coalition of community members and groups, may be well suited to convene and lead a reentry mapping initiative.

Corrections Agencies

Both institutional and community corrections agencies are natural partners to include in any reentry initiative. State and local departments of correction and/or community supervision agencies (parole and probation) are frequently the main sources of address-level data on reentry. Most RMN partners have spent significant time working with both types of agencies to obtain and accurately interpret administrative data on reentry.

The role of these agencies in a reentry initiative, however, should not be restricted merely to that of data provider. As an active participant in a reentry mapping partnership, corrections and supervision agencies can provide input about what they are currently doing with regard to pre- and post-release reentry assistance, as well as what new policies and programs might be beneficial. Ideally, these agencies will actively seek opportunities to make policy and program decisions in collaboration with the community. In addition, using mapping for community reentry planning may be a natural extension of the work some community supervision agencies are already doing that uses mapping for tasks such as assigning caseloads to probation and parole officers.⁴⁷

Law Enforcement

With arrest rates for formerly incarcerated people 30 to 45 times higher than those for the general population, contact with former prisoners is part of law enforcement's everyday business.⁴⁸ Police have an obvious role in prisoner reentry as they respond to any new crimes committed by formerly incarcerated people. Yet police departments in some cities are beginning to take on a

⁴⁷ Karappunna (2005).

⁴⁸ Rosenfeld, Wallman, and Fornango (2005).

broader role that focuses on preventing crime by providing assistance that can help returning prisoners succeed and avoid returning to criminal behavior.⁴⁹ Police can work with community supervision to monitor former prisoners, and can link up with service providers and businesses to help returning prisoners access services, obtain housing, and find employment. Police may also be involved in restorative justice efforts, serving as an intermediary between victims and offenders. Efforts such as these are often rooted in a community policing or problem-oriented policing model, both of which frequently involve partnerships with local businesses, residents, government agencies, and other community stakeholders. Prior research has found that these types of proactive crime prevention partnerships can yield long-term crime reduction benefits,⁵⁰ in addition to building trust and enhancing police legitimacy in the eyes of the community.⁵¹

Policy involvement can also enhance the work of the other partners, sending a message to both returning prisoners and critics that the reentry initiative is by no means “soft on crime,” because the support and assistance provided to returning prisoners also carries with it the threat of rearrest if they return to criminal behavior. Law enforcement agencies can also contribute datasets and mapping expertise to a reentry partnership. Many police departments collect crime data and use GIS to map crime locations, which then helps them to allocate patrols, identify crime hot spots, and develop crime prevention strategies.⁵²

Nonprofit Research and Policy Organizations

Nonprofit organizations that conduct local-level research and policy analysis on issues relevant to their cities and communities can be vital members of reentry mapping partnerships, regardless of their prior experience on the topic of prisoner reentry. While the majority of the Reentry Mapping Network’s lead partners are nonprofit organizations that had little or no background in prisoner reentry prior to their involvement in RMN, taking on this issue was a natural extension of the work in which they were already engaged. For example, the Neighborhood Data Center at the Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee has a long history of leading action research projects and conducting research on Milwaukee neighborhoods, with a specific focus on developing strategies to improve the quality of life for families and individuals in distressed neighborhoods. These distressed neighborhoods are also the neighborhoods most affected by prisoner reentry, so it was a natural fit for the Nonprofit Center to lead Milwaukee’s reentry mapping partnership.

The biggest contribution nonprofit research and policy organizations usually offer to a reentry mapping initiative is expertise in obtaining, analyzing, and mapping data; conducting research; and creating maps and other products to effectively convey findings. However, these organizations often have expertise in areas other than research. They may have previously partnered with important reentry stakeholders from government, the nonprofit sector, and the community. Organizations that have been involved in action research projects in the past will have experience navigating the challenges of conducting research in a collaborative manner with multiple partners.

⁴⁹ For more information on the role police can play in prisoner reentry initiatives, see La Vigne et al. (2006).

⁵⁰ Kelling and Coles (1996). Wilson and Kelling (1982).

⁵¹ This increased legitimacy can also yield great benefits, as the public will be more willing to report crime and engage in community crime prevention activities (Tyler 2004; Tyler and Huo 2002).

⁵² Mamalian and La Vigne (1999).

Policymakers

Policymakers are another key partner in a reentry mapping effort, particularly if the initiative aims to change government statutes or administrative procedures. State agencies (and to a lesser extent, federal agencies) provide funding and oversight for many programs and services accessed by returning prisoners, such as workforce development programs, food stamps, and cash assistance benefits (i.e., TANF). City governments administer programs and services including homeless shelters, transitional housing, substance abuse treatment, and health care. Policymakers in the executive and legislative branches of state and local government make decisions on how funds are appropriated to support these programs and services and how the programs are administered and delivered. Policymakers also control some legal barriers to reentry success, such as employment restrictions and voting disenfranchisement.

While some policymakers may be more familiar with the challenges associated with prisoner reentry than others, all of them can benefit from better data on reentry to make informed policy decisions and target resources where they are needed most. The key role for policymakers in a reentry mapping partnership is to implement policy, program, and funding decisions that are informed by the data presented in reentry maps and discussions with other reentry stakeholders. Policymakers should be welcomed to participate in reviewing and interpreting reentry maps alongside their constituents.

Service Providers

Returning prisoners have a host of needs, from housing and employment to substance abuse treatment and mental health problems. Figure 14 lists some of the services frequently accessed by returning prisoners to meet these needs. Service providers who work with formerly incarcerated populations should play a prominent role in any reentry mapping partnership. These include government agencies and nonprofit organizations that specifically target returning prisoners, as well as providers with a broader client population that includes formerly incarcerated people. Providers can improve their programs and service delivery through involvement in a reentry mapping partnership. They will learn in much more specific detail about the location, characteristics, and needs of the population they serve and will connect with other service providers, opening opportunities for collaboration and creating the possibility of more targeted, coordinated service efforts. Service providers have a great deal of firsthand knowledge about reentry to contribute, which can add qualitative context to the interpretation of maps and other analysis. Moreover, they often have promising, creative ideas for strategies to address reentry, as well as existing relationships with other stakeholders.

Figure 14: Services Accessed by Returning Prisoners

- General, Dental, and Vision Health Practice
- Substance Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation
- Mental Health Services
- Family Counseling and Reunification
- Legal Services
- Credit Counseling and Repair
- Transitional and Permanent Housing Placement
- Food Security (e.g., access to food stamp benefits, finding soup kitchens)
- Job Training, Adult Basic Education, Literacy Services

A reentry mapping partnership can benefit from participation by service provider staff at all levels of an organization, from managers and organization executives to case workers and other line-level staff. Different staff may have varying experiences working with former prisoners and connections to other organizations. On the whole, service providers are top candidates to participate in leading a reentry mapping partnership. They tend to have a number of existing relationships with other potential partners and thus are well positioned to help convene and coordinate efforts among interested organizations.

Victims Advocates

Having been directly affected by crime, victims are an important group to involve in a reentry initiative. Victims have many rights that allow them to participate in prisoners' release to the community,⁵³ often including:

- the right to be informed about parole-related events and proceedings;
- the right to be heard on matters relating to the offender's parole and related incidents;
- the right to be present at parole proceedings; and
- the right to an order for restitution as a condition of parole.

Many people erroneously believe that victim participation in these processes always results in negative outcomes for the offender. Yet victims share the same goal as other partners in a reentry effort: to prevent future victimization by released prisoners. Toward this end, victims can contribute important, offender-specific information to a standard reentry plan. Some victims know their offenders well (e.g., victims of domestic violence) and, because victims may reside in the same communities offenders return to, they may have helpful insights about how to manage the challenges prisoners will likely face on return.

⁵³ Herman and Wasserman (2001).

Universities

As with nonprofit research and policy organizations (see above), universities have valuable research, mapping and analytic skills to contribute to reentry mapping initiatives. In addition, they may have strong relationships with their communities, and have projects or programs dedicated to connecting university research with community needs. The Center for Community Safety in Winston-Salem, for example, is a group affiliated with Winston-Salem State University that coordinates multiple community-based action research initiatives, including RMN. Several staff members also teach at the university or facilitate service-learning and internship activities for students.

Other Related Initiatives

Other initiatives may be working to improve outcomes for populations that include former prisoners, their families and friends, and their community members. Initiatives such as those listed in figure 15 offer reentry mapping partnerships the opportunity to collaborate with a well-established project to work towards shared goals. Many RMN partners collaborated with their local *Making Connections* initiative, and others worked with the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative SVORI or Weed and Seed projects in their area (see figure 15 for more details). Reentry mapping partnerships can offer their services in support of an existing initiative, and in doing so may gain access to additional resources. These parallel partnerships can also be useful for obtaining data and convening common stakeholders.

Figure 15. Related Initiatives

*Making Connections*⁵⁴

Many RMN partners are also involved with their local *Making Connections* initiative team. Currently, 9 of the 10 *Making Connections* cities are also RMN partners.⁵⁵ *Making Connections* is a national program sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation that focuses on providing support to families and communities by enhancing social connectedness, linking families to local resources and services, and strengthening community members' financial well-being. To advance these goals and objectives, partners mobilize a broad cross-section of constituencies, including community members, public agencies, private organizations, the business community, and faith leaders to obtain their support and investment in strengthening families in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Program partners engage these stakeholders to gather related information, identify community problems and resources, and discuss and test various strategies. *Making Connections*' partners have also forged relationships with a wide range of stakeholders that have enabled them to produce local change based on their findings. RMN partners in Seattle, Milwaukee, and other cities have been able to leverage the *Making Connections* partnerships to support their reentry mapping efforts.

⁵⁴ Information about *Making Connections* is available on the Annie E. Casey Foundation web site at <http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/mc/>.

⁵⁵ *Making Connections* includes 10 organizations in the following cities: Denver, Des Moines, Hartford, Indianapolis, Louisville, Milwaukee, Oakland, Providence, San Antonio, and Seattle.

*Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI, also known as “Going Home”)*⁵⁶

The Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative is a collaborative federal effort to improve reentry outcomes along criminal justice, employment, education, health, and housing dimensions, in hopes of promoting productive social roles and reducing the likelihood of a return to crime and incarceration for released prisoners. Sixty-nine state and local government grantees (typically departments of correction) have received over \$150 million to develop or expand programs that offer integrated supervision and services to serious and violent offenders.⁵⁷ Local SVORI sites may have useful data to offer on prisoner release or may be able to help a reentry mapping initiative access such data.

*The Weed and Seed Initiative*⁵⁸

The Weed and Seed Initiative is a national grant program that aims to bolster law enforcement and community development by linking the two through community policing efforts. Because community members involved in Weed and Seed have working relationships with police and other institutional organizations, they make ideal partners for a reentry mapping initiative. Weed and Seed is also a potential source of reentry-related data, because sites track and use local crime data to inform policing efforts. In Winston-Salem, the Center for Community Safety’s (CCS) involvement in local Weed and Seed efforts positioned it to identify and engage relevant community stakeholders. The CCS forged a relationship with the Winston-Salem County Police Department (WSPD) through Weed and Seed, and was subsequently able to acquire WSPD data for use in its RMN project.

⁵⁶ For more information on SVORI, see <http://www.svori-evaluation.org/>.

⁵⁷ For information on the SVORI activities in each state, see the *National Portrait of SVORI* (Lattimore et al. 2004) at http://www.svori-evaluation.org/documents/nationalportrait/SVORI_NationalPortrait.pdf.

⁵⁸ For more information on Weed and Seed sites, see <http://www.weedandseeddatacenter.org/>.

The Reentry Mapping Initiative

The reentry mapping team's purpose is to guide and support the research members of the team in the process of data acquisition, analysis, and mapping, as well as to design and implement strategies for using the project's findings. While every reentry mapping initiative's experience and process will be unique, this section outlines some of the general activities a partnership may engage in when conducting its reentry mapping efforts. The next section will explore strategies for using the research findings to create change.

Convening the Partnership

Some project stakeholders may not have previous exposure to computer mapping, while others may have limited experience with the criminal justice system. It is important that partners begin the project with some knowledge about prisoner reentry and reentry mapping, so that all parties can actively participate in discussions and shape the direction of the project. Most RMN partners held early meetings with stakeholders during which examples of reentry maps from other cities (such as those appearing throughout this guidebook) were presented. Local maps providing community context and any existing information on reentry at the local level were also presented. In addition to helping recruit new partners, this type of introductory meeting will bring existing partners up to speed on the topic of reentry mapping and can generate informed project planning. At this meeting or another early meeting, project leadership and the roles of various partners within the initiative can be determined through collaborative discussion.

In some cases, the initiators of a reentry mapping project may find that in the process of recruiting stakeholders and building the partnership, they are bringing together people who have never sat down and discussed the issue of reentry. This was the case in both Seattle and Milwaukee; many stakeholders who attended the initial RMN meetings in these cities had little history of working together, despite overlapping missions and client populations. Such a situation produces numerous challenges. For example, it may take time for organizations that are new to the field to be able to commit resources to reentry work. In addition, the group, with little history of working together and limited knowledge of reentry issues, may not know exactly where the project should direct its focus. However, it can also present significant opportunities for a reentry mapping project to provide strong leadership on the issue and shape local dialogue and efforts around reentry.

Setting Priorities

Many factors contribute to the well being of prisoners after release, including the support of family and friends; the availability of housing and jobs; and access to health, education, counseling, and other social services. While reentry mapping can contribute to improvements in all of these arenas, partnerships are often working with limited resources and therefore may benefit from making a decision early on about the scope and target population of the project.

Hartford was one of several RMN sites that focused on employment and reentry. In discussions with local nonprofits and community members, employment continually arose as a major community concern in the area of reentry. The Hartford RMN team decided early on that the

issue of employment would be its top project priority, and devised the guiding project questions with this focus in mind:

- What are the challenges that people returning from prison to Hartford face in obtaining and maintaining employment?
- What support services exist locally for people returning from prison and their families?
- How can these services be improved to better support ex-prisoners' reintegration into the community and entry into the workforce?

In Denver, on the other hand, the RMN team eventually decided to focus on five priority areas: employment, housing and homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, and family. The Denver RMN Community Advisory Committee was formed to review the reentry data and analyses from a community perspective and to develop and implement a strategy for disseminating the findings and engaging the community on the issue of reentry. After reviewing the initial data, and based on members' experiences and knowledge, the Community Advisory Committee identified the five priority areas listed above to guide the project's research and community outreach.

Some of the key considerations in setting priorities for a reentry mapping initiative include (1) identifying relevant data, (2) understanding the local political and economic climate as it relates to prisoner reentry, and (3) assessing the resources available to the partnership to address the identified priorities.

Identifying Relevant Data

To address a specific topic, the partnership must have an informed expectation of what data they might be able to obtain about it. For instance, if the partnership decided to focus on the need for and availability of substance abuse treatment for returning prisoners, members would need data on the substance abuse histories of returning prisoners and the locations and capacities of substance abuse treatment providers. The partnership must consider who, if anyone, collects such data and whether the partnership will be able to have access to it.

Understanding the Local Political Climate

It is also important to consider whether local support and resources exist for potential changes in the identified area of concern. Are relevant agencies willing to change their policies and practices based on the reentry mapping project's findings? Is research in a given area likely to lead to improvements? Continuing with the substance abuse treatment example, if the maps demonstrate a need for more treatment services in a particular neighborhood, what is the likelihood that the service provider community will be able to shift resources or obtain new ones to meet that need?

Identifying the Partnership's Resources

While data availability and local context are legitimate concerns, reentry mapping partnerships need not limit their goals and priorities to only those issues for which data are readily available and political will exists to create results. Resources available to the partnership may be able to overcome these limitations. If an issue is truly important to the partnership, it may be able to collect its own data on the topic or build political support for policy and programmatic changes. Such work, however, takes resources, and the partnership must consider the level of resources available to it and how it wants to assign them. In some

cases, the reentry maps themselves can be used to make the case for collecting more detailed data on a topic or for building political support around an issue.

The development of priorities will involve a number of elements in addition to the criteria outlined above. The community members and organizations will bring perspective on what the most pressing community needs are. The research partners will play a critical role in identifying the data needed to focus on a given issue, the feasibility of obtaining such data, and the time and resources that will be needed to acquire it. The collection of stakeholders at the table will influence the selection of priorities, as each stakeholder has its own interests and strengths. A project focusing on a specific area, such as employment, will require the participation of at least some organizations or individuals with expertise in that field.

The experience of the Urban Strategies Council (USC) in Oakland is also instructive: USC found that many of their local RMN partners had significant interest in the issue of voting rights for former prisoners. USC, on the other hand, was more concerned with service needs that were not being met in areas such as employment and housing. Rather than stall the project with debate over differing priorities, USC found it useful to accept disagreement on certain priorities and concentrate on strengthening coordination on issues of concern to all parties.

Setting the reentry mapping initiative's priorities is not a discrete, one-time task. As new data become available and stakeholders join and leave the partnership, priorities must be continually assessed and adjusted to ensure that they are relevant to the community and reflect the input of all stakeholders. In addition, the research findings may steer future project work as they suggest priority areas that had not previously been identified. When DOC data analyzed by the Piton Foundation in Denver showed that a major portion (43 percent) of people returning to the city from prison were homeless, the Foundation and its community partners determined that they needed to focus special attention on the homeless formerly incarcerated population and the services available to them.

Guiding Mapping and Analysis

Once the data have been obtained, cleaned, and geocoded, the research arm of the partnership can produce maps and other analyses on an ongoing basis. Draft maps should be shared with partners for review and feedback. Partner input can guide researchers in revising the maps for public dissemination, and anticipating and responding to issues highlighted by the maps. For example, Seattle Goodwill worked with the Seattle RMN research team to produce maps that were clear in their message and easy for a wide range of audiences, including those not familiar with policy research, to understand. The way in which others in the partnership interpret the meaning and message of each map is a good indication of how those outside the partnership might interpret them. Sharing these maps will also keep the partners up-to-date on what is being learned through the project, and can initiate constructive dialogue on reentry issues within the partnership.

Partner feedback can guide data analysis plans as well, as partners suggest new data sources or research priorities for the project. In Seattle, community partner input identified several potential data sources that could add value to the project (in addition to the primary dataset), such as King

County Jail release data. The Denver RMN team convened a community advisory committee composed of residents, community-based organizations, and local nonprofits. After a community forum was held on employment issues relating to reentry, the community advisory committee determined that the project needed to collect more extensive information than could be obtained from the administrative data, to gain a fuller picture of the barriers to successful reentry. They decided to collect primary data and raised funds to support the new research, as well as future public forums.

Disseminating Findings and Initiating Change

A main goal of the partnership is to disseminate findings and craft strategies for turning those findings into action. The use of research findings to spur community engagement, inform local planning efforts, and initiate policy changes will be discussed in the next section (“Using Analysis Results to Inform Action”).

Creating a Sustainable Reentry Mapping Partnership

Most reentry mapping partnerships will aim to continue in some form even after they have achieved their basic reentry mapping goals. A partnership may take on new reentry-related projects, or simply continue to disseminate and build on its initial efforts. To sustain itself over time, a partnership must regularly examine the nature of its work and the potential for future activity. This type of sustainability analysis involves assessing the current state of the project: the data that have been obtained and data gaps that still exist, the types and mix of stakeholders currently involved, existing funds and resources, and the actions that have been taken as a result of the partnership’s efforts. The partnership should also consider the future possibilities for the project by examining the dedication of existing partners, the prospects for new partnerships and projects, and expected funding and other future resources. The current and future resources should be measured against the key issues that must still be addressed and the other goals that remain for the partnership. Because it takes time to obtain additional funding or build new partnerships, the sustainability of the project should be considered well before a partnership concludes its initial work.

The Reentry Mapping Network partners highlighted in this report are in various stages of exploring and building long-term project sustainability. Most have submitted proposals to local or national funders for new resources to support further work. Figure 16 provides a list of some potential action research topics a partnership can pursue, which build off of basic reentry mapping work. Once a reentry mapping partnership has put in the initial effort to collect data and bring stakeholders together, engaging in future projects, such as those listed below, is unlikely to require the same amount of resources.

Figure 16: Potential Action Research Projects for Reentry Mapping Partnerships

- Analyzing the availability and accessibility of services for former prisoners
- Creating educational materials for elected officials on relevant public policy issues
- Engaging employers in identifying barriers to employing former prisoners and ways to overcome these barriers
- Collecting and mapping data on neighborhood assets useful for former prisoners
- Analyzing the costs of incarceration and prisoner reentry in different neighborhoods
- Researching the impact of reentry on families
- Analyzing barriers to finding housing for former prisoners
- Estimating the impacts of the voter disenfranchisement of former prisoners
- Analyzing legal barriers and access to public benefits for former prisoners

Using Analysis Results to Inform Action

The ultimate goal of a reentry mapping project is to produce research findings that will inform local policy, practice, and community responses to reentry. This section outlines some of the ways a reentry mapping partnership can use its findings to create change.

Promoting Community Education and Awareness

There is often a dearth of comprehensive data on the local dynamics of prisoner reentry, and the data that do exist are not widely distributed to those who need it. The Reentry Mapping Network was formed to address the need for useful, data-driven information on reentry and its affect on local communities. Once reentry maps and other analyses have been completed, a partnership will want to disseminate its findings to the public, former prisoners and their families, community leaders, elected officials, local nonprofits, service providers, advocacy organizations, business leaders, faith organizations, and others whose lives and work are impacted by reentry. Publicizing the research findings can raise awareness about reentry issues, engage community members in crafting response strategies, and provide stakeholders with more accurate information on which to base decisions relating to reentry. Listed below are some ways a partnership can disseminate its findings and engage the community, along with examples from the experiences of RMN sites.

Ideas for Disseminating Research Findings:

- **Hold a community forum to present research findings and other information on reentry and to provide opportunities for community discussion and dialogue on the issues that are raised.**

Denver. The Denver RMN Community Advisory Committee identified five priority areas for the project's community outreach: employment, housing and homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, and family. They planned to present four public forums, one for each of the first four topics, with the implications for families explored in all the forums. Each forum included the presentation of relevant data, an opportunity for policymakers and others to discuss the issue in depth, and specific training opportunities for practitioners. The first forum, on employment barriers facing formerly incarcerated persons, was hosted in partnership with the Denver Division of Workforce Development and *Making Connections–Denver*.

- **Create short, easy-to-understand policy briefs that explain the research findings and highlight key maps.**

Hartford. The United Way of Connecticut (UWC), the lead RMN partner in Hartford, created four reentry policy briefs on the topics of education, housing and homelessness, women returning from prison, and an overview of reentry. Each two-page brief presents basic information on the topic in a simple, concise manner enhanced by the use of charts and graphs. A sample brief can be found in appendix G.

- **Create a web site with research findings and links to information on reentry.**

Providence. The RMN partners in Providence created a web site providing a wide collection of reentry resources and information, including reentry maps; links to government and community resources; and links to reentry-related reports and campaigns at the local, state and national levels. The site, called “Prisoner Reentry in Rhode Island,” is online at <http://local.provplan.org/reentry/>.

- **Combine the presentation of reentry maps and data with the screening of a video, the sharing of personal testimonies, or another activity that presents the personal side of reentry and engages the audience emotionally.**

Milwaukee. The local PBS station and *Making Connections–Milwaukee* organized a screening for community service agencies and residents of *Behind These Walls*, a Casey Foundation–sponsored video on incarceration and reentry. At the screening, the Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee also presented data illustrating the spatial patterns of reentry in the local area.

- **Hold a press conference and work with local media to publicize the project’s findings and other local issues and campaigns related to reentry.**

Providence. The Providence RMN team worked with local media to disseminate their findings and raise awareness about reentry-related campaigns. The *Providence Journal*, the major local paper, ran articles about the RMN community workshops that were held; a policy brief issued by the Family Life Center (FLC) on felon disenfranchisement in Rhode Island, which included maps and data analysis from the RMN project; and a successful effort by the FLC and other local organizations to repeal Rhode Island’s ban on food stamp benefits for people with felony drug convictions. The FLC also co-hosted a press conference with Rhode Island governor Donald Carcieri to announce the launch of the governor’s Reentry Steering Committee, and included RMN maps and data analysis in the briefing packet that was distributed at the press conference.

- **Produce a monthly newsletter highlighting new data and maps, as well as local efforts related to reentry.**

Oakland. The Urban Strategies Council developed a weekly electronic newsletter titled *California Police and Prison News*. Through this newsletter, community stakeholders received articles on crime, police, sentencing, youth and adult incarceration, and community reentry, as well as updates on the USC’s continuing community engagement and reentry mapping and analysis efforts.

Other potential strategies for disseminating findings include the following:

- **Present findings to small groups of stakeholders or at the monthly meeting of an organization or coalition.**

- **Incorporate the reentry findings into other materials that partners routinely distribute, such as newsletters or policy briefs.**
- **Present findings at neighborhood, city council, chamber of commerce, or other local government meetings.**

A successful community education campaign requires a creative, comprehensive strategy for presenting findings that utilizes a wide range of events and products to reach multiple audiences. As the San Diego RMN team pointed out, “Different audiences respond to different products and presentation styles.” The community engagement strategy of the Providence RMN team provides an excellent example for other sites to follow. The primary component of their strategy was a community education campaign aimed at residents and other neighborhood-based stakeholders. The education campaign was coordinated by the project’s two community-based partners—the Family Life Center (FLC) and the Local Learning Partnership (LLP) of the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s *Making Connections* initiative—along with community organizers from the grassroots group Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE).

Together, LLP, FLC, and DARE hosted an “Impacts of Incarceration” community workshop that engaged participants in a conversation about reentry-related issues. The workshop began with a warm-up activity to illustrate to people how the issue of reentry relates to them. The introductory presentation included an historical overview of incarceration with an emphasis on the experiences of and effects on people of color, and a PowerPoint presentation with data and maps. The interactive component of the workshop included four small group discussions and a large group discussion of major issues and possible solutions. Each small group discussion focused on one of the cycles of incarceration (the road to prison, inside prison, reentry, community impact), and incorporated real life stories written by released prisoners, prisoners who were still incarcerated, or their family members. Approximately 70 people participated in the three-hour workshop. Most of them were actively engaged in the conversations about the issues, and just over half provided comments on the meeting evaluation form. This workshop was a pilot that was replicated on a smaller scale in Warwick, the state’s second largest city.

Around the same time that these workshops were being planned, staff from partner organizations FLC, LLP/*Making Connections*, DARE, and the Rhode Island DOC worked with representatives of the local PBS television station to screen the reentry videos that were produced by the Casey Foundation through its Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign. The events were held in four locations throughout the state and included a panel discussion with a formerly incarcerated individual, a family member, someone from a faith-based institution, a representative of a community-based agency, someone from the criminal justice system, and a moderator. The Providence RMN produced maps and made them available as PowerPoint slides and posters for each of the community forums. Three television broadcasts and a live televised call-in talk show were also part of that process.

All these events incorporated the reentry mapping and analysis that had been conducted, along with other information on prisoner reentry and local campaigns. All told, approximately 435 individuals received reentry information at over 20 information-sharing events in 2004.

In the process of developing a successful community engagement strategy, a reentry mapping partnership should consider not only what events, products, and activities to undertake, but the manner in which the findings will be presented to the public. When reentry research findings are presented in any forum, they may touch off a range of responses, both positive and negative, and can elicit fear or increase tensions among community members. One issue likely to be highlighted by the maps in many communities is the disproportionate involvement of minorities, specifically African Americans, in the criminal justice system. When presenting data that highlights the concentrated impact of incarceration and reentry on certain communities, particularly minority communities, it is important to establish that the data are well documented and that the map's purpose is to identify and meet needs rather than to profile or target individuals. The Center for Community Safety in Winston-Salem advises reentry mapping partnerships to avoid skirting the reality that reentry affects some neighborhoods and racial groups more than others. Trying to ignore or draw attention away from this fact may actually deny residents a voice in claiming the issue and working to develop solutions that draw upon the community's strengths.

Because of the sensitive nature of data demonstrating the concentrated impacts of reentry, local residents, clergy, and community groups should be brought into these conversations early so that they can work together to identify sources of strength in the affected communities. The Indianapolis RMN site found that it is essential to have a partner who is talking regularly with the community about their overall objectives in relation to reentry and the resources available for attaining those objectives. Bringing reentry data to the community as a stand-alone piece of information, without providing any support for community action or response, can overwhelm residents or evoke negative reactions, and may actually hinder community action on the issue. It may be useful to present maps of released prisoners and community assets simultaneously to clearly communicate that while these communities may be distressed, they often possess remarkable resiliency that can be tapped.

Reentry maps also raise public safety concerns, and may evoke fear, anger, and resentment among some community residents, especially crime victims. The location of released sex offenders in particular has consistently been a source of contention among residents in cities across the country. These fears may exist despite the fact that in many cities, such as Winston-Salem, San Diego, and Seattle, the locations of released prisoners do not consistently correspond to the areas with high crime rates. Maps can also raise privacy concerns among former prisoners and their families who may prefer to maintain a low profile in their communities. Reentry partnerships must delicately balance respecting and responding to the concerns of victims and residents while communicating to the families and friends of returning prisoners that their purpose is to help released prisoners succeed. This message is best communicated in a public forum that enables residents to voice their concerns and permits members of the reentry partnership to share their goals regarding reentry success.

Maps of service locations, especially shelters and other residential service agencies, can also be greeted with strong reactions. As they did in Denver, these maps may reveal a heavy burden on particular neighborhoods where services are concentrated. Residents of the affected neighborhoods may feel that bringing in new services will further concentrate and isolate previously incarcerated persons while also burdening community members. The alternative of

placing services in neighborhoods with lower concentrations of returnees and/or existing services is not an ideal solution either. This issue is best addressed by using the maps as a springboard for a broader community conversation among service providers and residents about service needs and placement.

Guiding the Planning and Implementation of Reentry Initiatives

Reentry mapping and data analysis can be used to support community members, local leaders, government agencies, service providers, and other stakeholders in formulating comprehensive, long-term strategies for addressing prisoner reentry in their city. By solidifying goals and providing vision, a “big picture” strategy will create the foundation for developing specific initiatives and policy changes that complement one another and provide a multi-pronged approach to meeting local needs.

One successful approach is for a reentry mapping partnership to plug into a preexisting local planning initiative. Several RMN sites, for example, worked closely with their local *Making Connections* (MC) initiative, a comprehensive effort aimed at improving family and community well being in select neighborhoods. Existing MC planning efforts usually address a number of issues related to reentry, such as employment, social capital, and service delivery. Because many of the *Making Connections* neighborhoods are also neighborhoods that are significantly impacted by prisoner reentry, reentry work can be incorporated into a larger effort to improve community well being along multiple dimensions. RMN partners have presented their work at MC committee and resident meetings, and have seen their findings incorporated into local MC planning processes. In Hartford and Louisville, the initial impetus for mapping and analyzing reentry data actually came out of community discussions related to *Making Connections* that raised reentry as an important issue.

The Louisville RMN site connected with a different type of local planning effort, in terms of both its scope and participants. The Justice Reinvestment Planning Project (JRPP) is a community-wide planning effort in Louisville that focuses specifically on prisoner reentry and brings together city, county and state government leaders, including elected officials and criminal justice agency leadership, service providers, community-based organizations, local academics and researchers, and other reentry stakeholders. The JRPP’s primary objectives are to gain a better understanding of the formerly incarcerated population in Louisville, to evaluate existing services for this population, and to design a pilot project to assist former prisoners in reentry. The Community Resource Network (CRN), the RMN partner in Louisville, was able to connect early on with the JRPP. CRN’s reentry mapping work was incorporated into the JRPP process, and they became the primary party responsible for research and analysis within the planning effort, while also contributing to other JRPP working groups. The JRPP provided a natural forum for using the results of CRN’s reentry mapping and analysis. CRN’s findings were incorporated into the JRPP final report and influenced the development of two local programs to serve returning prisoners: a workforce initiative that provides job training and placement and a pilot program in the Newburg neighborhood that will provide case management and coordinated service delivery.

Influencing Public Policy

One important goal of many reentry mapping initiatives is to provide accurate data that can inform public discussions and the decisionmaking processes of policymakers with regard to government statutes and practices that affect prisoner reentry. A reentry mapping partnership can communicate its findings to policymakers by producing policy briefs and reports, making presentations to elected officials and government agency personnel, or testifying at government hearings or meetings. The research findings can also be used by advocacy organizations and community members in support of their own efforts to influence public policy.

A list of policy issues that affect people returning from prison can be found in figure 17. These laws and policies are often set at the state level.

Figure 17: Public Policy Issues that Affect Reentry

- Laws that bar people with felony convictions, people on supervision, or other people who have been involved with the criminal justice system from voting.
- Limitations on what types of jobs former offenders may hold.
- The hiring practices of government agencies that regulate whether former offenders are permitted to apply for government jobs.
- Regulations that ban former offenders from public housing or set restrictions on where they may live.
- Laws that ban former offenders from receiving food stamps, welfare, or other public benefits.
- The fiscal resources that are devoted to in-prison programs and government-funded reentry programs.
- The sentencing structures that determine what crimes result in incarceration and how long offenders are sentenced.
- The policies that structure the parole system, and determine the conditions of parole and the consequences of parole violation.
- The mission statements and organizational cultures of criminal justice agencies (police, parole agencies, correctional agencies) with respect to prisoners and prisoner reentry. Specifically, the attitude these agencies take toward rehabilitation and support of people returning from prison.

One of the simplest ways to influence the policy issues listed above is to involve policymakers or those with direct access to policymakers in the reentry mapping project from the outset. In San Diego, the lead RMN partners were the county district attorney's office and the San Diego Association of Governments. While these organizations do not have the unilateral ability to change certain policies, they have authority within policymaking circles and a wide web of existing government connections. A reentry mapping project led by government agencies may not be the most effective strategy for some cities, however, as it requires sacrificing some community control over outcomes. A more moderate strategy may be to involve local elected

officials, agency leaders, and other policymakers at various points throughout the project, welcoming their contributions and perspectives while also balancing community input and control.

Although it is still too early for many RMN sites to tell how their work has influenced public policy, a few efforts have already been successful. Some examples are listed below:

- The Family Life Center (FLC) in Providence produced a policy brief on the impact of Rhode Island's lifetime ban on Family Independence Program and food stamp benefits for people convicted of felony drug distribution. The brief incorporated analyses of reentry data to underscore important points. The Poverty Institute and Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE) used this brief to inform state lawmakers of the effects of the ban, which was ultimately repealed.

The FLC also released a policy brief on felon voter disenfranchisement in Rhode Island, an issue that disproportionately affects urban minority communities. The brief included analysis and maps of the sentenced and supervised offender populations by neighborhood and race in the state. This effort mobilized the local community to advocate for the restoration of voting rights for former felons, and the legislature voted to place a constitutional amendment up for referendum on the ballot in November 2006. The measure would restore voting rights to all felons when they complete their incarceration.

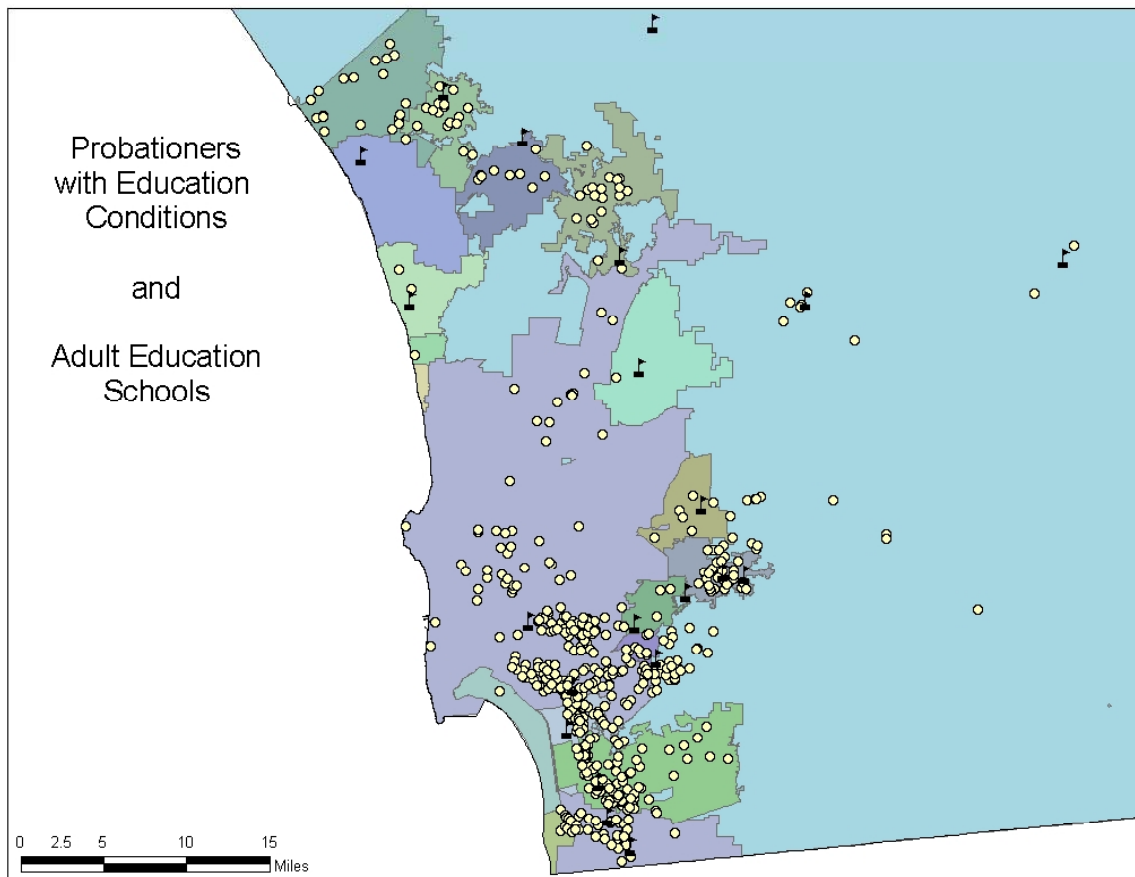
- The Center for Community Safety in Winston-Salem supplied data to the city's housing services department on prisoner reentry and the location of abandoned buildings. The city recognized a connection between the problem of abandoned buildings and the challenges of reentry. In response, the housing services department partnered with local contractors to train former prisoners to rehabilitate abandoned buildings in a neighborhood with a high concentration of returning prisoners. Several of the construction firms later hired former prisoners for additional contracting work.
- The Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee is using reentry data to assess Wisconsin's 1998 truth-in-sentencing (TIS) legislation, which enacted stricter guidelines on the portion of their total sentence that prisoners must serve. This sentencing reform act greatly reduced the number of individuals exiting prison on supervision in Wisconsin, and may have affected how prepared people are for release and how much support they receive after release.
- The Council of State Governments (CSG), a national organization of state governments, used maps from several RMN sites to lobby Congress on the Second Chance Act. The bill provides funding for community-based services for former prisoners, with the goal of reducing recidivism and making communities safer. CSG used reentry maps to demonstrate to legislators the impact of incarceration and reentry on cities in their jurisdictions.

Improving Service Delivery

Reentry mapping is a useful tool for improving the delivery of services to former prisoners. It can inform citywide planning efforts related to the creation and siting of new services, link former prisoners with services that meet their needs, and help individual service providers better understand their client populations.

Basic reentry mapping of the locations of service providers and the concentrations of former prisoners can demonstrate whether services are located where they are most needed. If data are available on the needs of the returning prisoners, more detailed analyses can be conducted that explore the fit between certain types of services and the prisoners who need those services. For example, the San Diego RMN team created a map that compared the location of probationers with educational needs and the location of adult education schools (see figure 18). These types of maps allow for more detailed exploration of service delivery matches.

Figure 18: Mapping Service Needs and Availability in San Diego



Mapping and analysis of service provider locations can inform local planning efforts regarding where new services should be located, where resources should be directed to improve existing services, and what service locations may be underused or unnecessary. In Winston-Salem, mapping conducted by the Center for Community Safety (CCS) played a role in the planning of a

one-stop reentry resource center. CCS's analysis revealed a spatial mismatch between returning prisoners and the resources and services targeted to them. This mapping sparked the idea for a one-stop resource center that would meet the needs of former prisoners who were currently underserved. The maps were used in a successful grant application funded by the Mary Babcock Reynolds Foundation to support the planning process for creating such a center. Currently in the planning stages, the Reentry Network Center is envisioned as a collaborative, community-based, service coordination center, offering links to a continuum of services for released prisoners. The center will be located in an area with a significant concentration of returning prisoners and will be managed by former prisoners, community members, and human service professionals.

Reentry mapping can also help individual service providers better understand their client populations. By knowing where, for example, young former offenders with children and education needs live, an alternative school can better target its outreach efforts. Multi-site agencies can enhance their planning about where to expand their services, where to create new ones, and where to contract existing ones.

The Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee (NPCM) has been helping local nonprofits organize and enhance their service data. The largest nonprofit organization working with reentry clients in Milwaukee, Wisconsin Community Services, has been working with NPCM to support strategic planning, including a thorough assessment of its client data to understand its pattern of services in Milwaukee neighborhoods. In addition, a program called Project Return has recently joined the *Making Connections–Milwaukee* workforce strategy effort. As a part of that collaboration, NPCM and *Making Connections* consultants are linking that program to a comprehensive client tracking system.

Moreover, the NPCM continues to work with Going Home (also known as SVORI or the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative) staff to improve Going Home's capacity to serve its client population. In 2003, the NPCM provided Going Home with a preliminary analysis of its expected caseload (serious juvenile offenders being released over the next 18 months). To improve their capacity to make referrals, the Wisconsin Going Home staff then built a database of relevant local services that the NPCM mapped for them in 2003. As Going Home's client population expands, more extensive work with that dataset is anticipated.

Information that has been gathered on local service providers can also be used to link former prisoners with the services they need. The Providence Plan maintains an online resource guide where people can search for providers by the type of services they provide, their target client population, their location, and other factors. The site, located at <http://www.pcrn.info/>, provides detailed information on each provider, including contact information, location, hours of operation, and languages spoken. Once a reentry mapping partnership has gathered data on local service providers, an electronic or printed resource guide is easy to create and can be distributed to former prisoners, their families, and case managers and other service agencies that provide referrals.

Conclusion

The experiences of the Reentry Mapping Network sites highlighted in this guidebook have yielded a wealth of information on how to launch a local reentry mapping partnership. Key processes include the development of a strong reentry mapping collaboration; the acquisition, mapping and analysis of reentry-related data; and the use of the research findings to prompt action and promote changes that will improve the prospects for successful reentry. These steps are not easy, and they cannot be achieved without a bare minimum of resources. The most important of those resource requirements relate to people: reentry mapping partnerships need a broad base of stakeholders, competent researchers, and individuals with leadership capabilities who have the vision to move beyond maps to community action. Preferably, those leaders will include community residents and representatives from both state and local agencies.

This long list of requirements may appear daunting to jurisdictions contemplating the development of a reentry mapping partnership, but in most cases the foundation for such a partnership already exists. Most RMN partners had little in the way of experience in prisoner reentry issues prior to joining the RMN. Yet interest in the topic of prisoner reentry is strong, prompted by the growing understanding by politicians on both sides of the aisle that promoting successful reentry is important for public safety and is also fiscally pragmatic given the high costs associated with perpetually returning people to prison. This interest is likely to help build support and maintain momentum for the development of reentry mapping partnerships throughout the country.

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Appendix A: The Reentry Mapping Network Case Studies

In 2002, the Urban Institute established the Reentry Mapping Network (RMN), an action research partnership designed to help communities across the country harness the power of mapping to aid in local prisoner reintegration efforts. Funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the Network's primary objective is to mobilize key stakeholders in 14 U.S. cities to devise data-driven and coordinated strategies that will effectively address reentry-related problems.

The RMN selected its first members in 2002: Des Moines, Iowa, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Oakland, California, Providence, Rhode Island, Washington, D.C., and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. These six sites were supported by grants from two different funders. The Annie E. Casey Foundation provided funding to the Urban Institute to support the Institute's leadership and technical support of the Network as well as to allocate \$25,000 of the grant funds to the Des Moines, Oakland, and Providence, RMN partners, who were selected because their proposed projects were relevant to and needed in their communities and their work was related to parallel investments by the Casey Foundation in targeted neighborhoods in their communities. NIJ provided similar funding to support the RMN infrastructure, as well as \$25,000 each to the Milwaukee, Washington, D.C., and Winston-Salem partner sites. These NIJ-funded sites were selected to receive funding because they represented a good mix of reentry problems and planned approaches. The selection of these three sites was also influenced by NIJ's interests based upon both topic area and previous NIJ investments.⁵⁹

Each \$25,000 subgrant awarded to these six local RMN partners was initiated in January 2004 for a period of 12 months. During those 12 months, partners were expected to successfully collect address-level data on offenders returning to their community, produce local maps and analyses describing reentry patterns, and work with community stakeholders to use the data for improving reentry-related programs and policies. The six proposed projects represented a diversity of reentry related problems. Winston-Salem focused on community planning and the identification of community assets; Des Moines focused on both community planning efforts and employment issues; Providence focused on community education and public policy reform; Washington, D.C., focused on forming a collaboration across faith-based institutions; and Oakland and Milwaukee focused on coordination across social service agencies.

In September 2004, an additional six partners joined the RMN: Denver, Colorado, Hartford, Connecticut, Indianapolis, Indiana, Louisville, Kentucky, San Diego, California, and Seattle, Washington. The Annie E. Casey Foundation provided funding to support \$25,000 subgrants in each of these six cities. Projects were initiated in January 2005 for a funded period of 12 months. The scope of work and expectations for these six cities were identical to those developed for the original six partners. Three of these partners, Hartford, Indianapolis, and Louisville, connected to existing reentry coalitions, with some focus on service provision for returnees. The Seattle partnership worked to bring together a local coalition to review and act on their research, finding some success in connecting with Seattle Goodwill. San Diego focused on finding ways for

⁵⁹ Milwaukee, for example, is an NIJ COMPASS site, and the RMN work dovetails off of COMPASS work that has already been done. In addition, Winston-Salem is a former SACSI site and is currently a part of Project Safe Neighborhoods.

county agencies to support better reentry planning. Denver has developed a reentry profile for the metro area and is pursuing additional primary data collection.

An additional two partners, Atlanta, Georgia, and Chicago, Illinois, were selected in May 2006 and will begin a 12-month scope of work in August 2006. These two cities will receive \$25,000 subgrants from Annie E. Casey Foundation funding. The Reentry Mapping Network has also selected five communities as affiliates: Detroit, Michigan, New York, New York, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Nashville, Tennessee, and Los Angeles, California. RMN affiliates do not receive funding from RMN grants.⁶⁰

As members of the Reentry Mapping Network, partners collect and analyze local data related to incarceration, reentry, and community well-being; develop policy options based on the findings; use the findings to engage community stakeholders toward community improvement; and document their findings and lessons learned. This appendix describes the experiences of the reentry mapping partnerships in each of the original twelve partner cities. The potential for replicating these experiences in other communities is discussed, along with a summary of partner institutions' assessments of the Network.

RMN Site Case Studies

DENVER, COLORADO

The Piton Foundation leads the Reentry Mapping Network project in Denver. The Piton Foundation is a private operating foundation with a history of working with the Denver community to use data to influence public policy and program practice. Piton focuses on Denver's low-income neighborhoods, providing technical assistance and support to community-based efforts and training residents in strategies for using information for social action. For example, one of Piton's main projects, the Neighborhood Facts program, includes a database of neighborhood indicators, maps, and histories, which are used to conduct research and analyses on issues that are important to local residents. In their work in the Denver community, the issue of prisoner reentry, and its impact on former prisoners, their families, and their neighborhoods, has emerged as a key topic of interest. Piton's interest in reentry and history of action-based research made it a natural fit for the RMN.

The Piton Foundation's key community partners on the RMN project are the Colorado Criminal Justice Coalition, the Denver Reintegration Coalition, and *Making Connections—Denver*. These and other organizations participate on a community advisory committee whose mission is to provide advice and perspective on the analysis and maps that were created and to determine how the findings would be used.

⁶⁰ Organizations that become Reentry Mapping Network affiliates are invited to attend select RMN meetings as observers and to participate in the RMN e-mail list, which enables participants to share questions, ideas, and lessons learned. Affiliates do not receive funding or technical support from UI.

Data Access and Quality

The primary source of data for the project was the Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) Information System, which was accessed and analyzed via the Colorado Justice Analytics Support System. This inmate dataset was supplemented with information from the Level of Supervision Inventory (LSI), a standardized risk and needs assessment tool designed to pinpoint areas of need and concern for individual inmates. The LSI surveys the attributes of offenders across the following dimensions: criminal history, education and employment, financial, family/marital, accommodation, leisure and recreation, companions, alcohol/drug problems, emotional/personal, and attitudes and orientation. The LSI data provides a unique opportunity to examine some of the problems faced by the population of returning prisoners.

The main dataset for this project covered the 3,057 persons released to Denver City/Denver County between January 1, 2003, and July 15, 2005, representing 27 percent of the 11,180 persons released statewide during this time period. The original DOC dataset included a record for each instance of a person being released, and thus some individuals had multiple records because they were released multiple times during the time period. In its analysis, the Piton Foundation focused on the most recent release record for each individual to generate a dataset of unduplicated persons released from incarceration (one or more times) from January 2003 to July 2005.

Eighty-nine percent of the inmate release addresses were able to be geocoded; the remainder did not match due to missing fields or illegitimate addresses, or because they were located outside of the target geographic area. Fortunately, match rates were better in urban areas where street networks are better established.

A significant proportion of the individuals in the dataset were homeless on release, a phenomenon that created difficulties in both the geocoding and the subsequent data analysis. While the Piton Foundation was able to geocode those who were released to homeless shelters or motels, there were some individuals who did not have an address. And of those people returning to Denver whose addresses were geocodable, almost half (43 percent) were homeless at release (1,190 were released to shelters and 121 to hotels or motels). This large homeless population complicated the spatial analysis. Denver shelters are concentrated in a few neighborhoods, and these neighborhoods thus had much higher concentrations of former prisoners.

These findings have helped the Denver Homelessness Initiative (DHI) recognize that the number of people leaving jail and prison who are released homeless is placing significant stress on shelters' capacity and is posing complex policy and program challenges. Although they have felt the impact for some time, they are currently working to improve their understanding of what is driving homelessness among people released from incarceration.

Community Engagement

A Denver RMN community advisory committee was formed to review the reentry data and analyses from a community perspective and to develop and implement a strategy for disseminating the findings and engaging the community on the issue of reentry. The community

advisory committee consists of residents from *Making Connections* neighborhoods and representatives of community-based organizations that serve formerly incarcerated populations, as well as the Colorado Criminal Justice Coalition, the Denver Reintegration Coalition, and *Making Connections–Denver*.

After reviewing the data, and based on members' experiences and knowledge, the community advisory committee identified five priority areas for the RMN research and community outreach: employment, housing and homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, and family. The plan they developed called for four public forums, one for each of the first four topics. Each forum would include a presentation of relevant data, an opportunity for policymakers and agency personnel to discuss the issue in depth, and specific training opportunities for practitioners. The implications for families would be explored in all four forums.

The first forum, on employment barriers facing formerly incarcerated persons, took place in November 2005, and was hosted in partnership with the Denver Division of Workforce Development and *Making Connections–Denver*. Following that forum, the community advisory committee determined that the project needed to collect further information to gain a fuller picture of the barriers to successful reentry than could be obtained from the administrative data. They decided to collect primary data about the five priority areas—employment, housing and homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, and the role of family—and their impact on reentry success. Funds were raised to support the new research, as well as the three remaining public forums, and it is expected that this phase of the Denver project will be completed by the fall of 2006.

The new research plan, which is still being implemented, entails the following:

First Wave

1. Surveys of people affiliated with the organizations on the RMN community advisory committee who are currently in prison on parole revocation.

Second Wave

1. Randomized sample of people who are currently on parole in the community.
2. A series of focus groups to go further in depth on reintegration issues involving:
 - Females
 - Males
 - Formal supports—case managers, reentry specialists, etc.
 - Informal supports—family, friends and community
3. An online survey of parole officers to determine whether they identify the same barriers to successful reintegration as parolees (under consideration).

The survey of individuals currently incarcerated due to parole revocation was conducted in May 2006, and focused primarily on the challenges faced by respondents while on parole. It resulted in approximately 150 responses, and the data is currently being analyzed. The second survey, planned for the summer of 2006, will seek respondents who are currently on parole and will ask similar questions.

Mapping and Analysis

The Piton Foundation created maps and analyses exploring the basic demographics, the spatial location, and the needs and challenges of the people returning from prison to Denver. The Level of Supervision Inventory (LSI) served as a particularly rich source of data. Highlights of findings from the analyses include the following:

- 40 percent of the Denver returnees were black, 37 percent were white, and 21 percent were Hispanic. By way of comparison, the returning population in the rest of the state was predominantly white (68 percent), with 14 percent black and 17 percent Hispanic.
- Most returnees were between the ages of 25 and 34 (34 percent) or 35 and 44 (40 percent).
- Three-quarters reported having a drug problem at some point in their lives, and 60 percent had an alcohol problem sometime in their lives. Almost half had a drug problem and almost half an alcohol problem in the year before their incarceration.
- 60 percent were employed for less than half of the 12 months prior to their incarceration; 35 percent had never been employed continuously for twelve months or more.
- Only 40 percent had completed regular schooling through the 12th grade (this does not include those who completed a GED or other equivalency or correspondence program). Hispanics generally had less formal education than blacks or whites.
- Almost three-quarters had two or more previous convictions as an adult.
- 1 in 10 returnees had severe emotional or psychological disturbances; for female returnees only, the figure was 18 percent.

The spatial analysis showed that a quarter of the persons released in Colorado between January 2003 and July 2005 returned to Denver City/County, and an additional quarter returned to the remaining four counties in the Denver metro area. 36 percent of releasees were spread throughout the rest of the state, and 12 percent returned somewhere outside of Colorado or gave an unknown address. Mapping pinpointed neighborhoods in Denver with high concentrations of returning prisoners and showed that, to some degree, blacks, whites, and Hispanics were returning to different neighborhoods.

These data analyses and maps have been shared with the community advisory committee. Because the data revealed that nearly as many people were released to the surrounding counties in the metro area as were released to the city of Denver, the RMN partners decided to use the data to address reentry-related issues for the region as a whole, instead of targeting specific neighborhoods.

Results and Lessons Learned

As outlined above, the Piton Foundation and the RMN community advisory committee are currently preparing to conduct primary data collection to gain more information about the challenges faced by people returning from prison to Denver. Their goals for this research include:

- identifying common reentry barriers and possible solutions that individuals can initiate while in prison;
- improving access to existing resources (employment, clothing, food, medical and mental health, legal, substance abuse, mentors, transportation, voting, etc.) by educating released prisoners, their family members, prison and parole personnel, and other service providers about these resources;
- providing prisoners with information on shelter and housing opportunities prior to their release, in an effort to reduce the high number of returning prisoners who are homeless;
- establishing connections with other supportive service organizations such as affordable housing advocates;
- providing information to assist prisoners and their families with family reunification; and
- developing better reentry policies.

The Piton Foundation's initial analysis of the administrative corrections data was crucial, because it provided a basic understanding of reentry in Denver and served as a springboard for further work. The corrections data, especially the LSI, supplied a great deal of information on the needs of the prisoners returning to Denver. The RMN partnership hopes that its current primary data collection will offer additional insights on how these needs can best be addressed, as well as what policies and programs might accomplish this.

Further results and lessons learned from the Denver RMN project will come later in 2006 after the completion of the primary data collection. The project has already had a significant impact by drawing attention to the extent of homelessness among former prisoners. Moving forward, the Piton Foundation and the community advisory committee want to focus special attention on this homeless population and how services are provided to them.

DES MOINES, IOWA

The Des Moines RMN partner, the Child and Family Policy Center (CFPC), focused its RMN project on workforce issues for returning prisoners, as well as on family reunification among returning prisoners and their immediate families. Established in 1989 by a former Iowa legislator, the CFPC links research and policy to improve outcomes for children and strengthen families. With experience in research, community forum facilitation, and technical assistance to policymakers, the CFPC is making significant contributions to Polk County communities throughout its RMN work.⁶¹

Before joining the RMN, the CFPC began its work developing neighborhood maps and analyses of the formerly incarcerated population. When the CFPC became an RMN partner, they already had an extensive array of data to work with, including census data, 2001 incarceration data that include the number of children that each prisoner has, and zip-code level community-corrections data.

The CFPC was also well positioned to engage the community in their reentry mapping efforts. Prior to their involvement in the RMN project, the CFPC was selected as the local evaluation

⁶¹ Much of the analysis conducted on Des Moines also included Polk County, in which Des Moines is located.

partner of the Polk County Going Home Initiative (SVORI) and they have been an active member on the Steering Committee. The CFPC is also closely involved with the Community Coalition for Former Offender Reentry (Community Coalition), a joint effort of the Central Iowa Employment and Training Center (CIETC), and the Director's Council, a consortium of agencies working in the Des Moines *Making Connections* neighborhood.

Data Access and Quality

The CFPC was successful in obtaining agreements with the Iowa DOC and the Polk County jail to access data on released state prisoners and released jail inmates. The CFPC's past work with the DOC on the Going Home initiative helped them acquire more current data for the RMN work. The CFPC was able to obtain almost all relevant variables; however, it took a lot of time and effort on the part of CFPC staff to clean the DOC data. Jail data on inmates released from the Polk County jail presented further difficulty, as it was provided in a format that was not conducive to statistical analysis. The CFPC had to manually retrieve the data files and re-enter them into a statistical program. DOC and Polk County jail staff made themselves available to answer questions about exact definitions and codes used in the prison database. After extensive cleaning of address-level data and geocoding to assign reported addresses to census tracts in Polk County, the CFPC achieved a 97 percent match rate.

Community Engagement

The CFPC integrated the RMN project into its ongoing prisoner reentry work in Des Moines on workforce development and family stability issues in disadvantaged neighborhoods. As an active member of both the Going Home steering committee and the Community Coalition, the CFPC has used its RMN work to connect the strategic planning of these two initiatives to advance the collective goal of addressing the challenges associated with prisoner reentry. The CFPC's community partners have been particularly interested in analyses relating to the connection between individuals involved in the criminal justice system and the economic growth and stability of disadvantaged communities.

To address employment-related reentry challenges, the CFPC convened a meeting on workforce development strategies that included the Central Iowa Employment and Training Center and the Director's Council, along with the deputy director of the state Workforce Investment Act, the United Way Human Services Planning Alliance, the Des Moines Community College, and several other neighborhood-based organizations. The group is designing a workforce development proposal to address the challenges that inner city residents, especially former prisoners, face securing and maintaining employment.

In addition, the CFPC has been working with the Going Home Initiative to design its Keys Essential to Your Success (KEYS) pre-release training program. One of the central components of the KEYS training program is preparation for reconnecting with family members and the larger community upon release. In its ongoing involvement with the Going Home initiative and the Community Coalition, the CFPC has taken the lead on exploring and addressing the policy barriers facing people returning from prison. The Council is coordinating the development of a cross-agency working group to examine these policy barriers.

Mapping and Analysis

The CFPC's analysis for the RMN project focused on the working-age population of formerly incarcerated people and the children of released prisoners in Polk County. The CFPC's analysis of DOC and jail data shows that in Des Moines' inner-city neighborhoods, a high proportion of the working-age population was formerly incarcerated or on probation or parole, and a significant portion of the child population has a formerly incarcerated parent. Using census tract-level data on indicators of social, economic, and educational well-being in Des Moines' *Making Connections* neighborhoods, the CFPC also analyzed the formerly incarcerated population as well as the probation and parole population by race and gender.

The CFPC produced several reports on the social and economic implications of prisoner reentry using the maps and analysis developed out of the RMN project. Two major reports prepared for the *Making Connections* Neighborhood Learning Partnership, *Corrections and Making Connections: The Impact of Incarceration on Neighborhoods* and *Justice System Involvement of Young Men in Polk County: Implications for Family Strengthening*, illustrate the impact of prisoner and jail reentry on Des Moines's communities. The CFPC found that nearly 30 percent of all young men in *Making Connections* neighborhoods are involved in the criminal justice system, compared with less than 9 percent of young men in less-disadvantaged neighborhoods. However, while the CFPC's analysis shows that more than one-third of black men are involved in the criminal justice system, the neighborhood in which they reside does not seem to affect their involvement. Although a high share of black men in central Des Moines neighborhoods are involved in the criminal justice system, the CFPC's analysis showed that similarly high rates are found throughout Polk County.

Results and Lessons Learned

To complete this analytic work the CFPC overcame significant difficulties retrieving and preparing DOC and Polk County jail data for analysis. The relationship they had established with the DOC helped the CFPC obtain clarification of data codes and formats throughout their analysis work. The CFPC also established ongoing communication with the Polk County jail to address the challenges associated with the jail data.

The analyses and reports produced through the CFPC's RMN work have been instrumental in the strategic planning process of both the Going Home Steering Committee and the Community Coalition. The CFPC's involvement in the Going Home Initiative and the Community Coalition helped sustain momentum for addressing policy barriers that returning prisoners face. An Iowa state representative has requested the CFPC's technical assistance in introducing legislation around responses to parole revocations and drivers license suspensions in particular. The CFPC's technical assistance and support has also been critical in the development of a collaborative community effort to address workforce issues in Des Moines's inner-city neighborhoods. The CFPC's mapping and analysis work for this community coalition on workforce development has shaped the Institute for Educational and Social Development's efforts to work with the ex-offender population.

The RMN work in Des Moines has increased community recognition of the need for strategies to support individuals returning from prison. Through their work in the RMN, the CFPC has emphasized the importance of an analysis of the whole criminal justice system, in addition to the population of released prisoners, as it impacts Polk County neighborhoods.

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

The Hartford Reentry Mapping Network partner is the Community Results Center of the United Way of Connecticut (UWC). Formerly the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council, the UWC Community Results Center provides policy information and analysis to assist policymakers, community organizations, local residents, and other stakeholders in their efforts to improve the Hartford community. The United Way of Connecticut was also the Local Learning Partner for the *Making Connections* initiative in Hartford over the course of its RMN project. It is in this role that the issue of prisoner reentry was first brought to the UWC as an area in need of exploration.

During discussions with local nonprofits and community members, the return of people from incarceration to *Making Connections* neighborhoods and the ability of these formerly incarcerated people to find employment were identified as issues of concern to the community. In response to the community's concerns, the UWC focused its reentry work on the issue of employment, laying out three questions to guide its mapping and data analysis:

- What are the challenges that people returning from prison to Hartford face in obtaining and maintaining employment?
- What support services exist locally for people returning from prison and their families?
- How can these services be improved to better support ex-prisoners' reintegration into the community and entry into the workforce?

In addition to data analysis and mapping expertise, the UWC had existing relationships with local service providers and demographic and social data from previous projects. These resources, combined with experience as the Local Learning Partner for *Making Connections*, helped prepare them for the Reentry Mapping project.

Data Access and Quality

The collection and cleaning of incarceration, parole, and probation data took over one year from the first meetings with various data gatekeepers. The UWC acquired three databases:

- all individuals in the state's prison system between January 1, 2003, and July 1, 2005, and whose address at intake (pre-incarceration) was in the city of Hartford;
- all individuals on parole in Hartford as of July 1, 2005; and
- all individuals serving probation after incarceration (as a condition of their sentence) in Hartford as of July 1, 2005.

The UWC contacted the state department of corrections in late 2004, beginning a series of phone calls and face-to-face meetings to build a relationship that would eventually lead to a data-sharing agreement. After discussions with the DOC about how the UWC intended to use the data and how the DOC databases were organized, the UWC submitted a formal data request specifying data fields. In spring 2005, they received datasets relating to parolees and incarcerated people. Probation data was obtained from a separate agency, the Court Supports Services division of the judicial branch.

Based on previous experience, the UWC realized the importance of working to build trust and establish a solid partnership with the department of corrections. Because they were able to build a relationship with the DOC, the process of acquiring data went smoothly. Despite the good working relationship, providing data to researchers is not the DOC's top priority, and thus it sometimes took longer than initially expected for overloaded DOC personnel to fill the data requests.

The major challenge with the data was the accuracy of the addresses. The UWC had to invest time in cleaning the addresses, as the address field was often truncated or contained misspellings and arbitrary abbreviations. In addition, for those released without supervision, the address in the DOC system was the person's address at intake to the correctional system prior to incarceration. In the probation dataset, on the other hand, there were often several addresses entered on many different dates and sometimes on the same date. In both cases, the UWC tried to get the most recent and accurate addresses possible with the available data. These difficulties with the address field and other data limitations reflect that the DOC maintains data on inmates primarily to track and manage them within the correctional system, not for post-release planning.

Community Engagement

The UWC's interest in reentry developed from conversations they participated in as the Local Learning Partner for the *Making Connections* initiative, where residents and stakeholders raised reentry and related employment issues as important community concerns. The UWC presented their reentry analysis to the *Making Connections–Hartford* (MCH) steering committee, and the committee expressed interest in learning more and crafting strategies to address challenges identified in the UWC analysis. Additional community meetings are being planned for the UWC to present its findings to MCH and other community partners, as well as local government officials.

The UWC also presented their analysis to the Connecticut Department of Corrections and Community Partners in Action (CPA), a Hartford-based organization that provides comprehensive services to people during incarceration, throughout the reentry process, and in the community. Both agencies are interested in this information as a tool for facilitating conversation on reentry and services in Hartford. Although CPA is not planning any community events on reentry at this time, they are interested in sharing the UWC's mapping and analysis with their partner organizations.

The UWC also met with several local human service providers to share initial reentry maps, to learn about the services available in the city for people returning from prison, and to explore

what types of RMN analyses would be most useful to service providers. Many of the agencies at this meeting were collaborating to apply for a federal Prisoner Re-Entry Program (PREP) grant from the Department of Labor. PREP grants are designed to support a variety of employment and training services for people returning from prison. The UWC contributed its expertise and analysis of the DOC and probation data to the grant application, and the grant was awarded, with CPA as the lead organization.

Mapping and Analysis

The UWC combined the parole, probation, and incarceration data it received to create a reentry database. The addresses available from this dataset were recent, post-incarceration addresses for those on parole or probation and pre-incarceration intake addresses for those released without supervision. Although there are limitations to working with these different types of addresses, the data that the DOC has on formerly incarcerated people is limited, and these were the most accurate addresses that exist on this population.

The UWC mapped the location of people returning from prison, and the density of returnees by neighborhood. They examined the location of formerly incarcerated people by age and by supervision type (parole, probation, no supervision). The UWC maps included a display of areas zoned for residential use in Hartford, because large portions of the city are zoned non-residential. This map added the context for understanding where formerly incarcerated people are located. For additional context, the UWC displayed the location of returnees in relation to data such as Part 1 crime (obtained from the Hartford Police Department), poverty, and the location of abandoned buildings (collected as part of another UWC project).

The locations of human service providers were also mapped, to explore the geographic fit between service coverage and the formerly incarcerated population that might access those services. Services mapped included education, substance abuse treatment, and housing (halfway houses, homeless shelters, public housing). The UWC also analyzed residential mobility, mapping the residential movement of people on parole by comparing their pre-incarceration address with their current address in the parole system. UWC researchers found the largest movement was into three neighborhoods in south Hartford.

The UWC conducted basic data analysis on the reentering population in Hartford, looking at dynamics such as gender, race, age, educational attainment, offense, sentence length, and drug/alcohol assessment score. They examined which neighborhoods people are coming to prison from, and where parolees are returning. They explored the disproportionate incarceration of black and Hispanic young men, and different educational backgrounds of African American, white, and Hispanic women returning from prison. The UWC team also analyzed the housing situations of people prior to and after incarceration, and the housing market conditions in the neighborhoods where parolees are returning.

Based on these data analyses, the UWC produced four prison reentry policy briefs on reentry in general, reentry and education, reentry in relation to housing and homelessness, and women returning from prison. These briefs are being used in meetings with *Making Connections–Hartford* stakeholders and in other community events.

Results and Lessons Learned

The UWC has presented reentry maps and analyses to the Connecticut State Department of Corrections, Community Partners in Action (CPA), and other service providers in Hartford. Both CPA and the Department of Corrections are interested in sharing UWC's maps and analyses with other stakeholders in conversations on reentry and services in Hartford. UWC's work has been used by local organizations in a PREP grant application, by the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness in discussing housing needs in Hartford, and by CPA in a presentation at a drug policy conference. In addition, *Making Connections–Hartford* is moving to incorporate reentry issues into its work, in part by sharing the UWC's work with its partners and stakeholders.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

The United Way of Central Indiana (UWCI) and the Local Learning Partnership of Indianapolis's *Making Connections* initiative led the Reentry Mapping Network project in Indianapolis. They also established several key partnerships, including one with the Indianapolis Weed and Seed program.

The UWCI participated in the Reentry Mapping Network as part of its mission to better understand the needs of the community and to share that knowledge with its partner agencies. Only a few UWCI agencies focus primarily on returning prisoners, but many offer services of use to those returning from prison, their families, and their neighborhoods. By learning more about the reentering population, the UWCI is better positioned to assist its partner agencies and other service providers in developing relevant programs and services. In addition, the UWCI, along with The Polis Center at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis, serves as a member of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP). The UWCI has worked with The Polis Center to develop and refine SAVI, an online database of Social Assets and Vulnerabilities Indicators for Central Indiana. The UWCI felt that reentry mapping and analysis would be a valuable addition to these spatial information systems.

The Indianapolis Local Learning Partnership (ILLP) had an interest in the RMN project from two perspectives. First, as *Making Connections–Indianapolis* (MC-I) has worked to strengthen families and the neighborhoods in which they live, it has frequently faced reentry-related issues, including the difficulties former prisoners have finding employment and housing, as well as their inability to vote. The large population of returning offenders in the two *Making Connections* neighborhoods, and the need to take their unique situation into consideration when developing strategies, was a driving force behind the ILLP's participation in the RMN. Neighborhood LLPs also brought prisoner reentry to the attention of ILLP. The Martindale-Brightwood LLP in particular recognized that a large number of people being released from prison were returning to their neighborhood, and they expressed a desire to know more about the people returning and to work as a community to make their reentry transition successful.

Informed by their existing projects and concerns, the initial goals for the Indianapolis RMN team were:

- to inform the ongoing work of the *Making Connections–Indianapolis* site team and the community and neighborhood Local Learning Partnerships on reentry issues; and
- to analyze the disparate impact of reentry on various Indianapolis neighborhoods and to explore the service opportunities this presents for UWCI agencies, especially the 12 community centers located throughout Indianapolis’s inner-city neighborhoods.

Data Access and Quality

Data were requested from the Indiana Department of Corrections (DOC) through a research application to the DOC’s research and planning division. The Department was cooperative and provided most of the requested fields in a single flat text file. Although the scope of the Indianapolis project was limited to Marion County, the DOC dataset included offenders released to addresses throughout the state.

The dataset encompassed all offenders released from state DOC facilities between July 1, 2003, and June 30, 2004. The DOC has also agreed to provide another year of release data (July 2004 to June 2005); this agreement is a move toward institutionalizing a data-sharing relationship between the UWCI and the DOC.

In addition to covering basic demographics (age, race, gender, marital status, educational status, health conditions), the data also included information about the inmate’s incarceration (length of sentence, security level, offenses). While DOC documentation was unclear on the meaning of the classification codes associated with some fields, the UWCI was typically able to reconstruct the classification codes and verify their accuracy with DOC staff.

Unfortunately, only one address is maintained in the DOC system. In most cases, this is the address at the time of arrest or admission into the correctional system. Infrequently, new addresses are added to the system, such as a release address, yet these addresses are rarely validated. For these reasons, the accuracy of the addresses in the DOC dataset is unknown. On analysis, the RMN team found that a few of the addresses were readily identifiable as institutional or agency addresses, but the overwhelming majority were valid residential addresses. After a significant amount of data cleaning, 92 percent of the addresses were successfully geocoded.

Community Engagement

In the early stages of the RMN project, the UWCI connected with the lead agency in a local Weed and Seed neighborhood, that was hosting a Reentry Forum involving residents, service providers, and recently returned prisoners. An ad-hoc coalition grew out of the forum, which the UWCI participated in as a means to learn more about local reentry planning efforts and to identify ways in which they could connect their reentry mapping work to ongoing community planning and action.

Through this coalition, the UWCI connected with the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) Weed and Seed coordinator and a local representative from the United States Attorneys’ Office,

who had been working on improving access to services for returning offenders in Indianapolis. Their goal was to develop an online system of reentry services to be used by case workers, returning offenders, and their friends and families to identify services that can support successful reentry. The IPD Weed and Seed Coordinator and the U.S. Attorney's Office also held a focus group of former prisoners to discuss the challenges they faced upon reentry, their needs for services, and how they found information about service providers. In connection with these efforts, the UWCI overlaid their reentry data with some of the service data to create maps demonstrating how the service provider database could be used for service planning as well. The UWCI sees continued participation in this collaborative effort as part of its goal of using the RMN work to inform local agencies about the reentry population and their service needs.

The UWCI also worked with the Indianapolis LLP to share maps and data with residents of *Making Connections* neighborhoods in Indianapolis. One neighborhood, Martindale-Brightwood, has viewed this project as an opportunity to address reentry in their community. They took the issue to representatives from all of the neighborhood organizations and developed a consensus as a neighborhood that they want to explore ways residents and neighborhood organizations can assist with successful reentry. This planning work is ongoing.

Although the Southeast *Making Connections* neighborhood was not as quick to take up the issue of reentry, there is ongoing community conversation about challenges to employment success, including having a criminal background. This neighborhood concern has been used as an entry point to bring data to the community regarding the demographics and needs of returning offenders in the neighborhood. They are using this basic information on the returning population to develop a job placement program for returning sex offenders.

Mapping and Analysis

The UWCI mapping revealed that most of the people returning from prison were coming back into the older neighborhoods surrounding downtown Indianapolis, with some going into the older suburban neighborhoods of the region as well. Both *Making Connections* neighborhoods have high concentrations of returning offenders. Using maps and charts, the UWCI explored the characteristics of those returning from prison, including basic demographics, educational attainment, and offense history. They also combined reentry mapping with contextual data, such as the location of service providers, Part 1 crime, and public transportation routes. These maps and analyses are being used to introduce UWCI partner agencies and *Making Connections* neighborhood organizations and residents to the issue of reentry in Indianapolis. As part of the collaboration described earlier to improve reentry services in Weed and Seed neighborhoods, the UWCI is also focusing its mapping and analysis efforts on these neighborhoods.

One interesting finding coming out of UWCI's analysis is that in several neighborhoods, including Martindale-Brightwood, drug related offenses were among the most common reasons returnees were incarcerated. In the Southeast neighborhood, on the other hand, driving related crimes were high on the list of offenses. This information was shared with the *Making Connections* neighborhoods, and Martindale-Brightwood residents were especially concerned about the affect drug convictions can have on the ability to obtain employment.

Results and Lessons Learned

The UWCI's RMN work benefited from a cooperative and helpful relationship with the DOC, yet they still spent many hours cleaning the data and compensating for the lack of a preexisting data dictionary. The RMN project also benefited from the UWCI's position in the community as a leading funder of local services and from their multiple connections with their partner agencies. This position will enable UWCI to raise the level of consciousness about reentry-related challenges throughout Indianapolis, and start a dialogue with new organizations not previously involved in reentry discussions.

In addition, the Indianapolis LLP will continue working in the *Making Connections* neighborhoods of Martindale-Brightwood and Southeast. In Martindale-Brightwood, there is enthusiasm and momentum from community leaders to get involved with reentry planning for their neighborhood. In Southeast this same enthusiasm is taking longer to develop, because there was little recognition prior to RMN that reentry is a serious challenge for their neighborhood improvement efforts. The project has made important progress in getting past this hesitation and developing a baseline of understanding in the Southeast neighborhood from which more meaningful dialogue and planning can follow.

Other lessons learned by the Indianapolis RMN partners throughout the project include the following:

- It is important for the research team to clearly understand their data needs and analysis plans to avoid the need to request additional DOC data;
- The research team should try to obtain a data dictionary or a list of definitions for any field codes as early in the project as possible, as this will make data cleaning and analysis much easier and data accuracy more certain;
- It can be difficult for the research team to know when and how to introduce reentry-related data, especially if a community is unaware of the scope of the returning population in its area or is not interested in addressing the challenges and needs of this population. In this case, it may be best to introduce data slowly, as opportunities arise, and to connect them to conversations about other topics, such as employment.
- It is essential to have a partner who is talking regularly with the community about their overall objectives and their barriers to attaining those objectives. Bringing reentry data to the community as a stand-alone piece of information, without any support for community action and response, can overwhelm community residents or evoke negative reactions, and may actually hinder community action on the issue.

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

The Community Resource Network (CRN) is the lead RMN partner in Louisville. The CRN serves as the Local Learning Partner (LLP) to *Making Connections-Louisville* (MCL) and maintains Louisville and Jefferson County's social service referral resource database. Due to its

experience collecting and working with community data, the CRN was well positioned to obtain, clean, organize and analyze reentry data for the RMN project.

One factor motivating the CRN's involvement in reentry mapping was that, during the strategic planning process for *Making Connections*, residents from *Making Connections* neighborhoods had identified reentry-related challenges as a top concern. Specifically, the residents were concerned that their neighborhoods were home to a significant number of returning prisoners and parolees, for whom inadequate services and supports were available. Residents were also concerned that their neighborhoods suffered from higher crime rates than the rest of the Louisville metro area. What remained unclear, however, was the extent to which there was a correlation or even a causal relationship between the number and concentration of former prisoners and the crime rates in local neighborhoods. Another question was the extent to which inmates were truly returning "home"—for example, to live with family or friends, in the neighborhoods in which they had lived prior to arrest and incarceration and to which they had preexisting ties—or were being directed or attracted to certain neighborhoods. What implications might these different scenarios have for the community? The CRN hoped its participation in the Reentry Mapping Network would help answer these and other questions.

Early in the project, the CRN was able to connect its reentry mapping work with a community-wide planning effort around reentry called the Justice Reinvestment Planning Project (JRPP). Funded by the Open Society Institute, the JRPP brings together city, county, and state government leaders, including elected officials and criminal justice agency leadership (of the Department of Corrections, the Parole Board, the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, and other agencies), service providers, community-based organizations, local academics and researchers, and other stakeholders. The primary objectives of the JRPP were:

- to gain a better understanding of the formerly incarcerated population in Louisville through data analysis and mapping;
- to evaluate existing services at the state, local, and neighborhood levels that assist prisoners upon reentry; and
- to design a pilot project that enhances investment in neighborhoods and provides alternatives that encourage former prisoners to become contributing members of their neighborhoods and communities.

The CRN was selected to lead the research and analysis component (the first objective) of the JRPP, and the CRN incorporated its planned RMN work within the JRPP framework. The CRN's involvement in the project had a significant impact on its RMN work, particularly with regard to gaining access to reentry data.

Data Access and Quality

The CRN's connection with the JRPP provided a strategic opportunity to fast-track a data request to the DOC with some assistance from JRPP participants who worked in the corrections system. The JRPP collaborated with the CRN team and the state and local corrections staff to develop

and refine a detailed data request. This effort was aided substantially by the JRPP project coordinator, Keith Hardison, who had recently retired from the position of executive director of the Kentucky State Parole Board. Mr. Hardison was invaluable in helping to refine the data request, based on extensive practical experience using the data and working with its challenges and idiosyncrasies.

A data-sharing agreement was established with the Kentucky Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Kentucky Parole Board to receive data from the inmate database (ORION), the Probation and Parole Case Management System (PPCMS), and the Parole Board Risk Assessment (PBRA) database. Data on local jail releases was obtained from the Louisville Metro Department of Corrections inmate database.

The target group for analysis was people released to the Louisville Metro area and assigned to the Louisville Probation & Parole Office over three consecutive calendar years: January to December 2002, January to December 2003, and January to December 2004. The PPCMS dataset was used as the core dataset, and was augmented with information from other data sources, including the ORION (inmate) and PBRA (risk assessment) files. The ORION and PBRA records were matched to the PPCMS database to create a single file containing most of what is known from the three sources (case history and demographics) about the 9,162 parolees released to Louisville from 2002 to 2004.⁶² Combining these three datasets was challenging because each is produced, used, and maintained for a different purpose by a different entity, using its own set of identifiers and usage norms.

The individuals in the master dataset fell into six case categories: parole (27 percent), shock probation (6 percent), sex offender conditional discharge (1 percent), probation (40 percent), misdemeanor (18 percent), and pretrial (10 percent). For the most part, individuals in the first three categories (parole, shock probation, and sex offender CD) served time in prison prior to being released to supervision.⁶³ The individuals in the other three categories were remaining in the community rather than going to prison, serving their time under some form of supervision administered by the Probation and Parole Office.

Each of the individual records in the master dataset contains up to 44 fields, which provide information ranging from basic demographics (age, race, gender, educational attainment) through more detailed designations such as the type of crime and conviction, the length of time on probation and parole, and the release address. Due to typographical errors, missing data, and some inherent differences between the three datasets, it was not possible to fill all information fields for all individuals in the resulting master file. In some cases, a person was only listed in one of the three databases, rendering a less-detailed picture of that individual.

⁶² The CRN chose not to include “serve-outs”—those individuals who have served their full prison term and are released without supervision or restriction—in their analysis because addresses for this group are not as reliable as those for parolees. An estimated 700 individuals per year are released from Kentucky state prisons and provide a Jefferson County (Louisville Metro) address or zip code on release. The inclusion of serve outs would increase the three-year count (9,162) of probation/parole/reentry by an estimated 2,100 individuals.

⁶³ The CRN was informed by the Probation and Parole Office that it is difficult to know for certain if an individual served time in prison solely based on his or her case category. However, it is highly likely that most persons categorized as parole, shock probation, and sex offender CD were previously incarcerated.

Community Engagement

The CRN was fully engaged in most aspects of the JRPP, serving on the advisory committee, the planning team, the data subcommittee, and the services committee. Active participation and support to this community-wide effort, specifically in the acquisition and analysis of local reentry data, was envisioned as an excellent collaborative learning and relationship-building opportunity. The CRN hoped it would serve as the starting point for work in the *Making Connections* neighborhoods of Smoketown, Shelby Park, Phoenix Hill, and California.

Engaging with the JRPP was the first phase of the CRN's work, and was followed by a second phase that focused primarily on sharing the reentry data and maps with local neighborhood stakeholders and partners, including *Making Connections* neighborhood residents. *Making Connections–Louisville* convened a group of stakeholders from *Making Connections* neighborhoods who had expressed an interest and were specifically engaged in supporting the formerly incarcerated populations within their neighborhoods. This initial gathering was small, but included representatives from the Interdenominational Ministerial Coalition and the Urban League.

With funding from *Making Connections–Louisville*, the Urban League had begun a reentry demonstration workforce initiative called Making It Work in the California neighborhood, designed to secure jobs for up to 30 former prisoners. Program participants receive a range of services, including counseling, employment skills training, job search assistance, and help with expunging eligible criminal records. The Urban League had also convened the Transition Partners group, a bimonthly gathering of reentry service providers. Unlike several of the other nonprofit and stakeholder forums that had emerged from the JRPP, the providers involved in the Transition Partners group had closer cultural and community ties to the *Making Connections* neighborhoods. The CRN presented their reentry analyses to this group as well.

Mapping and Analysis

From the master dataset, 8,400 individuals had addresses that were able to be geocoded. The CRN's mapping confirmed that the population under criminal justice supervision is not evenly distributed across the Louisville metro area. A significant proportion of the probation and parole population is geographically concentrated within the inner urban area—that is, within the Urban Service District (the old City of Louisville boundary). Further concentrations are easily identifiable within some of the most distressed neighborhoods in the area. Like other RMN sites, the CRN found that the high concentration of parolees in some neighborhoods was due to clusters of parolees living in shelters or halfway houses. The CRN also prepared maps illustrating the spatial distribution of the probation and parole population by supervision level, age, gender, race, and proximity to services. They used demographic data from the 2000 U.S. Census to explore the characteristics of neighborhoods with high concentrations of people under criminal justice supervision.

The CRN analyzed the basic demographics of the reentry population, including gender, race, age, marital status, supervision level, educational level, type of crime, type of supervision, and length of time on supervision. They conducted many of these analyses across different variables,

for example, exploring educational level by race and by gender. One interesting data item that the CRN had access to that not many other RMN sites had was the number of children of the parolees/probationers (although this information was recorded for only 35 percent of the individuals in the dataset). The CRN found that, among those for whom this information was available, 29 percent had no children, 25 percent had one child, and 36 percent had two or more children.

Results and Lessons Learned

The CRN's close collaboration with the JRPP put them in excellent position for obtaining data and provided a natural forum for using the results of their analysis. The JRPP final report⁶⁴ relies heavily on the CRN's analyses and maps to describe prisoner reentry challenges in Louisville. The report also recommends a pilot program in the Newburg neighborhood that would provide case management and coordinated service delivery to people returning from prison, to address their health, housing, employment, and other needs. The design of this program, including the selection of the Newburg neighborhood, was influenced by the CRN's reentry analysis. The program is currently being developed.

Despite the benefits of working with the JRPP, the CRN staff still faced the common pitfalls of working with corrections data, such as geocoding problems and a lack of metadata. In addition, while the JRPP provided the CRN with access to data and partners interested in using the data, it also presented the CRN with the challenges of being beholden to a project with its own priorities and timeline. The CRN found that flexibility is key when striking a balance between pragmatic, "real world" needs for quick, simple analyses and researchers' desires to conduct more detailed, in-depth analysis work.

The CRN's maps and analyses have also been used to frame community dialogues in *Making Connections* neighborhoods. Having completed more detailed analyses of the data for the *Making Connections* neighborhoods, the CRN hopes that this new analysis will more strongly engage neighborhood residents and will assist in the planning of responses to reentry challenges.

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

The Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee's Neighborhood Data Center is the lead Reentry Mapping Network partner in Milwaukee. The Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee is an association of nonprofit organizations that provides technical support, training, and services to the nonprofit community. The Center's purpose is to dispense the tools that nonprofits need to successfully fulfill their missions and improve the lives of people in the community. The Neighborhood Data Center is the Nonprofit Center's analytic arm, serving as a clearinghouse for mapping and analysis support as well as for community data on housing, health, safety, and local assets.

Project COMPASS⁶⁵ was also a lead partner with the Data Center at the inception of the Reentry Mapping Network partnership in Milwaukee. The COMPASS program at the City of Milwaukee

⁶⁴ The JRPP final report is available online at <http://www.louisvilleky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/DB87D149-724F-4CB6-AADC-5B1E49820FD0/0/FinalReport.pdf>.

⁶⁵ For more information on COMPASS Milwaukee, see <http://isdweb1.ci.mil.wi.us/compass/>.

originated as one of three pilot programs sponsored by the National Institute of Justice to model the use of data and mapping for community problem solving around issues of public safety and community well-being. Project COMPASS played a significant role in assisting the Data Center in building relationships within the corrections field to obtain and use reentry-related data.

Initially, the Milwaukee reentry mapping partnership planned to use spatial analysis to:

- identify and depict the relationship of risks and assets to concentrations of ex-prisoners;
- identify all agencies providing services to released prisoners;
- generate data-driven problem solving within a consortium or network consisting of DOC and other reentry service providers; and
- collaboratively develop new or improved policy responses to build the capacity and stability of neighborhoods with high concentrations of ex-prisoners.

Data Access and Quality

At the onset of the project, the climate for accessing data could not have been more favorable. Relationships with the state Department of Corrections and the local police and sheriff's offices had already been established during the three-year development of the COMPASS project. The value of organizing data to address community safety problems had been demonstrated, and the Data Center had already demonstrated its experience in working with sensitive data.

Corrections officials shared preliminary data shortly after the Data Center began its reentry mapping partnership. This included data about all persons under supervision, including street address, statute violation (e.g. felony, misdemeanor), age, gender and race. The most significant limitation of these initial data was that they did not distinguish between offenders released to probation and offenders released to parole. It did have some limited value in estimating the overall spatial patterns of reentry in Milwaukee, though, because nearly all Wisconsin offenders are released to some form of supervision.

Despite this early data acquisition victory, it took the Data Center more than a year to obtain more refined data from the Department of Corrections (DOC). The DOC's management information system (MIS) consisted of several legacy databases—one for community corrections, one for prison management, one for assessment and programming for inmates, and yet another to track the criminal charges and court dispositions. Although a single ID number could serve as a unique identifier with which to link information across datasets, differences in the degree to which the datasets were updated created problems in doing so, as one file could be out of sync with records in other files.

Fortunately, the Data Center was able to identify a data analyst within the DOC's Community Corrections Unit who understood how to tie the systems together and generate file structures that could yield accurate information. After a legal review of the Data Center's request (including a review of applicable privacy guidelines with regard to health data⁶⁶), the actual programming began for the data extract. In January 2005, the Data Center obtained biannual data snapshots of

⁶⁶ For more information, see <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/>.

released prisoners in the DOC system from 1997 to 2004. These snapshots pictured everyone in the DOC system at a particular time (in this case, twice annually on the first Tuesday of March and September). These snapshots include data detailing offender residence prior to incarceration, residence following incarceration, incarceration dates, most serious offense, supervision status, supervision termination date, birth year, race/ethnicity, gender, program needs and participation status while incarcerated, work skills and drug/alcohol risk assessments, and previous incarceration.

The combined dataset obtained from the DOC was extremely rich, yet it had its share of shortcomings. In numerous cases, addresses were missing or turned out to be inaccurate representations of a person's actual residence in the community (e.g., a local jail or INS detention center). The volume of individuals cycling in and out of the correctional system also presented a significant problem, as the snapshots do not capture individuals who are incarcerated, released, and reincarcerated within short periods of time. Perhaps the greatest challenge associated with this dataset was the time required to extract useful information from it. The Data Center has obtained an extraordinarily complete portrait of reentry in Milwaukee through these data snapshots. Much work remained, however, in creating usable maps and data analysis.

While corrections data proved more difficult to obtain than expected, other data sources were easily accessible. Data on crime incidents were already available through the COMPASS program. Prior agreements became the basis for accessing sheriff's department information on arrests, and the Data Center program already possessed well-developed demographic and neighborhood characteristics data. Data on local service programs was limited at first, although the Data Center made progress during the project on collecting this information by working with the local service providers.

Community Engagement

Prior to receiving data from the state DOC, the Data Center generated interest in reentry mapping in Milwaukee by demonstrating its benefits to local service providers. For example, Milwaukee's Community Justice Center (CJC) needed an MIS system and a way to share outcome information with other organizations for referrals. The Data Center developed a web-based database for profiling CJC clients and tracking client outcomes, enabling more efficient communication with outside referral programs. The Data Center also mapped data collected by service providers, such as the St. Rose Youth and Family Center, to demonstrate the use of reentry mapping for allocating resources.

More recently, the Data Center has focused its community engagement efforts on working with *Making Connections–Milwaukee*. *Making Connections–Milwaukee* partnered with the Milwaukee PBS station to organize a screening of a video on incarceration and reentry, *Behind These Walls*, which residents and community services agencies attended. At the meeting, the Data Center presented data illustrating reentry patterns within the *Making Connections* neighborhood. The Data Center has continued to work with *Making Connections–Milwaukee* to share data and obtain feedback on how to proceed with its analysis. Residents were particularly

interested in supporting the effort to match released prisoners to local social services as well as to expand those programs.

The community engagement effort with *Making Connections–Milwaukee* developed relatively late in the timeline of the reentry mapping partnership in Milwaukee. This effort, however, represents a promising and sustainable application of reentry mapping toward informing community-based initiatives. With the help of *Making Connections–Milwaukee*, the Nonprofit Center Data Center program will identify key indicators of reentry challenges and successes, assess their potential strengths and weaknesses, and create templates allowing the easy tracking of these indicators at six-month intervals. This work will be essential to informing strategic decisions made by the *Making Connections* initiative.

These demonstrations of reentry mapping and analysis will continue for the foreseeable future. Wisconsin Community Services, the largest nonprofit organization serving reentry clients in Milwaukee, has been working with the Data Center in support of its strategic planning, including a planned assessment of its client data to understand its pattern of services in Milwaukee neighborhoods. In addition, the Data Center will be working with the Hope Project, a new partner of *Making Connections–Milwaukee*, to design a data-driven workforce strategy for released prisoners.

Mapping and Analysis

Using the DOC snapshots, the Data Center created summary profiles for all persons under correctional supervision in 2003 and analyzed the spatial patterns of their locations within the city of Milwaukee. The Data Center has cleaned and organized queries of the extensive DOC dataset in preparation for further mapping of the multiyear prisoner release cohorts. This analysis will focus on selecting indicators of successful reentry by released prisoners and assessing their quality, examining shifts in population characteristics and spatial distributions over time, and assessing flows of individuals through the corrections system longitudinally. The Data Center will also compare the different experiences of persons sentenced under “truth in sentencing”⁶⁷ provisions with those prisoners sentenced prior to those sentencing reforms. Department of Corrections and local nonprofit organizations have agreed to review and provide guidance for these forthcoming analyses. The Data Center’s relationship with *Making Connections–Milwaukee* will enable it to undertake more focused analysis incorporating neighborhood-level data provided by the *Making Connections* team.

The Data Center has also worked with the Wisconsin Going Home⁶⁸ staff to improve Going Home’s capacity to serve their client population. To improve their capacity to make referrals, the Wisconsin Going Home staff built a database of relevant local services that the Data Center mapped for them.

⁶⁷ For more information about Truth in Sentencing in Wisconsin, visit <http://www.wicourts.gov/services/judge/truth.htm>

⁶⁸ Going Home is Wisconsin’s application of the federal Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) grant. For more information, see <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/reentry/sar/wi.html>.

Results and Lessons Learned

The Data Center, through its partnership with *Making Connections–Milwaukee*, is positioned to continue reentry-mapping work. In addition, because the Data Center has received time-series, address-level data (for which they will receive updates every six months), they are uniquely positioned to make a substantial contribution to the continued exploration of reentry challenges in Milwaukee.

Early results and impact of the Data Center’s reentry mapping efforts are difficult to assess because of the extraordinary investment in time and resources needed to obtain and analyze DOC data. The Data Center faced considerable challenges in collecting and analyzing DOC data because the state system included several distinct subsystems that required complex programming to link together. The Data Center may have had earlier and more tangible results had it made a more conventional request for one calendar year’s worth of data on a single release cohort.

From an analytic perspective, the construction of this dataset also presented a second challenge: frequent changes in supervision status and address data among individual released prisoners over time made assessing patterns of release difficult. Rather than create a seamless file with all changes in status (linked across each relevant file at the point of that change), the Data Center developed a file system that provided data snapshots in six-month intervals. The start and end dates within snapshots allow reconstructing all but short episodes of incarceration.

A major challenge now facing the Data Center is releasing the data for review and use by multiple service providers and community-based stakeholders. Although there is significant interest in and support from the *Making Connections-Milwaukee* partners with regard to prisoner reentry issues, the broader community of stakeholders has no pre-existing network. For example, individual organizations may be familiar with each other’s work, but they lack an established venue at which to convene and discuss collaboration or coordination of efforts. As a result, the Data Center is challenged with serving as the lead convener of relevant stakeholders and is tasked with providing a sustainable and supportive infrastructure that allows stakeholders to collaborate on projects and initiatives that result from reviewing the results of the Data Center’s mapping and analytic work.

The Data Center has already begun to overcome this challenge by convening initial community meetings with relevant stakeholders to review reentry maps. Several meetings were held in 2004, and in 2005, at which the Data Center was able to present preliminary maps. The meeting in 2004 included reentry stakeholders, agency representatives, and service providers—ranging from the DOC to a prison ministry group. In a 2005 meeting, the Data Center shared preliminary maps and data from a snapshot of all probation and parole persons currently under supervision. At this meeting, a number of organizations learned about each other for the first time, and those present expressed interest in collaborating on a regular basis and committed to convene for subsequent meetings.

The Data Center’s original community engagement strategy was to convene relevant organizations after the reentry data had been acquired and fully mapped and analyzed. The Data

Center made an intentional decision to carry forward with obtaining a complex database, at the expense of delaying this community engagement goal. This strategy resulted in the acquisition of an extremely useful dataset though, which may yield a powerful, long-term payoff in informing reentry planning in Milwaukee. In the short term, however, the most notable result from this work in Milwaukee is the development of potential in the form of a rich database of reentry-related information and a sustainable community partnership with *Making Connections–Milwaukee* to support the use of that database.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

The Urban Strategies Council is the lead agency in the Oakland RMN project. As a community building support and advocacy organization, the Council's mission is to eliminate persistent poverty by helping stakeholders transform low-income neighborhoods into vibrant, healthy communities. The Council's capacity for convening and facilitating meetings with community stakeholders, mobilizing resources, and using data to advocate for innovative programs and strategies has proven to be a great asset in its work as an RMN partner.

The Council's reentry work began in early 2000 when it partnered with the National Trust for the Development of African American Men in an effort to bring the Trust program to California and adapt it specifically to address the issues of reentry and reintegration of the formerly incarcerated. The Trust is an in-prison asset-based community development and leadership training program developed in New York by Dr. Garry Mendez, director of the Trust. In early 2003, the Council and Trust partnership was successful in obtaining a grant from The California Endowment (TCE) to launch the Community Health Project in San Quentin prison. At about the same time that their partnership was finalizing discussions with TCE, the Urban Institute launched the RMN project. Given the Council's history of using data and information for change, it was selected to become a RMN partner. The Council's RMN work focuses on addressing issues faced by the formerly incarcerated in reintegrating into their communities, as well as on violence prevention in the community.

Data Access and Quality

The Council encountered substantial challenges with obtaining case-level data from the California Department of Corrections (CDC) and the California Youth Authority (CYA). Prominent among the challenges is that CDC research staff were severely underfunded and understaffed. After unsuccessful attempts to obtain data through official data requests, the Council decided to take a different route and build relationships and contacts with local administrators from the CDC and the CYA.

Through the Council's participation in the steering committee for Project Choice, Oakland's federally funded Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Program, its staff were able to meet both administrators from the CDC and CYA. As steering committee members, the Council also met representatives from Hatchuel, Tabernik and Associates, the firm conducting the independent evaluation of Project Choice, who were similarly interested in obtaining data on parolees. The firm had already made a request for data and if successful agreed to share it with the Council within the bounds of their agreements with the CDC.

The Council demonstrated the utility of corrections data for their purposes as well as for the purposes of CDC and CYA. Using 1998 and 2000 zip code data of parolees that the Council obtained from CDC, along with the locations of participants in the Community Reentry Service Provider Network (CRSPN), the Council created maps showing where parolees resided compared to the locations of the service providers. While both local administrators were impressed with the analyses and maps and expressed interest in providing assistance, they also emphasized that obtaining record-level data would be a long process.

In January 2005, the CDC and CYA were merged to create a new California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). Not long after, the Council was able to obtain record-level data. The newly appointed interim CDCR secretary was one of the people the Council had an established relationship with, and was already a supporter of the Council's work.

The Council received four related datasets for all active parolees committed from Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Marin and Los Angeles counties. This included a dataset of active parolees, which included demographic data, gang affiliation, history of substance abuse, mental health issues, sexual offenses, and violent behavior. The second dataset is the history of parolee addresses, which includes addresses provided at time of release, the parole unit assignment, and the relationship of parolee to address given (e.g. mother's home, treatment program, etc.). The third dataset contained parole offense and sentencing history, and the fourth dataset contained the number of times a parolee was in/out of prison. This latter dataset is based on dates of parole and transfers to non-CDCR institutions (e.g., rehabilitation centers and state hospitals).

Many variables in the dataset were difficult to decipher, and CDCR codebooks did not provide descriptions or explanations of variables. The Council has created a comprehensive codebook, which includes descriptive labels and explanations of variables. They delivered this codebook to the CDCR for their use, and in doing so were able to build capital that enabled them to have specific and targeted problems clarified in cases where the Council could not decipher variable meanings on their own.

Community Engagement

The Council is involved in many community-centered activities and efforts to coordinate collective responses to the challenges of reentry. The Council is working with the Trust, Project Choice, and the CRSPN in an ongoing effort to engage and unite law enforcement, government agencies, nonprofit groups, community members, and formerly incarcerated people around a common table to discuss reentry issues and devise a comprehensive plan for service coordination and decisionmaking to reintegrate people into the community.

The Council is actively involved in CRSPN, a group convened by Allen Temple Baptist Church, the district office of the State Economic Development Department, and the Port of Oakland, to provide a networking opportunity for providers of various social services to released prisoners. Finding great potential but few resources, the Council has provided staffing support and has helped build a communications infrastructure for the CRSPN. With the help of the Council, the CRSPN developed three goals: (1) to create a resource bank and referral system for programs

that serve formerly incarcerated people; (2) to identify and support policy initiatives that promote successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated people; and (3) to develop an infrastructure for the CRSPN that supports fundraising and management.

In addition, the Council, the Trust, and the CRSPN are working with the CDCR to develop a Community Corrections Partnership Project. The project will include pilots in northern and southern California communities and correctional facilities and will utilize the vehicle of a reentry roundtable as a format for integrating use of data and strategic planning to address the issues of community reentry.

Mapping and Analysis

The zip code parolee summary data that were obtained from the CDC early in the project were of limited value for analyzing the reentry challenges in Oakland. The Council used those data to demonstrate the potential utility of such analyses, should more detailed case level data with addresses become available. Despite this limitation, the Council was able to use alternative data sources to provide some insight into reentry-related issues in Oakland. Using zip code-level data, the Council analyzed parole releases at city, county, and state levels, identifying trends and differences in rates for the three geographic areas, as well as developing a recent “snapshot” of reentry locally. The Council found that in 2004, there were 1,442 parolees under the jurisdiction of Oakland parole offices. Oakland’s parolee rate peaked in 1998 at 542 parolees per 100,000 residents, and has since declined to 350 per 100,000 in 2004. This rate is still higher than the national average of 300 per 100,000. In its analysis, the Council suggested that the drop in parolees might be partly explained by the transfer of Oakland residents on parole to other surrounding jurisdictions due to caseload limitations.

In early 2005, the Council released a report detailing information on homicides in Oakland from 2002 to 2004. A key finding presented in the report shows that parolees and probationers are responsible for homicides at a far lower rate than previously cited by Oakland’s mayor.

After receiving record level data from the CDCR, the Council created a comprehensive community reentry report, as well as a monthly monitoring report that is based on recurrent CDCR data updates. The report included maps of where parolees lived, and information about the number of parolees who were under CDCR supervision in Alameda County and how that compared with the rest of the Bay Area, California, and the nation. Demographic characteristics of parolees were analyzed, as were parolees’ offenses. In addition to reporting on parolees, the Council included data on adult and juvenile probationers in Alameda County. The report has been taken to the community, and delivered at a regional training for faith-based organizations (attended by 20 pastors) and at a meeting of the Alameda County Violence Leadership Prevention Group.

In addition to the comprehensive snapshot, the Council has begun releasing monthly reports on parole and probation in Alameda County. In many instances, data are not available for categories in the report’s tables. This is because either the baseline data or monthly updates to the data already obtained are not available to the Council. Nonetheless the report is issued with “n/a” in the relevant columns and rows to show the need for these data. This strategy has already been

successful in obtaining access to Alameda County probationer data that had been previously unavailable.

In addition, this report ties into the Council's efforts to work with reentry service providers. In attempting to generate a monthly county of parolees and probationers, the Council is also generating an estimate for available treatment slots for service needs. This has enabled them to communicate more about the gap between the need for services and the availability of treatment slots to meet that need. The Council has also been funded by The California Endowment to use this approach to get better data on the gap in health services for formerly incarcerated people.

Results and Lessons Learned

Currently, the Council is assisting the CRSPN in creating a resource and referral system for programs that serve formerly incarcerated people. In accordance with this goal, the Council has partnered with Public/Private Ventures to pursue funding for the development of the referral system as a tool for performing service-gap analyses for Oakland's formerly incarcerated population.

In response to the positive feedback and press resulting from the Council's homicide report, the governor's office asked the Council to extend its analysis to earlier years. These neighborhood level reports are available on the Council's web site.

One significant challenge the Council faced as it implemented the local RMN was its lack of familiarity with prisoner reentry issues and the criminal justice system. This challenge exists to some degree with most RMN partners. The Council addressed this challenge by partnering with the Trust, a group with substantive knowledge in the area of criminal justice. The partnership fostered a greater understanding of the relationship between prisoner reentry and community well-being within the Council, and led them to create a new program area within the organization focused on community safety and justice.

While the Council has dealt with large bureaucracies throughout their history, the California correctional system proved to be the most difficult to navigate. That the Council was new to this policy area also meant that it had no established history of experience and developed relationships to call upon to overcome challenges. Nonetheless, the Council was finally able to reach an agreement and obtain corrections data from the CDCR.

The Council also found it challenging at times to partner with other advocacy organizations that had different priorities for policy reform. For example, many of the partners they worked with placed significant emphasis on disenfranchisement among formerly incarcerated people, while the Council was more concerned with the policy implications of poor service delivery in such areas as employment and housing. To move the project forward, the Council decided to accept disagreement on certain priorities and concentrate on strengthening coordination on issues of mutual concern.

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

The Providence RMN project was managed by a partnership of The Providence Plan (TPP) and the Rhode Island Family Life Center (FLC). The Rhode Island Department of Corrections was also an active partner in the project. TPP is a nonprofit organization established in 1992 to promote the economic and social well being of the city, its people, and its neighborhoods. The organization has assembled a comprehensive array of neighborhood-level data and works in partnership with numerous organizations at the community, city, and state levels to use these data as a tool for community-level change.

FLC is a one-stop center for released prisoners and their families returning to the South and West neighborhoods in Providence. In addition to providing case management and social services to released prisoners and their families, the FLC also has staff dedicated to working on research, policy, and advocacy to change the systemic barriers that released prisoners face when reentering the community.

The Providence RMN was built around a common interest in using administrative corrections data to gain a better understanding of issues pertaining to the reentry of released prisoners into Providence neighborhoods and to use the findings from the data analysis to contribute to local reentry-related initiatives.

Data Access and Quality

The DOC was interested in having a community-based partner assist in conducting spatial analyses of the populations under its jurisdiction. Permission to access DOC data, therefore, was not a problem for the Providence RMN team. Although the DOC was willing to provide data and participate in the project, it took approximately five months for the first data to become available. This delay was due to the fact that the request coincided with a significant overhaul of the DOC's data system. The request was not fulfilled until the new system was in place.

In early 2004, the DOC provided datasets of the statewide awaiting trial, sentenced, and probation and parole populations as of September 30, 2003. There were no other agencies to contact for data, because all of the Rhode Island criminal justice system is under the DOC's jurisdiction. Each unique record was address-matched using ArcView software, with approximately 89 percent of the statewide records from the sentenced file successfully matched, and 92 percent of statewide records from the probation and parole file matched.

As rich as these datasets are, they are not ideal because they provide a snapshot of individuals in the criminal justice system at a given point in time, rather than a profile of a cohort of released prisoners. As discussed earlier in this guidebook, point-in-time datasets are difficult for use in creating an accurate depiction of current spatial patterns of reentry. This is because the locations of new releasees are mixed in with the addresses for former prisoners who have been on supervision for some unknown period of time. The probation and parole data did not include a release date, so it is unclear when an individual returned to the community.

In June of 2005, however, the DOC contracted with the Providence Plan for additional analytic work, and provided data for statewide releases and commits for all of 2004. The DOC wanted the new analysis to show where prisoners are returning relative to what services they may need, taking into account offense type, eligibility, and transportation. The project officially covered four urban communities outside of Providence, but due to geographic proximity much of the new analysis was done statewide.

Community Engagement

The FLC played a key role in both connecting the local RMN project to the people and communities experiencing the challenges of reentry firsthand and engaging policymakers and legislators. The primary component of the community engagement strategy for Providence was to launch a community education campaign to inform and engage residents and other neighborhood-based stakeholders, along with policymakers.

The FLC and the Local Learning Partnership (LLP) of the *Making Connections* initiative led the coordination of the community education campaign, along with community organizers from Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE). The *Making Connections* initiative was already engaged in an extensive community-based process to address a range of issues pertaining to strengthening families and communities, many of which were directly relevant to overcoming the challenges of reentry. The *Making Connections* neighborhoods also have the highest concentration of released prisoners in Rhode Island. The FLC and the LLP were logical choices to lead this effort, as both organizations are based in the Providence *Making Connections* neighborhoods. In addition, they were previously involved in reentry-related discussions in these neighborhoods.

In planning the community education campaign, the reentry mapping partnership envisioned a two-way process in which the data and analysis from the RMN could be presented to help educate members of the community, and through which the partnership could learn about the issues of greatest concern to the community. In beginning of the campaign, the reentry mapping partnership invited participants from the *Making Connections* initiative, community organizers, and members of the faith-based community to meet with them and help them better understand issues that the community was most concerned about and discuss how to address these issues. The partners started the conversation by presenting what had been learned through mapping and analyzing the DOC data. The issue that received the most attention was race, particularly the degree to which black men in the community were involved in the criminal justice system. While participants in this discussion were quite familiar with these racial dynamics, the maps and analyses illustrated and quantified the experiences of black men under criminal justice supervision in a new way.

After this initial meeting, the reentry mapping partnership began to strategize about who to involve in their campaign. Participants in the initial meeting developed a long list of potential stakeholders, including people with criminal records and their families, neighborhood residents, community development corporations, service providers, business owners, and elected officials. The group decided to prioritize engaging people with records, their families, and other community residents who were most affected by incarceration and reentry.

The LLP, FLC, and DARE hosted an “Impacts of Incarceration” community workshop that included engaged participants in a conversation about reentry-related issues. The workshop began with a warm-up activity to illustrate to people how the issue of reentry relates to them. The introductory presentation included an historical overview of incarceration with an emphasis on the experiences of and effects on people of color, and a PowerPoint presentation with data and maps. The interactive component of the workshop included four small group discussions and a large group discussion of major issues and possible solutions. Each small group discussion focused on one of the cycles of incarceration (the road to prison, inside prison, reentry, community impact), and incorporated real-life stories written by released prisoners, prisoners who were still incarcerated, or their family members. Approximately 70 people participated in the three-hour workshop. Most of them were actively engaged in the conversations about the issues, and just over half provided comments on the meeting evaluation form. This workshop was a pilot that was replicated on a smaller scale in Warwick, the state’s second largest city.

Around the same time that these workshops were being planned, staff from the FLC, LLP, DARE, and DOC worked with representatives of the local PBS television station to shape a series of events to screen reentry videos that were produced by the Annie E. Casey Foundation through its Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign. The events were held in four locations throughout the state, and included a moderated panel discussion with a formerly incarcerated individual, a family member, and representatives from a faith-based institution, a community-based agency, and the criminal justice system. Maps were produced and made available as PowerPoint slides and posters for each of the community forums. Three television broadcasts and a live televised call-in talk show were also part of that process.

Mapping and Analysis

A primary focus of the Providence analysis has been to illustrate the concentration of the statewide sentenced population in Providence, and how specific neighborhoods and demographic groups within Providence are particularly affected by incarceration and reentry. The maps and other analysis results produced through the work of the local RMN partners were used in a variety of formats and forums to increase awareness and start conversations, as well as to inform policymakers and legislators.

Analysis conducted by TPP confirmed, and clearly illustrated, that the highest concentrations of the state’s sentenced population are found in Providence. The analysis also made it clear, given the wide differences that exist across the city, that neighborhood-level analysis of these populations is critical to developing a clear understanding of the potential local effects of reentry and related issues.

Their analysis of the sentenced population relative to the general population focused on the 18- to 64-year-old (working age) male population. Individuals were selected from the DOC data based on gender and age, and were compared to the numbers of 18- to 64-year-old males extracted from Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1). Their analysis of children with incarcerated parents included men and women of any age from the sentenced and awaiting trial populations who indicated that they had children. Key findings include the following:

- Providence has 17 percent of the state’s overall population, but is home to 38 percent of the state’s sentenced individuals at the time they were sentenced and one-third of all individuals on probation or parole.
- The offender population is highly concentrated in just a few neighborhoods (47 percent of the city’s sentenced offenders came from only 5 of the city’s 25 neighborhoods).
- Adult males living in one neighborhood on the South Side (within the *Making Connections* target area) are 45 times more likely to be incarcerated than adult males from some of the city’s more affluent neighborhoods.
- One in three adult black males in Providence is on probation or parole; In parts of some neighborhoods, more than half of the adult black males are on probation or parole.
- Individuals from the sentenced and awaiting trial populations with Providence addresses reported that they were the parents of a total of 1,486 children. This translates to a rate of 33 children of incarcerated parents per 1,000 Providence children under age 18. Five of the city’s 25 neighborhoods have rates that exceed 40 children per 1,000, with the extreme case being 82 children per 1,000 in one neighborhood.⁶⁹
- The estimated annual cost of incarcerating Providence residents (excluding central administration and capital costs) is \$32 million; \$11.6 million in the four *Making Connections* neighborhoods.

The focus of the second wave of analytic work was to analyze areas of high returnee concentration versus what relevant services exist in those areas. Rather than simply map services regardless of actual availability to the returnee population, TPP documented those that actually serve this population (based on eligibility requirements), as well as “near misses” where services would be available if eligibility restrictions were changed. The bulk of the work was identifying and categorizing service providers and determining whether returnees are eligible. The Providence Plan and the Family Life Center used their findings from this research to build a web-based, searchable database of local community organizations that will serve ex-offenders. The database is built to be user friendly for organizations to update regularly, which could eventually provide the ability to map actual available services in Providence in near-real time. These data were also used to create maps to inform the discussion about reentry and the discharge planning process for individuals returning to Providence.

Results and Lessons Learned

Approximately 20 presentations of the reentry maps and analysis were made during 2004, with an estimated combined attendance of 430 individuals. Formats included PowerPoint presentations, hardcopy handouts, and posters. These maps were used during the early meetings of the partnership to help plan and launch the community education campaign. The FLC incorporated some of the key maps and findings from the local analysis into a presentation, “The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry in Providence,” that could serve as an information tool to help start and guide conversations about reentry in a variety of forums, including subsequent community meetings organized by the partnership and additional community engagement work carried out by FLC in support of that organization’s mission. The primary purpose of the

⁶⁹ The analysis of children with incarcerated parents was done for Ready to Learn Providence, an early childhood initiative of The Providence Plan, with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

presentation was to provide insight into the populations and neighborhoods most affected by incarceration and reentry so that a broad range of participants would have a common starting point for conversations about reentry, regardless of their prior experience with the issues.

In addition to increasing community awareness, the maps and analysis were also used as a key component of several efforts to affect policy and initiate action:

- FLC published a policy brief on the impact of the state's lifetime ban on Family Independence Program and Food Stamp benefits for every Rhode Islander convicted of a felony for drug distribution. FLC analyzed sentenced population data from the local RMN project to strengthen the points made within the brief. The Poverty Institute and DARE used the brief to inform state lawmakers of the effects of this ban. The legislature repealed the ban.
- FLC included analysis and maps of the sentenced and community supervision population by neighborhood and race in its policy brief on felon disenfranchisement in Rhode Island.
- Ready to Learn Providence, a program of TPP aimed at ensuring that children are healthy and ready to learn before they reach kindergarten, included neighborhood-level analysis of the number of children of incarcerated Providence residents as one of two dozen indicators in its indicators report.
- The FLC is developed a legislator's handbook that focused on the impact of corrections spending on the State budget. The handbook includes an analysis of sentenced population data by offense type, with a particular focus on drug and other non-violent offenses, and by cost of incarceration, based on the specific corrections facility in which an individual is serving time.
- The FLC is using data pertaining to the cost of incarceration per neighborhood in Providence and per municipality in Rhode Island, as it works with other organizations to build a coalition of community and statewide advocates to propose a set of cost-effective justice reforms.
- The FLC hosted a press conference for Governor Donald Carcieri in March 2004, at which the governor announced the creation of his Reentry Steering Committee. A briefing packet that included maps and analysis of DOC data was distributed to public sector officials, legislators, and community advocates in attendance. The large format maps that were on display generated a great deal of discussion.
- Maps and analysis prepared by TPP were used in a presentation by the director of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections to the National Governors Association in May 2005.

The local RMN work was also included in newspaper articles that reached an even wider audience. The *Providence Journal* ran stories on the governor's press conference, the repeal of the State's ban on Food Stamp and Family Independence Program benefits for convicted drug felons, the Family Life Center Issue Brief on felon disenfranchisement, and on the PBS community workshops.

TPP and the FLC remain involved in Rhode Island reentry work and are well positioned to continue the RMN partnership. In April 2005, TPP received a \$35,000 contract from the Rhode

Island DOC to analyze where prisoners are returning relative to what services they may need, taking into account offense type, eligibility, and transportation.

The Rhode Island RMN was successful in acquiring and analyzing data and using the analyses to engage and inform the community and influence policy change. There were several important challenges and lessons learned throughout the process from data collection and analysis, applying the analysis results, and engaging the community. Overcoming and learning from these challenges has strengthened the Rhode Island RMN project and prepared them for their new and ongoing efforts.

Through their work with the DOC, TPP and the FLC realized that even under the best circumstances, data acquisition could take longer than anticipated. Even though the DOC was committed to making the data available and participating as an active partner in the project, the data requests were subject to the existing workload and priorities of the DOC. Further, the corrections data has inherent limitations that affect the accuracy of the analysis and the representation of the reentry population over a given period of time.

To conduct an effective analysis, it is critically important to have partners that are expert in both the corrections data and the relevant criminal justice issues. In this case, TPP had expertise in data analysis and GIS applications, as well as in a variety of relevant community issues, but lacked prior experience in issues of criminal justice and prisoner reentry. The DOC devoted time to explaining the details of their data and how individual data fields could be used. Without that knowledge, there would have been a greater risk of misinterpreting and misusing the data.

The diversity of the local RMN partnership can also affect the extent to which the community is engaged in the process. The Providence RMN has recognized the importance of considering existing relationships between the various RMN members and the community. Some community participants in the process described their experiences as “us” (the community) versus “them” (the DOC as “the system”). These direct experiences, as well as the perceptions held by others, presented some challenges to moving the community engagement process forward as issues of trust and accountability were brought to the surface. RMN partners made an effort to include differing points of view and recognize legitimate concerns and criticisms to move forward constructively.

Attempting to engage a representative sample of the community and discuss sensitive issues can also be a challenge, though it may be necessary to move toward collective solutions. For example, the RMN juggled differing opinions as to how, or even whether, to get the police involved in the community engagement process. Some participants had negative experiences with or feelings toward the police and were hesitant to get the police involved. Others viewed the police as an important partner in developing successful reentry strategies. While important, acknowledging these opposing views slowed progress toward getting a key participant, the police, involved in the process.

Discussing sensitive issues, especially concerning race, among a diverse group of community stakeholders is a difficult but critical component in the process of developing solutions to the challenges of reentry. The data provided a starting point for discussions about reentry as it relates to race, but many different perspectives on how race factors into the cycle of incarceration and

reentry came to the surface. These perspectives range from the belief that institutional racism is to blame for high incarceration rates among black men, to the feeling among some minority residents that there is a greater need for members of their communities to move beyond blaming the system and take greater personal responsibility for their own actions and the actions of family members.

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

The San Diego County District Attorney's (DA's) office, in conjunction with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), led the Reentry Mapping Network project in San Diego. As one of the two RMN partners based in local government, San Diego offered a unique opportunity for direct access to law enforcement data. California has one of the largest prison populations in the United States, and because almost all California prisoners (98 percent) are released to parole, the breadth and reliability of government data on reentry is greater than in many other states. Although approximately 9,500 parolees call San Diego County home, no local analysis of reentry data had been conducted prior to the RMN project.

The DA's office was able to devote staff explicitly to the RMN project, including a crime analyst with extensive experience in statistical and spatial analysis and a community relations specialist. The Criminal Justice Research Division of SANDAG was also well-suited to conduct mapping and analysis of neighborhood-level reentry data and indicators of community well-being. They serve as the state-designated regional census data center for the San Diego region and have an ongoing partnership with the Automated Regional Justice Information System (ARJIS), the consortium for maintaining local law enforcement reports in San Diego County. In addition, SANDAG had previously completed analysis and planning work with the San Diego Reentry Roundtable related to prisoner reentry in the City Heights neighborhood of San Diego.

During the initial stages of the project, the DA's office and SANDAG outlined three goals for their reentry mapping efforts:

- Identify patterns and trends related to returning prisoners' residence locations, demographics (including age, race, language, and family status), employment and education experiences, and criminal history (number and types of previous crimes);
- Identify and map programs and resources relevant to reentry, including workforce development, transitional housing, and substance abuse treatment; and
- Work with community and government partners to develop effective responses based on the analysis and findings.

Data Access and Quality

The DA's office and SANDAG have long-standing relationships with law enforcement and corrections agencies that maintain reentry-related data. Using these contacts, they were able to set up meetings with appropriate agency staff and obtain the data files necessary for analysis. Specifically, data were obtained from the San Diego County Probation Department

(“probationers”—those individuals released from county jail⁷⁰) and from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (“parolees”—those individuals released from state prison⁷¹) for ex-offenders in the system as of August 30, 2004. The DA’s office and SANDAG signed cooperative transfer agreements with the two agencies providing data. Data available from County Probation and State Parole included (1) address upon release, (2) conviction charge, (3) time served, (4) release date, (5) facility at time of release, (6) sex, (7) race, (8) date of birth, and (9) substance abuse history (available for some people).

There were numerous issues with the validity and reliability of the dataset, most of which related to incomplete or missing data fields. Both the parole and probation datasets included many incorrect addresses; when possible, research staff looked up and corrected the addresses. In the parole dataset, project staff had to manually assign hierarchies to determine the most serious charge for which an inmate was convicted.

The DA’s office and SANDAG also obtained several other types of data for the project, including

- crime and arrest data (from SANDAG/ARJIS);
- local service providers, including type of services provided and geographical areas served (multiple sources);
- demographic data, including population, affordable housing, employment, education, poverty status, household type, household size, and household income (from Census/SANDAG); and
- public transportation routes (from SANDAG).

Community Engagement

During the course of this project, the DA’s office and SANDAG worked in close partnership with a number of local organizations through the creation of a San Diego Reentry Mapping Network committee. Committee members included the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department, San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), the San Diego County Probation Department, and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation–Parole Services Division. At the group’s first meeting in October 2004, the members agreed to form subcommittees on data, policy/strategy development, and community engagement, with the agreement that the last two would convene once data had been compiled, cleaned, and summarized. The data committee, which included representatives from each of the key local groups, met monthly from late 2004 through early 2005. Staff from the DA’s office and SANDAG, with the assistance of the GIS coordinator from HHSA, worked to clean and analyze the datasets, and shared analysis plans and maps with the data subcommittee as they were developed. Input was received throughout the project from the data subcommittee and various stakeholders regarding the types of maps and analyses that would be beneficial.

⁷⁰ Due to data limitations, these data actually included individuals released from jail, as well as those who were placed immediately on probation following adjudication. Both groups are included in the final analysis because they may share some similar needs related to coping with issues following conviction. The average term of adult probation in San Diego County is 3.4 years, according to department staff.

⁷¹ In California, 98 percent of releasees are placed under parole supervision, which typically lasts for a period of three to five years, although non-violent offenders are eligible to be discharged from parole after 13 months.

Another forum for community engagement was the San Diego Reentry Roundtable. The Roundtable came into being in April 2002, when a local reentry service provider, Community Connection, partnered with the Urban Institute to set up local meetings with key community representatives to explore the nature of prisoner reentry in San Diego and brainstorm strategies for addressing the issue. Realizing that the Roundtable offered an opportunity to engage a large number of reentry stakeholders, the DA's office approached the group in 2004 and offered to play a greater role, with the goal of creating an ongoing working group. Since then, the DA's office's role on the Roundtable has included hosting the meeting at their office, as well as encouraging a reexamination of the purposes and goals of the group, a more frequent meeting schedule (monthly, rather than quarterly), more formal structure (including the formation of an executive committee, voting structure, and subcommittees), and broader membership. The reinvigorated Roundtable now manages the roles of community engagement and strategy development that were originally intended for subcommittees of the San Diego RMN committee.

Another community partnership that the San Diego RMN team developed was with Second Chance/STRIVE, a local community-based organization that operates the Prisoner Reentry Employment Program (PREP). Several meetings, discussions, and brainstorming sessions were conducted with STRIVE to determine how mapping could be used to identify ex-offender employment patterns and aid in the employment process for people returning from prison. One result of this partnership was a spatial analysis of a sample of individuals who had completed PREP and found employment.

Mapping and Analysis

A key challenge for San Diego was mapping and presenting data for the entire county. With over three million residents, San Diego County covers 4,261 square miles and is slightly smaller than the state of Connecticut. Due to the large area encompassed by the county, it was agreed that the majority of analyses would be conducted at the census tract or zip code level.

The August 2004 sample used for this project included 9,647 parolees and 14,295 probationers, for a total of 23,942 returning ex-offenders. While these returning prisoners were spread across the region, their most current addresses showed that they were more likely to be living in certain neighborhoods compared to others. That is, while 30 percent of the general adult population lives in 15 of the county's 110 zip codes, 55 percent of the parolees and 50 percent of the probationers live in these 15 zip codes.

To supplement the limited information available from the Parole and Probation data files, analyses were conducted comparing these 15 zip codes to the county as a whole on various demographic characteristics documented by the 2000 Census. The 15 zip codes with the highest concentrations of parolees and probationers were more ethnically diverse and more economically challenged, compared to the region as a whole. For example, while 17 percent of county residents age 25 and older had less than 12 years of education, this percent (29 percent) was considerably higher in the zip codes with the most ex-offenders. Additional analyses used a "deprivation index" of seven community indicators: poverty, average income, percent of non-English speakers, unemployment rate, education level, violent crime rate, and overcrowding.

These analyses found that, at the census tract level, ex-offenders were clustered in deprived areas, and, if one assumes that neighborhood context plays a role in successful reentry, were therefore at greater risk for recidivism.

The San Diego RMN team, with assistance from local partners, also compiled a data file which contained 196 service providers in San Diego County. The providers were located in 41 zip codes across the region, with 58 percent located in the 15 zip codes with the highest concentration of ex-offenders. This dataset allowed the creation of maps exploring the match between service needs and availability, including a map comparing the location of probationers with educational needs and the location of adult education schools, and a map showing parolees who had drug testing requirements (often indicative of a substance abuse problem) and community resources that provide substance abuse treatment. Overall, services did appear to be located in communities with the greatest need (i.e., those that were most deprived) and with the greatest clustering of ex-offenders.

As mentioned above, the San Diego RMN partnership with Second Chance/STRIVE led to a spatial analysis of a sample of individuals who had completed STRIVE's Prisoner Reentry Employment Program (PREP) and found employment. A similar analysis was also conducted of data on an employment program run by Community Connection, another service provider. Because zip codes were the level of analysis, they were unable to determine an average distance, but did find interesting results in regard to travel patterns from one zip to another. The vast majority of ex-offenders worked outside of their home zip. It should also be noted that additional analyses that involved mapping transit routes showed that public transportation options were available in those communities with the greatest concentrations of ex-offenders.

Results and Lessons Learned

In addition to sharing their maps and data analyses with local partners throughout the process, the DA's office and SANDAG (often in partnership with the Urban Institute) presented their findings at a number of venues outside of San Diego, including the NLECTC Innovative Technologies for Community Corrections Conference in Seattle, Washington (June 2005), the International Crime Mapping Research Conference in Savannah, Georgia (September 2005), and the American Society of Criminology Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada (November 2005).

During the first half of 2006, the San Diego RMN team presented maps and findings to the San Diego Reentry Roundtable, the California Endowment, and SANDAG's public safety committee (which is composed of local elected officials and local, state and federal public safety executives). A Criminal Justice Bulletin and one-page criminal justice fax outlining findings in an easy-to-understand format is also planned for distribution later in the year to over 700 stakeholders in the region, as well as posted on SANDAG's web site for widespread availability.

The DA's office and SANDAG are also committed to using these initial findings as a starting point as they continue to identify additional resources to expand and continue the reentry mapping project. For instance, an interactive mapping application of local service providers is currently being developed for internal county employee use. In addition, the RMN team is

working with local foundations to bring heightened attention to this issue and identify ways this information can be used to positively affect local public policy.

Project staff learned a number of lessons from having to address issues that arose during implementation. Some of the most important are outlined below for others considering similar research:

- *Incomplete and inaccurate data in official files.* Program staff on the ground often do not have the time or resources to collect comprehensive and accurate data, requiring a large investment by project staff later to clean the data and prepare it for analysis. However, after seeing the RMN maps and analyses, agency staff appreciated the value of getting more accurate data entered from the beginning.
- *Staff turnover at partner agencies.* Due to a change in management in the local U.S. probation office, interest in collaborating on this project diminished. Any long-term project must account for the possibility of staff turnover.
- *Engaging the community.* Assumptions should not be made that everyone will suddenly agree that mapping and data analysis are valuable. Discussions, examples, and time are needed to show the value of the work and its practical applications.
- *Keeping partners involved.* Without constant and continual communication and progress (which is limited by available project staff time), it is difficult to keep the current and potential stakeholders actively involved.
- *Deciding the best means for distribution.* Different audiences respond to different products and presentation styles and, in a large area like San Diego County, it may be necessary to focus in on the most important relationships, analyses, findings, and products.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

The Public Health Department for Seattle and King County was the lead RMN partner in Seattle. As a local data warehouse and a member of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP), Public Health was well suited to lead the acquisition, analysis, and presentation of the reentry data. They have worked with two key local partners to disseminate findings and engage the community on reentry issues. One partner is the *Making Connections* initiative site team, a group that works with a wide range of community partners to improve families' economic success, strengthen social networks, and provide quality services and support to families in the White Center/Boulevard Park neighborhood of South King County. In addition, Seattle Goodwill Industries has played a prominent role in the local RMN partnership. Along with many other projects, Seattle Goodwill operates the STRIVE program (Support and Training Result In Valuable Employees), which provides participants with employment training and placement services, along with ongoing support. Goodwill has a strong partnership with the court system and released prisoners are often referred to STRIVE.

The Seattle RMN partnership had the following objectives:

- to assess patterns of prisoner reentry in the White Center/Boulevard Park (WC/BP) neighborhood, compare them to patterns in King County as a whole, and explore

disparities related to race, immigration status, socioeconomic status, gender, and family configuration;

- to collaborate with community partners in defining the problem, designing data collection plans, determining what analyses to carry out, and presenting and using the findings; and
- to identify and improve services for former prisoners in the community.

Data Access and Quality

Working with the Urban Institute, Public Health–Seattle and King County was able to negotiate a data sharing agreement with the Washington Department of Corrections’ (DOC) Planning and Research unit. The agreement stipulated that the DOC would provide annualized case-level data on releases from DOC facilities. The DOC provided all release records for the years 2003 and 2004, as well as an update of addresses for the 2003 release cohort. Although DOC staff turnover caused some delays in receiving the data and some inconsistencies in the data received, the DOC staff were generally cooperative and helpful in interpreting the data.

The release data were provided in the form of flat text files, with addresses and offender characteristics data in separate files. Each record in the data file represented a single release event. The release data files included demographic information (such as gender, race, and age), incarceration details (such as most serious offense, admission date, etc.) and release information (including release date, facility released from, and type of release).

The data contained multiple records for some of the individuals released in each year. The reasons for this duplication varied widely. In some cases, the offender was first released to a work release program (first record) before being released to the community (second record). In other cases, the first record represented the end of the sentence for one offense and the second record was the release for a second offense. This record duplication created some problems for analysis, as some individuals had as many as four separate release records in the same annual data file. Furthermore, demographic information (date of birth, race, gender, etc.) on a single individual was not always consistent across multiple records.

Deciding which information about the incarceration and release was most relevant to the analysis—choosing the most serious offense, determining the overall length of incarceration and final terms of release—was a difficult task, especially when the reasons for record duplication varied. Release information for the last release date in a given year was selected as being most likely to represent the final release to the community. The data were examined to ensure that this method did not result in significant loss of other information. After consultation with the DOC data contact, the research team decided that total time served should be calculated by summing the time served from all of the records for an individual in the data file.

The geographic identifier in the datasets was the self-reported address of each inmate on release. These addresses were updated for those under supervision or paying monetary compensation as a condition of release. Only the most recent known address is kept in the DOC database, and information about address at time of conviction was not available. In addition, there was no

information on when an address was entered or updated, and thus no way to know how current the address was. Geocoding the addresses required a lot of manual address cleaning because of the poor quality of the data. Cleaned addresses that fell within King County were geocoded; for both release cohorts, there were fewer than 200 addresses that could not be geocoded (51 in 2003 and 175 in 2004). Individuals who indicated that they were homeless or gave no street address but also gave King County as their location were assigned to the King County population for demographic analysis, even though they could not be mapped.

Contextual data were obtained from four different sources: socioeconomic and demographic data from the 2000 U.S. Census, 2003 Seattle crime data from the Seattle Police Department web site, data from the Washington State Department of Health on deaths from 1998 to 2002, and data on services for former prisoners culled from community resource manuals. Developing the ex-offender services database was the most challenging of these tasks. Several different sources were consulted to build a countywide database of services for former prisoners. However, the result was a hodgepodge of sometimes-conflicting information that was more comprehensive for some areas of the county than for others. In addition, as community partners pointed out, there are many social services organizations that include a significant number of former prisoners among their clients but do not specifically target former prisoners or state this in their materials.

Community Engagement

To initiate community involvement, a small core working group of representatives from Seattle Goodwill, *Making Connections–Seattle* and Public Health–Seattle and King County developed a list of people and organizations interested in reentry, and used a snowball method to build on this list and identify a universe of interested stakeholders. Public Health convened a meeting with approximately 20 local stakeholders, at which they presented reentry data and maps and discussed the available data and participants' ideas for the project. For many of the participants, this was their first time coming together as a group interested in reentry; they were seeing most of the information presented for the first time and, with little history of working together, they struggled to determine what their next steps should be.

Seattle Goodwill helped contribute perspective and direction to the group at subsequent meetings, and agreed to facilitate both small and large gatherings of local agencies, policymakers, and community organizations involved in reentry issues. The evolving focus of the community regarding RMN is on developing and rationalizing service delivery. They are interested in expanding reentry services to include preparation for release while prisoners are still incarcerated, using a case manager approach to connect prisoners to available services on their return to the community.

Mapping and Analysis

Two broad research questions guided the initial analysis: Who are the people returning from prison? Where do they live? The majority of the analysis focused on those people living in King County as of September 2004. Because the Washington DOC provided release records for the entire state, it was also possible to compare the reentry population living in King County with those living in the rest of the state.

Out of the 7,523 prisoners released from Washington state correctional facilities in 2003, 2,177 (29 percent) were living in King County (their most recent address as of September 2004 was in King County). Demographic analysis of this population was conducted, exploring gender, race, age, educational level, time served, offense type, and post-release supervision. Findings included the following:

- African Americans were disproportionately represented among ex-prisoners—41 percent of releasees in King County were African American, in comparison to 6 percent of King County’s general population. Eighteen percent of ex-prisoners in King County were Hispanic, while just 6 percent of the general King county population is Hispanic.
- 45 percent of the releasees had been serving time for a drug-related offense.
- 76 percent of the releasees living in King County were released under DOC supervision, known in Washington as “community custody.”

Interestingly, the RMN team found that 7 percent of the people released in Washington in 2003 were released to INS/BICE custody. The population in INS/BICE detention was overwhelmingly Hispanic. Because the primary INS/BICE detention facility is located in downtown Seattle, those in custody represent a fairly large proportion of the release cohort living in King County (13 percent).

Pin maps and census tract thematic maps were created showing the returnee addresses that could be geocoded in King County. Not surprisingly, the maps showed that former prisoners were living predominantly in the western, more urban part of county. The heaviest concentration was located in central Seattle, especially in the downtown commercial district and the central residential neighborhoods that extend down through south Seattle in a region known as Rainier Valley. Outside of Seattle, the southern suburban cities of King County also had a fairly heavy concentration of ex-offenders.

A similar analysis was performed on the 2004 release cohort data received in March 2005. Two additional research questions were added for this analysis: Does this cohort differ from the 2003 cohort? What is the relationship between where ex-offenders are living and neighborhood-level indicators? Demographically, the 2004 releasees were similar to the 2003 cohort across most variables. The spatial distribution of releasees was also similar in both years. Analyses of neighborhood-level indicators in the areas with the highest concentration of former prisoners are still being conducted.

Results and Lessons Learned

Public Health has presented their reentry data analyses and maps to a number of community stakeholders. The data were useful for motivating partners and convening groups of people interested in reentry issues that did not have a history of working together. The findings have not yet affected policy or practice in any concrete way, but whether that will be the case is an open question, as Seattle Goodwill and Making Connection Seattle work with other community partners to develop common goals and strategies relating to reentry.

There is clearly interest from public agencies and community-based organizations in seeing updated data and maps. Community partner input also identified several potential data sources that might add value to the project. There was a great deal of interest in obtaining and mapping King County Jail release data, which represents a much larger population than those released from state facilities. Also, it might be possible to obtain data from the Washington Community Corrections system on all persons in the community currently under DOC supervision. Unfortunately, in the absence of additional funding, Public Health is unlikely to produce new analyses. However, they are committed to continuing to share the maps and analyses they have completed to date and to participate in local reentry-related meetings.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

NeighborhoodInfo DC is the lead reentry mapping network partner in Washington, D.C. Established as a partnership between the Urban Institute and the Washington, D.C., Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), NeighborhoodInfo DC provides community-based organizations and residents in the District of Columbia with local data and analysis they can use to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. The Urban Institute brings its broad experience in data collection, processing, and analysis, as well as its expertise in public policy research, neighborhood indicators, and economic development to this NeighborhoodInfo DC partnership. LISC brings to the partnership its expertise in community outreach with organizations that have interest in using data to address neighborhood and citywide issues. LISC makes use of its partner organizations throughout the city, and also reaches out to new groups with which it has not previously had a relationship.

NeighborhoodInfo DC is the successor to DC Agenda's Neighborhood Information Service. DC Agenda was originally selected as the grant recipient and lead partner for the Reentry Mapping Network partnership in Washington, D.C. In March of 2004, however, DC Agenda's board announced the closing of the organization. Most of the staff members, including those working on the Reentry Mapping Network partnership, were laid off effective the first week of April 2004. This presented significant challenges for the District's continued participation in the Reentry Mapping Network. The program capacities of DC Agenda's neighborhood information services were quickly transferred and reorganized at the Urban Institute, however, and became operational by May 2004. A key staff person from DC Agenda was also hired by the Urban Institute in late May, and took up the charge to continue Washington, D.C.'s involvement in the Network.

Since the capacities needed to make progress in building a reentry mapping partnership were quickly reestablished after DC Agenda's closing, the decision was made (in consultation with the project's NIJ grant monitor) to proceed with building a reentry mapping partnership in Washington, D.C., with NeighborhoodInfo DC in the lead. NeighborhoodInfo DC set out to conduct spatial analysis of the location of released prisoners in the District to

- identify and depict the relationship of assets (and risks) to concentrations of ex-prisoners;
- generate problem solving from within the community and from responsible service providers and agencies; and

- inform decisionmaking on better ways to build the capacity and stability of neighborhoods with high concentrations of ex-prisoners.

Data Access and Quality

Prior to the closing of DC Agenda, data on released prisoners in the Washington, D.C., had not yet been obtained. NeighborhoodInfo DC immediately renewed efforts to obtain these data. The city is unique in comparison with other Reentry Mapping Network partners with regard to the source for data about released prisoners. An independent federal agency, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), manages probation, parole, and other supervision for released prisoners coming home to the District.

NeighborhoodInfo DC worked with staff at CSOSA's Research and Evaluation Office to better understand what data they would be willing to provide, and to shape a formal data request. The formal data request to CSOSA's Research and Review Board (RRB) was submitted in October 2004. The RRB reviewed and approved the request in January 2005, and data were transferred in March 2005. CSOSA staff members were receptive to working with NeighborhoodInfo DC staff to assist in transferring and interpreting the data.

Immediately after receiving approval to obtain the data, staff from NeighborhoodInfo DC met with CSOSA research analysts to review all of the variables available in their data systems and discuss appropriate methods for delivering the data. Based on the recommendations of the CSOSA's RRB, NeighborhoodInfo DC was given record-level data on all parolees and other supervised releasees returning to Washington, D.C., in 2004. The data were provided with census tract identifiers, and CSOSA agreed to supply quarterly updates of these data. The data include race/ethnicity, age, gender, education level, marital status, and employment status for released prisoners. While these data are useful for estimating general spatial patterns of reentry in Washington, D.C., they are rough estimates because they are not based on address-level data and are limited to persons under criminal justice supervision rather than a cohort of released prisoners.

NeighborhoodInfo DC has excellent access to contextual data about District neighborhoods. Its data warehouse includes information from local government agencies (the D.C. Department of Human Services, the D.C. Office of Planning, the Metropolitan Police Department, the D.C. Superior Court, and the State Center for Health Statistics), as well as nationally available data sources (the Census, the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development).

Community Engagement

When NeighborhoodInfo DC took on the work of the reentry mapping partnership in May 2004, the opportunity to create results in the time frame allowed by the Reentry Mapping Network grant was already short. DC Agenda had held some initial community conversations on employment issues prior to its closing, but these conversations were preliminary and did not present a promising set of relationships for generating action in accordance with the project's timeline. Instead, NeighborhoodInfo DC set out to identify an existing group of community

stakeholders who were already collaborating to provide better opportunities for the successful return of prisoners to Washington, D.C., neighborhoods. This focus quickly connected NeighborhoodInfo DC to the Faith-Based Reentry Initiative. Facilitated by CSOSA, the Faith-Based Reentry Initiative is a partnership of approximately 40 churches in Washington, D.C., that provide mentoring and service referrals for released prisoners. A meeting was scheduled with NeighborhoodInfo DC staff and the leaders of the Faith-Based Initiative to discuss the Reentry Mapping Network and identify priorities for data collection that would inform the work of their Initiative. Staff from both CSOSA and Washington, D.C.'s, Pre-Trial Services Agency also participated in this discussion.

At this meeting, as well as in subsequent meetings with individual leaders of the Faith-Based Reentry Initiative, it became apparent that information about services available to released prisoners in the District was sorely lacking. In particular, the Initiative's leaders indicated that they had some usable information about where services were located, but nothing about the eligibility criteria or capacity of the programs at specific locations. NeighborhoodInfo has focused its analytic plans on addressing these information gaps. The Faith-Based Reentry Initiative participants have become a natural audience for reviewing maps and other analytic products from NeighborhoodInfo DC's analysis of CSOSA data. This project focus on services was a change from the initial research direction established by DC Agenda, however. As such, a completely new data request needed to be submitted to CSOSA.

Mapping and Analysis

In addition to using data provided by CSOSA to map patterns of reentry in Washington, D.C., NeighborhoodInfo DC is focusing on obtaining better data on organizations providing services for released prisoners. While a number of existing resource directories describe services available to released prisoners in the capital, most of these directories have proven to be outdated and lack the detail necessary to understand program eligibility requirements and capacities at service locations. In addition, a review of these directories and other nonprofit service databases reveals that information about small, faith-based programs for released prisoners is particularly difficult to identify.

To begin to fill critical information gaps, as well as to develop a data source for better understanding deficits in services for released prisoners in Washington, D.C., NeighborhoodInfo DC is partnering with CSOSA to develop a database of services for released prisoners. Rather than reinventing the wheel, CSOSA and NeighborhoodInfo DC sought the expertise of staff at the Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee's Data Center, who had developed a similar database for their own reentry mapping project. This database could be easily adapted for use in the District at a fraction of the costs required to build a database from scratch.

The database will initially be populated with information on the services provided by the 52 churches in the Faith-Based Reentry Initiative. Staff members from CSOSA have been assigned to work with each individual church to get their program information entered and updated on a regular basis. This pilot database will serve as a model that can be expanded to include a broader set of service providers. Once populated, it will also provide the underlying data about where programs are located, as well as their eligibility requirements and capacities—information that is

critical in analyzing and responding to service gaps for released prisoners. The database will also be accessible on the Internet for mentors in the Faith-Based Reentry Initiative so that they can look up information about services for those they are guiding.

In June, analysis plans for the CSOSA data were presented at a meeting of the coordinators of the Faith-Based Reentry Initiative for review and feedback. These discussions included a review of maps of the spatial concentration of parolees and supervised releasees in Washington, D.C. Since that meeting, additional maps overlaying parolee/supervisee location with transitional housing facilities and information about changes in home values have been produced to begin to analyze gaps in housing availability for released prisoners. This analysis will be used in discussions with stakeholders about housing services for released prisoners in the District. Now that a working relationship has been established between NeighborhoodInfo DC and CSOSA, prospects are favorable for obtaining address-level data.

Results and Lessons Learned

In a relatively short time, NeighborhoodInfo DC has engineered the development of the information infrastructure needed to analyze the location of released prisoners and the location and characteristics of services that can be most useful to them. Although much work remains to be completed, the development of the services database will be supported by CSOSA in the future, which is key to the sustainability of this information resource.

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

The Winston-Salem Reentry Mapping Network project is managed by the Center for Community Safety (CCS), a public service and research center of Winston-Salem State University. Working with community partners, CCS initiates analysis and research on community safety issues and then helps shape action and response. In addition to the RMN project, CCS also manages the Weed and Seed initiative for Winston-Salem, is heavily involved in Project Safe Neighborhoods,⁷² and helps coordinate the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative for Winston-Salem. By integrating these various initiatives within a central hub, the CCS is able to leverage resources, encourage collaborative responses, and ensure the sustainability of each project.

The CCS has emerged as a strong advocate for reentry issues regionally and statewide. In collaboration with the Urban Institute, CCS hosted a local reentry roundtable in January 2002 in which Jeremy Travis, senior fellow at the Urban Institute, shared data from his report “But They All Come Back.” Later that year, CCS contracted with Urban Institute staff to conduct two focus groups with successfully reintegrated and recently released prisoners to identify the needs and services of released prisoners and to help launch a local strategic planning effort on reentry.

This initial work focused on the Northeast Winston-Salem neighborhood, characterized by high concentrations of returning prisoners as well as high rates of crime, open-air drug markets, unemployment, and poverty. Northeast Winston-Salem is also one of five designated Weed and Seed neighborhoods in the city. The RMN project enabled CCS to continue focusing on this

⁷² For more information about Project Safe Neighborhoods, visit <http://www.projectsafeneighborhoods.gov/>.

neighborhood to help support a community-based effort to assist ex-prisoners in reintegrating into a neighborhood already beset by numerous challenges, and to create a model for other similar neighborhoods.

For their RMN project, the Center set out to determine for this neighborhood answers to the following questions:

- Who are the returning ex-prisoners and where are they returning?
- Is there a relationship between areas of return and neighborhood crime rates?
- To what extent are returning ex-prisoners involved in the criminal offenses being committed in Northeast Winston-Salem?
- What are the existing risk factors and assets/resources in the community to which the ex-prisoners are returning?
- What other assets/resources, such as skills possessed by individuals, are available to address needs within the community?

Data Access and Quality

Data were obtained from the North Carolina Department of Corrections (DOC), the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department (Forsyth County Detention Center [FCDC]) and the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJDP). The DOC dataset contained individual characteristics of released prisoners, such as basic demographic data and data on conviction offense, incarceration date, release date, and status upon release (expiration of sentence or parole release). These data included all prisoners returning to Winston-Salem in 2003 and 2004. The FCDC data also contained individual characteristics for inmates who exited the Detention Center during 2003. The DJJDP dataset included data on juveniles returned to the community from youth development centers (training schools) in 2003. CCS staff initially achieved a 70 percent match rate when geocoding the DOC, FCDC, and NCDJJD data. With cleaning, that rate rose to between 87 percent and 95 percent, depending on the data source.

The CCS also accessed data from other governmental sources. The CCS received crime data, including data about victims, suspects, and offenders, from the Winston-Salem Police Department. The Winston-Salem Transit Authority provided files containing transportation routes across the city. The CCS also acquired data from the Winston-Salem city/county planning department GIS site, including building structures, tax parcels, corporate limits, FEMA floodplain boundaries, fire stations, hydrography, police sectors, schools, voting precincts, zoning, color aerials, fire demand zones, hydrants, planimetrics and topography, recreation centers and parks, voting polling places, wards, and zoning jurisdictions.

At neighborhood level, the CCS facilitated a data collection project, conducted by community residents and released prisoners trained in data collection, to record the precise location

community risks and assets within the Northeast Winston-Salem neighborhood. This project helped to develop participation and ownership of the reentry mapping work in the community.

Community Engagement

The CCS developed a community engagement plan to help the neighborhood best address the challenges of high concentrations of released prisoners. A key component of this plan was partnering with a grassroots organization, Faith Seeds, a program of Eureka Ministries, to develop a reentry coalition that involved adequate representation of community residents in the decisionmaking process. Eureka Ministries operates a transitional home for male prisoners returning to Winston-Salem, and thus was already intimately familiar with the reentry challenges experienced in the city, many of which are linked to the absence of family and community connections, service/support gaps, and current policy and laws that impede prisoners' reintegration. In the spring of 2003, Eureka Ministries launched its Faith Seeds Reentry Coalition, a community-driven process to address the issues of reentry. The Coalition is co-chaired by a community volunteer and a released prisoner. Its goal is to use a community-based approach to engage released prisoners, community members, and other stakeholders in restoring and revitalizing the community through the application of asset mapping, education, community action, and development of human capital—all toward the goal of reducing recidivism.

A critical challenge facing the CCS was the need to build legitimacy with community organizations and residents in implementing its grassroots/community-based engagement strategy. This challenge was evident in the difficulties the CCS encountered with a survey they planned to field in partnership with the Faith Seeds Reentry Coalition. The survey was intended to collect data from released prisoners about their job skills and other assets they could contribute to their community. Its purpose was to identify training and business development opportunities unlikely to be discovered through traditional employment surveys and workforce development programs. After initially agreeing to help administer the survey, coalition members reconsidered, indicating that their neighborhood had been "over-surveyed," and that researchers were taking community members' time and effort without leaving any value behind. As a result, the CCS decided not to field the survey at that time (the CCS is considering launching it in the future, but only with community support from local community development corporations).

Instead of pursuing the survey, the CCS focused on ensuring that the Faith Seeds Reentry Coalition would be representative of community members and released prisoners so that research plans would produce findings of value to the community. For example, to ensure community participation in and ownership of the coalition's work, CCS decided to delay including service providers in the initial stages of coalition building to allow the Coalition to develop without the influence of outside service providers, who might have goals conflicting with those of local residents. Unfortunately, this strategy has made it more difficult to collaborate with local service providers now that the Coalition is proceeding with plans for a Reentry Network Center, which will rely upon service providers for support and referrals. CCS is making progress in easing these tensions through ongoing dialogue with key service providers.

In September 2005, Faith Seeds worked with CCS, other community organizations, residents, and ex-offenders to develop a community research team. The team worked together with CCS

faculty to develop an asset survey, which was piloted in the community and was received with enthusiasm. The team revamped the survey based on the input from the community and set out to administer the survey, with a goal of 1,000 completions. The CCS funded a coordinator to oversee the project and the team of surveyors, which included ex-offenders, community partners and residents from the Latino/Hispanic and Northeast Winston Community. At the time of writing this guidebook, the surveys are being administered, and results are currently being entered into the database as they are received.

The Winston-Salem Local Initiatives Support Corporation has also funded the survey project as a part of their pilot program, Communities of Choice. Once the data has been analyzed, LISC will partner with CCS and Faith Seeds to hold forum to discuss the data with the community and begin to develop community-generated plans to create communities of choice. The survey was also translated into Spanish to enable the Latino and Hispanic community's participation.

Another unanticipated roadblock in community engagement for the project was the conflicting objectives of different members of the faith community, which made it difficult for CCS and Faith Seeds to gain the full cooperation of all parties. The partnership addressed this problem by identifying and working with only those organizations that were willing to collaborate and work toward a common goal.

Mapping and Analysis

The CCS achieved success in investigating each of their research questions, and their analysis proved critical to coalition-building efforts. Initially, the CCS was concerned that presenting maps of released prisoners within high-concentration communities would lead residents and other stakeholders to assume that where there are ex-prisoners, there will be crime. Instead, CCS's analysis of the relationship between crime and reentry showed that this was not necessarily the case. While the CCS found a correlation between crime and reentry citywide, this correlation did not hold within a subset of neighborhoods with a high number of released prisoners. The CCS also found that while the released prisoner recidivism rate in Winston-Salem was comparable to the national rate of recidivism, released prisoners were not disproportionately contributing to the crime rates in their neighborhoods. Within the Northeast Weed and Seed neighborhood, for example, ex-prisoners represent 2.33 percent of the neighborhood's population, and the 106 charges they faced were 2.58 percent of the total offenses in that neighborhood in 2003. This type of analysis and its findings helped to build a positive community dialogue on prisoner reentry, public safety, and stigmatization.

In addition to maps of crime and reentry, the CCS produced maps depicting the locations of returning offenders from DOC, FCDC, and DJJDP; the locations of local institutions, such as churches, schools, service providers in Northeast Winston-Salem; and the locations of major employers and transportation in the entire city. Additional census data (e.g., housing, income, and employment) and data from the WSPD (e.g., open-air drug markets, hot spots, and high calls-for-service locations) provided a balanced analysis of community needs, risks, and assets. The CCS maps showed a scarcity of resources and assets or economic opportunities in those parts of the neighborhood where concentrations of released prisoners are highest. More

pointedly, they learned that locations with high concentrations of released prisoners are more likely to be those with open-air drug markets and abandoned buildings.

Results and Lessons Learned

The CCS's mapping and analytic work has enhanced discussions at neighborhood planning sessions and generated creative ideas and possible solutions to prisoner reentry in the area. During a community problem-solving session in July 2004, CCS maps and data detailing abandoned building locations and concentrations of unemployed released prisoners prompted a significant change in public policy. Upon reviewing the data, city officials redirected a construction-training program to focus on training released prisoners from Northeast Winston-Salem. In addition, Eureka House has used CCS maps to target outreach and recruitment for a released-prisoner support group.

The CCS's mapping and analytic work also sparked the idea for the one-stop Reentry Network Center. Maps depicting the spatial mismatch between released prisoners and resources in Winston-Salem led directly to plans for creating a center to meet the needs of released prisoners. The Reentry Network Center stands to have a significant and lasting impact on reentry policy and practice in Winston-Salem. As the main focus of the Faith Seeds Reentry Coalition, the Center is seen as a collaborative, community-based, service coordination center, offering links to a continuum of services for released prisoners. The Center will be located in the Northeast Winston-Salem neighborhood and be managed by released prisoners, community members, and human service professionals. The Center's board, composed of representatives of faith-based organizations, community members, ex-offenders, grassroots organizations, and various other reentry stakeholders, will draw heavily from the Faith Seeds Reentry Coalition.

Faith Seeds Coalition members have expressed that data and maps from the CCS were instrumental in all aspects of their reentry work. Data provided by the CCS played an important role in mobilizing initial participation in the Coalition as it expanded to include other service providers, city officials, and community members. At regularly scheduled reentry meetings, the CCS provided the Coalition with data reports and maps as they became available. At the first annual Reentry Summit, the CCS data and map presentation was instrumental in not only demonstrating to community members the need for creating the Reentry Network Center, but also highlighted the need for community involvement and leadership. The CCS also provided guidance as to the value that the Center could bring to community residents.

The CCS will continue to provide data and analysis for the Faith Seeds Coalition as additional research questions are raised. For example, Coalition members are interested in knowing the number, percentage, and characteristics of neighborhood members who are currently incarcerated and on probation; the percentage of males removed from the neighborhood through incarceration; and other indicators of the overall impact that the criminal justice system has on the stability and human capital of the neighborhood. These analyses will continue to fuel the CCS's reentry work.

In addition to these contributions to local reentry efforts, the CCS has made major investments in developing a community-oriented research lab with GIS mapping capabilities. The lab, which is a collaborative effort among the CCS, the City of Winston-Salem, and Forsyth County, will explore a variety of topics related to community well-being. Given this investment in mapping and the extensive data collected for its RMN project, the CCS is well positioned to remain

involved with the Faith Seeds Reentry Coalition in producing maps and data analysis to support its work. The CCS also continues to collaborate with community members, training them to collect neighborhood survey data that can inform resource mapping and future decisionmaking. The greatest remaining challenge for CCS will be managing the mounting requests for maps and data analysis resulting from its outreach work.

The Reentry Mapping Network Model

In support of these partnerships collecting, analyzing, and using data, the Urban Institute engaged in a variety of technical assistance and peer learning activities. These activities included holding an annual RMN conference, providing on-site support, promoting the exchange of information across all RMN sites, working with sites to disseminate findings and lessons learned, and monitoring each site's progress through bimonthly updates. The following section details these activities, as well as an assessment by RMN partners of the Urban Institute's role in the RMN.

Technical Assistance to RMN Partners

As RMN partners developed their projects, Urban Institute staff provided technical assistance and resources to support the partners' efforts. The Urban Institute's goals in supporting RMN partners included providing assistance with collecting and analyzing reentry-related data, engaging key community stakeholders throughout the process, presenting findings in an accessible way to stakeholders, and devising strategies to address identified problems.

Each RMN partnership, for example, all faced some degree of challenge with acquiring reentry data for their communities. The partners needed assistance with identifying what data elements to request and how to address confidentiality concerns. The Urban Institute provided each site with documentation about data that the DOCs might be able to make available to them, confidentiality issues that might arise in accessing and using these data, and strategies for managing these confidentiality issues. In Louisville, the CRN also found that using the Urban Institute's templates for requesting data provided a measure of credibility to the state DOC. These resources were developed at the Urban Institute, based on Justice Policy Center staff members' experience with and knowledge about collecting data from corrections departments across the country.

The Urban Institute also drew from the expertise within its Justice Policy Center to create a guide for creating reentry maps, which serves as a resource for partners in determining the appropriate mapping techniques to employ for their intended audiences. In addition Urban Institute staff attended community meetings in RMN partner cities, presented information about reentry mapping to stakeholders, and provided feedback and perspective about the sites' agendas. Urban Institute staff members were also available to assist in RMN partners' efforts to sustain their work through additional fundraising. This assistance included reviewing proposals, writing letters of support, and participating in conference calls and meetings with potential funders. Each RMN partner was also provided with a fundraising profile for their community, detailing local and national funders that have made grants related to reentry issues.

Web Site and Email Group

Urban Institute staff maintain a recurrently updated web site for RMN partners containing administrative resources, relevant research, sample maps and reports, and technical assistance tools. Partners use these resources in their planning, analysis, and community engagement work. The web site contains four main sections: Partnership Information, RMN Resources, Partner Contributions, and UI Research and Publications. The web site is password-protected so that partners can freely share presentations and papers that may be helpful to RMN colleagues, regardless of whether the presentation or paper has been thoroughly edited for broader public release.

Partnership Information includes Reentry Mapping Network project summaries for the Network as a whole, as well as periodic updates on activities from each Network partner. This section also includes basic administrative tools, such as the schedule for Network meetings and conference calls, and Network contact sheets.

The **RMN Resources** section contains resources intended to guide partners' RMN work. The **Getting Started** subsection includes sample data requests and data nondisclosure agreements, sample data dictionaries, and a guide to developing a research agenda. The **Mapping and Analysis** subsection contains a basic guide to creating reentry maps, advanced mapping guides, and other reports on mapping neighborhood level data. The **Community** subsection features resources to guide the planning of community roundtables. **Partner Contributions** includes reentry maps and reports from RMN partners, as well as PowerPoint presentations used by partners in their community meetings.

The web site's **UI Research and Publications** section contains research reports and presentations by Urban Institute staff and other reentry research. Urban Institute contributions include reports from the Urban Institute's Returning Home Project, and presentations made by Urban Institute researchers on mapping and community at meetings and conferences. Other resources in this section cover reentry-related reports on housing and employment, as well as reports on the legal barriers to reentry in communities.

The Urban Institute also distributes select resources to RMN partners via e-mail. E-mails are usually sent monthly, and resources from the e-mail are archived on the Network web site. In addition to distributing resources such as those described above, the e-mail list has been used to inform partners about funding opportunities and upcoming conferences. This communication method has made it easy to share timely information about deadlines for solicitations for proposals or conference participation.

Conference Calls

In addition to virtual communication with Network partners via e-mail and the web, the Urban Institute holds bimonthly conference calls with partners to facilitate peer learning, involve the sites in the Network's development, and sustain the project's momentum. Calls are structured around pre-identified topics that might help to inform and guide RMN partners in their work.

In the early months of the Reentry Mapping Network in 2003, conference calls were geared toward getting RMN partners communicating with one another, as well as serving as a forum for discussing such issues as planning the initial phases of each partner's projects, writing data-sharing agreements, creating maps, and obtaining datasets and data dictionaries. As partners continued to work on these issues, the conference calls emerged as a forum for partners to discuss with each other and Urban Institute staff the common obstacles they encountered and strategies for overcoming them. This theme has continued into 2006, as the RMN has expanded to 14 cities. The calls currently serve as a forum for partners to talk about common issues, as well as share lessons learned for the benefit of the RMN's newest group of partners.

The conference calls have also been used as an opportunity to keep RMN partners up-to-date on current reentry research and policy issues. Nancy Fishman of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice spoke to RMN partners about her experiences and lessons learned in planning and convening local reentry roundtables. Betsey Nevins of the Reentry Policy Council (RPC) spoke about the RPC's report on prisoner reentry and discussed key strategies for impacting reentry policy and practice, engaging the community, and attracting positive media coverage.⁷³ Gene Guerrero of the Open Society Institute's Policy Center gave a presentation detailing the Second Chance Act under Congressional consideration, discussing how the bill could affect a partner's work locally.⁷⁴

Cross-Site Meetings

In October 2003, the Urban Institute convened the first of three Reentry Mapping Network conferences. This first cross-site conference was held over two days in Washington, D.C., with two representatives from each of the first six RMN partners. The focus of the conference was for partners to present and obtain feedback on their project strategies, with ample time allotted for discussion of those strategies by all partners and Urban Institute staff. In addition, a small number of national experts on reentry mapping attended and made presentations on community-level mapping, analysis, and reentry issues.

A second Reentry Mapping Network conference was held in New Orleans from November 30 to December 1, 2004. Representatives from 12 RMN partners were present. The original six RMN partners presented results from their projects, and all partners exchanged ideas regarding data collection and analysis, community engagement strategies, and the future of the Reentry Mapping Network. The Urban Institute surveyed partners about the second conference in New Orleans. Fifteen of 17 who attended rated the conference's networking opportunities as useful or extremely useful. All 17 attendees found the site presentations and discussions either useful or extremely useful. Thirteen of 17 attendees indicated that topical presentations on recent reentry-related research were useful or extremely useful.

A third Reentry Mapping Network Conference was held over two days in Washington, D.C., in January 2006. Representatives from 12 RMN partners were again present. The six phase-two

⁷³ The Reentry Policy Council's report is available for download at http://www.reentrypolicy.org/documents/rpc_report.pdf.

⁷⁴ The Open Society Institute's work on reentry issues can be viewed at <http://www.opensocietypolicycenter.org/issues/issue.php?docId=13>.

partners presented results from their projects. In addition, presentations were given on current research topics such as residential mobility in returning prisoners and using human services databases to inform reentry planning. Surveys after this conference revealed that 17 of 18 found the presentations either useful or extremely useful. Sixteen of 18 also found the quality of the networking opportunities to be good or excellent.

These conferences were valuable opportunities for partners to meet, share experiences, and discuss project strategies. RMN partners also collaborated to present project results at other reentry-related conferences. For example, Urban Institute staff collaborated with RMN partners from Winston-Salem and Milwaukee to present at the National Institute of Justice's International Crime Mapping Research Conference, held in Boston in April 2004. In addition, in June 2005, Urban Institute staff collaborated with RMN partners from Winston-Salem and San Diego at the Innovative Technologies for Community Corrections Conference in Seattle, sponsored by the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center. These presentations provided additional opportunities for RMN partners to share project experiences with each other, as well as with wider audiences.

Assessment of the Reentry Mapping Network

To obtain critical feedback about the Reentry Mapping Network structure and the Urban Institute's role as project facilitator, the Urban Institute conducted a survey of the RMN partners about the assistance and resources RMN provided.⁷⁵ Twenty-four individuals who were key staff members of Phase I and Phase II partners responded to the survey; in most cases, there were two respondents per city. Detailed survey results are included in appendix B.

In this survey, partners indicated that they have been accessing and using resources provided on the RMN web site on a regular basis. Specifically, 75 percent (18) of respondents are using the web site to access research and reports about prisoner reentry; 75 percent (18) are also using presentations, maps, and reports from other RMN partners; and a third (8) are using the web site to obtain more information about how to map reentry. Partners also indicated that they found e-mail broadcasts, conference calls, and the annual conferences to be useful. In addition, the survey revealed that when partners contacted each other directly to discuss common issues, the interaction was fairly productive (although the frequency of this interaction was relatively low, with only 13 percent reporting contact at a monthly or more frequent basis).

RMN partners reported mixed ratings for the technical assistance the Urban Institute provided on various aspects of their projects. This was not surprising, however, because each partner needed different types of assistance in conducting their reentry mapping efforts. In general, the sites accessed the Urban Institute's technical assistance on various topics in accordance with their unique needs. So, for example, a site's low rating of the Institute's assistance on presenting data and creating maps and its high rating of the Institute's help gaining access to corrections data make sense in the context of the site's particular needs for technical assistance.

⁷⁵ The assessment model draws from Barndt (2002).

Partners were also asked in this survey to indicate how they used their subgrants. Each RMN site receives a \$25,000 subgrant to help offset the costs of participating in the Network. On average, partners spent three-fourths of their project resources on staff time (including paid consultants). Three partners spent 10 to 25 percent of the subgrant on software needed for the project. The remaining spending categories included grants to local reentry partners and direct costs for equipment and supplies, each using an average of 5 percent of partners' monetary resources.

Six partners submitted open-ended comments. The comments were supportive of the RMN's work, indicating that the peer learning provided by RMN helped sites gain a richer understanding of reentry issues, and that being a member of RMN gave them credibility and helped generate ongoing support for the project (all six comments are included in appendix B).

RMN partners indicated that the Network has increased their organizational capacity and motivation to address reentry issues. Five of the twelve sites indicated that it is unlikely they would have engaged in reentry mapping had they not been selected to participate in RMN as partners. Even among those who would have pursued this work outside of RMN, partners noted that participating in RMN helped move them forward more deliberately. One partner commented on the assessment survey that their selection as an RMN partner was the catalyst for getting them started with local reentry research.

The Urban Institute provided partners with varying support, depending on their needs. In Winston-Salem, for example, the Urban Institute provided assistance with interpreting and mapping DOC data, which was instrumental in creating the packet of materials that was used at community problem-solving sessions. In Milwaukee, the Data Center was able to draw upon the experience of the Urban Institute and other sites in designing the programming approach to extract data from the state DOC system. The Urban Institute provided Milwaukee with advice on the types and structure of data to request from the DOC. In Denver, Urban Institute survey instruments were used to develop instruments to be administered locally. In Seattle, examples of how data has been used in other RMN partners cities was used to provide community partners with ideas for how they could use reentry maps in Seattle.

Collaboration among partners in the Network also played a vital role in supporting local reentry projects. The database developed in Washington, D.C., to create an information resource about services for released prisoners draws from the design for a similar database created by the Nonprofit Data Center in Milwaukee. NeighborhoodInfo DC was able to leverage this available resource from the Center to create a valuable resource at a fraction of what it would have otherwise cost to develop. In addition, work on a services database in Indianapolis was informed by connections project staff there made with the RMN affiliate in Newark, New Jersey.

The opportunities for partners to interact with each other and with the Urban Institute through the Network enable these types of collaborations to occur. In addition, the Network approach also creates opportunities for funded, cross-community action research projects. Cross-community action research projects similar to the RMN, and like the one conducted by the Urban Institute in 2003 on improving neighborhood health outcomes,⁷⁶ present communities with more opportunities to build their capacity to collect and analyze data for a new field of research on

⁷⁶ Pettit, Kingsley, and Coulton (2003).

specific issues. In the context of reentry, the Network approach can potentially connect sites to opportunities to conduct research on common reentry-related issues, such as employment barriers or voter disenfranchisement.

Overall, it appears that the key value that the Network added to the reentry mapping partnerships is that it improved the work in individual communities by introducing partners to best practices in reentry mapping, connecting them to partners conducting similar research, and increasing the prospects for sustaining the action research partnership.

Summary

The experiences of the RMN partners, establish a baseline of knowledge about reentry mapping that is useful for informing efforts by other jurisdictions to establish reentry mapping partnerships. Included in this baseline of knowledge is the lesson that this type of work is likely to require additional resources or the reallocation of existing ones. Any number of challenges, such as challenges with obtaining data, can potentially require some resource investment to overcome. Even in an ideal scenario, where data is easily obtained and stakeholders are already well organized, there is much work to be done to translate research findings into action. In addition, the experiences in RMN communities reveal that obtaining and analyzing data, convening stakeholders, and using data are all processes that are subject to unpredictable timelines. New reentry mapping partnerships should have some sense of urgency about their work, but must be able to move forward without unreasonable pressure or expectations about the timing of results.

The prospects for continuing the reentry mapping work in the original twelve RMN communities are favorable. The achievements of these sites during the course of this project include some identifiable impact of reentry practices, and the development of the potential for much more policy-relevant work in the future. It is encouraging that each RMN community has obtained data and produced at least basic summary maps. It is also promising that stakeholders in each community are reviewing the maps, and have expressed that they are valuable and useful for their work. This project has generated many important lessons that can be applied in support of developing reentry mapping partnerships in other cities. As the experience in Winston-Salem demonstrates, potential reentry mapping partnerships need not have already developed neighborhood data warehouses to get started with reentry mapping. And, as all RMN sites experienced, a commitment to building relationships with key stakeholders can yield benefits through all phases of the project, helping reentry mapping partnerships achieve their goals.

Appendix B: Results of RMN Partner Survey

1. How often do you use the RMN web site?

	Response Total
2 to 4 times a month (or more)	2
Once/month	7
Every 2-3 months	8
2-3 times a year	4
Once/year or less	3

2. What type of information from the RMN web site do you use? (check all that apply)

	Response Total
Research and reports about prisoner reentry	19
Information about mapping	8
Presentations, maps, and reports from other RMN partners	18
Other	1

3. How useful is the information you receive from RMN email broadcasts?

	Response Average (4=Very Useful, 1=Not At All Useful)
Overall content	3.08
Grant funding opportunities	2.84
Research reports	3.21
Conferences and workshops	3.08

4. Thinking about the bimonthly conference calls from 2003 through 2005, how useful are/were the bimonthly conference calls for:

	Response Average (4=Very Useful, 1=Not At All Useful)
Sharing information and ideas across the network	3.20
Informing strategies for accessing data	2.79
Informing strategies for analyzing and mapping	3.15
Informing strategies for engaging your community	2.95

5. How often do you contact other RMN partners directly by e-mail or phone (not including the bimonthly conference calls) to discuss RMN projects?

	Response Total
2 to 4 times a month (or more)	1
Once/month	2
Every 2-3 months	5
2-3 times a year	5
Once/year or less	11

6. How useful has direct contact with other RMN partners been in developing your RMN project?

	Response Total
Very Useful	5
Useful	15
Not Useful	0
Not At All Useful	0
N/A - I did not contact RMN partners	4

7. How would you rate the assistance provided by the Urban Institute regarding the following aspects of your RMN project?

	Response Average (4=Very Useful, 1=Not At All Useful)
Gaining access to reentry data	3.00
Analyzing and interpreting reentry data	2.95
Presenting data including creating maps	2.69
Developing a community engagement plan	2.53
Implementing strategies to address the issues	2.65

8. If your organization had not received a \$25,000 grant for this project, how likely is it that your organization would have still pursued gaining access to reentry data? (asked only of project coordinators at each site)

	Response Total
Very Likely	3
Likely	3
Unlikely	5
Very Unlikely	0

Any additional comments you might have about any of the aspects of the RMN discussed in this survey, or other aspects not discussed? (responses submitted are included below)

“I really enjoyed working with RMN. Urban Institute staff were very helpful and responsive to our requests for reentry-related literature. Interactions with other RMN partners, particularly at the conference in New Orleans, have given us a much richer understanding of reentry issues than we would have gotten working alone.”

“I look forward to more detailed sharing with sites as our analysis comes together.”

“We appreciate being connected to the other partners in the project. Being part of RMN increased our knowledge and sophistication about mapping and also gave us the impetus to be much more intentional about working on contextual reentry issues. We were pleased to be part of the initial sites selected, yet also benefited from each additional site brought in.”

“Although we did not interact much with other RMN partner sites other than through the bimonthly conference calls and the annual meetings, there was great value to being part of the RMN. Participation in the national RMN initiative not only helped us to learn from what other sites were doing, but it gave our local work additional ‘weight,’ or credibility, and it helped to keep the issue on our list of active work projects. Also, while the issue is very important to many local partners and we might have pursued the corrections data without receiving funds, it was the only way that we were able to devote staff time to working on the issue at the time. Finally, while we did not receive direct assistance from the Urban Institute on gaining access to local corrections data, our selection as a partner in the RMN was the catalyst to get this work going.”

"I have been very pleased with the support given our efforts by the UI staff.... Also, as a supplement to the previous question, I am certain we would have proceeded with obtaining data and analysis and mapping without RMN support. I am much less certain that we would have so actively engaged other community partners."

"I really want to get more involved in this process of using the materials provided by these resources."

Appendix C: Potential Department of Corrections Data and Accompanying Data Confidentiality Issues

POTENTIAL DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS DATA			
<p>Please note that DOCs will vary according to the type of data that they keep in electronic form. Many prisons will keep only certain data in electronic format and other data in hard copy only. This is a list of data that a prison or jail <i>may</i> maintain in electronic and/or hard-copy form. It is not likely that the DOC will have the resources or the willingness to provide you with all these data. If it is a matter of resources, it may be possible to have a staff member or an intern from a local university or college collect the hard-copy data and add the data to the dataset. Alternatively, some DOCs will pull the data for you if you pay a fee to cover their programmer's time for doing so.</p>			
	Variable	Confidentiality Issues?	Potential Solutions for Confidentiality Issues & Notes
Demographic Information			
1	Name (First, Last)	Y	Some DOCs will include prisoners' names in the dataset that they provide you. Prisoners' names should be deleted immediately from the dataset to prevent any confidentiality issues from arising. Also, because several prisoners could share the same name, names are not reliable as unique identifiers.
2	Residential Address at Time of Arrest or Admission (Street Address, Zip Code, City, State, and Country)	Y	Some DOCs consider prisoners' addresses to be sensitive data and may be unwilling to include them in a dataset. For example, if there is only one prisoner mapped on a street and if you also map other information (such as the offender's crime or age), then the prisoner could be identified. Since address-level data is critical for mapping, one compromise is to aggregate to the block level or a higher unit of analysis, such as the census block group.
3	Residential Address at Time of Release (Street Address, Zip Code, City, State, and Country)	Y	See above.
4	Race/Ethnicity	Y	When there are only a few prisoners in a particular race/ethnicity category (e.g., Asian), then this information could be used in combination with other data to identify the prisoner. DOCs may not raise this issue, but you should work to avoid this potential confidentiality issue. The most common solution is to simply combine all categories that include a small number of observations into an "other" category.
5	Gender	N	There are usually a sufficient number of female prisoners to avoid any confidentiality issues.
6	Date of Birth	Y	Prisoners with ages that are unusually young (below 18) or that are unusually old have the potential of being identified as well. DOCs may not raise this issue, but you should work to avoid this potential confidentiality issue. The most common solution is to create age ranges for mapping and analysis. If there are sufficient number of prisoners between ages 16 and 17, then combine these prisoners into that group. If not, then add these prisoners to a category of ages between 16 and 20, for example.
7	Place of Birth (City, County, State, and Country)	N	
8	Citizenship	N	
9	History of Substance Abuse	N	Please note that the criteria for making this determination vary by institution. It may be helpful to ascertain how the DOC identifies those with substance use histories. Also note that, most often, this is based on self-reported information.
10	Last Grade Completed	N	
11	Whether Possessed a Diploma (GED or High School) at Admittance to DOC	N	
12	Number of Children	N	Please note that these data are rarely available.
13	Residence of Children	Y	See number 2. Please note that these data are rarely available.
14	Marital Status	N	
15	Religion	N	
16	How Much Child Support Owed and Other Debt	N	
17	Whether Employed at Arrest and/or Admission	N	

18	Weekly Earnings at Arrest and/or Admission (From Taxable Sources and from Untaxable Sources)	N	
19	Mental Illness	Y	Confidentiality issues may arise in attempting to obtain mental health information, but the removal of identifiers should help to avoid this issue. Please note that the criteria for making this determination vary by institution. It may be helpful to ascertain how the DOC identifies those with mental illnesses (i.e., is the determination based on self-reported information or diagnostic testing?). Occasionally DOCs will ask related questions in a standardized way, such as: Have you ever been institutionalized for a mental illness? Have you ever taken medication for mental health reasons? Are you currently taking medication for mental health reasons? Have you ever been diagnosed for a mental illness? The DOC may also simply have a marker in their database for the prisoner being at risk for suicide. The DOC may also be able to provide you with such information as whether the prisoner received mental health care, the number of days a prisoner spent on suicide watch or in a mental health unit (if available), and/or whether the prisoner was transferred to a prison specifically designed for the care of mentally ill prisoners.
20	Physical Health	Y	Confidentiality issues may arise in attempting to obtain physical health information, but the removal of identifiers may help to avoid this issue. The type of physical illness may be documented, especially if the prisoner must receive medication and treatment. You may be able to obtain information about whether or not a prisoner has a particular type of illness that is of particular concern, such as infectious diseases. The DOC may be able to provide you with the number of days a prisoner spent in the infirmary and any transfers to a hospital.
Criminal History			
NOTE: DOCs do not often collect information about prisoners' criminal history in other states.			
21	Prior Arrests	N	
22	Prior Convictions (Number and Type)	N	Ideally, the institution could provide you with information about the types of crimes for which the prisoner was convicted previously; but, given that prisoners' criminal records are often lengthy, the institution may not be able to provide this information unless they already keep it in their electronic database. They may be able to do so if you provide them with a list of particular offenses of interest, such as sex offenses, escape, and manslaughter.
23	Prior Violation of a Restraining Order	N	
24	Prior Incarcerations	N	
Current Incarceration & Release Information			
25	Institutional Identifier	N	Most DOCs give each prisoner an institutional number, but this number is frequently not unique to each prisoner. Rather, it is unique to the prisoners' admission into the institution and, as a result, one prisoner may have several institutional identifiers if s/he is re-incarcerated. The institutional identifier may, then, be helpful in identifying those prisoners who have been reincarcerated during the time period analyzed.
26	FBI Identifier	N	Your analysis may require that the DOC provide you with a number that is unique to each prisoner so that you can identify those prisoners who have been reincarcerated. The FBI identifier should not raise IRB issues and should provide a unique identifier for each prisoner.
27	Social Security Number	Y	If there is no FBI identifier available in the institution's electronic database, the social security number (SSN), which prisons often collect, can serve as a unique identifier. However, in some cases, the SSN is not consistently recorded and/or the data are fraught with typographical errors. Although many DOCs are willing to release a dataset that includes prisoners' SSNs, this a potential threat to confidentiality. One strategy for circumventing this problem is for the DOC to create unique identifiers for each prisoner based on the SSN. This option is problematic because it requires additional programming time on the part of the prison. If the prison does not have the resources necessary to do this work itself, then another option is for the DOC to release the dataset with the SSNs to one external researcher (who has signed a confidentiality agreement) who could create the unique identifiers for each prisoner based on the SSN. It may help if the researcher does this work on the DOC's premises, if that is amenable to both parties.
28	Risk Classification	N	Some prisons classify prisoners by the risk they pose to safety and security based on their criminal history, current sentence, and other characteristics. The most common prison classification instrument used today is the LSIR.
29	Date of Sentence to Prison	N	This can be important information because prisoners may have been held in a county jail before being transferred to prison.
30	Date of Admittance to Prison	N	
31	Date of Admittance to Jail	N	
32	Date of Release from Jail	N	
33	Date of Release from Prison	N	
34	Sentence Length (in Days)	N	

35	Prison Time Served (in Days)	N	
36	Jail Time Served (in Days)	N	
37	Charges	N	Please note that most prisoners receive multiple charges for each sentence to prison. The prison may include all charges in the dataset or the most serious charge. Ideally, the prison will include all of a prisoner's charges because that allows you to conduct some further analyses. For example, you may want to examine the number of prisoners convicted of a drug charge, which would not be included in the dataset if the prisoner was also convicted of a charge considered to be more serious, such as a violent charge. Also, you may want to determine the number of prisoners eligible for certain institutional programs and may need the full range of charges to make this determination. It may be helpful to have the prison officials describe how they decided which charges were more serious.
38	National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Most Serious Offense	N	See above.
39	Admission Type (Direct Sentence from Court, Probation Violation, or Parole Violation)	N	
40	Whether Committed a Felony	N	
41	Sentencing Jurisdiction	N	
42	Educational Degrees Obtained While in the DOC (GED or High School)	N	
43	Program Participation (Program Type, Length of Participation, and Completion)	N	Programs could include work within or outside the institution, academic, vocational, and rehabilitation/reentry programs. DOCs may not disaggregate prisoners' program participation into these categories; in this case, it is difficult to disentangle prisoners' participation in particular programs.
44	Good Time Earned	N	"Good time" is the number of days credited towards completion of a sentence based upon prisoners' behavior and on their participation in work, programs, and education.
45	Security Level at Admission	N	Security levels can include super-maximum, administrative segregation, protective custody, maximum, medium, minimum, and community-based (halfway house, day reporting, electronic monitoring, etc.). Some DOCs may not have all these types of custody available to prisoners.
46	Security Level at Release	N	See above.
47	Total Days in Different Custody Levels	N	See above.
48	Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) Alert	N	
49	Total Number of Major and Minor Disciplinary Convictions	N	
50	Reason for Major Disciplinary Conviction	N	Major disciplinary reports may be issued for such offenses as a violent act (on staff or another prisoner) and possession of contraband (e.g., drugs, weapons).
51	Outstanding Legal Issues upon Release	N	Some prisoners' legal issues may not have been resolved by the completion of their current sentence. They may therefore be released to a county jail pending additional charges or to INS pending a deportation hearing. Please note that some prisons' and jails' policies prohibit the placement of prisoners into certain programs or custody levels if they have outstanding legal issues.
52	Date All Outstanding Legal Issues Are Resolved	N	
53	Violation of Restraining Order Part of Current Sentence	N	
54	Victim Notification Requirement	N	Some states require that prisons notify a victim before a prisoner is released if the prisoner committed a certain type of offense.

Reentry Information

NOTE: DOCs may maintain this information, but often it is maintained by other agencies and this information may not be linked to the DOC's database.

55	Community Supervision	N	Whether prisoner was released on parole and/or probation.
56	Parole/Probation Identifier	N	
57	Data on Compliance with Terms of Supervision	N	
58	Data on New Offenses	N	
59	Data on Violations	N	
60	Ordered Supervision Term	N	

	Days		
61	Actual Time Supervision Days	N	
62	Recidivism	N	

Appendix D: Sample Data Request

List of data items requested:*

Unique identifier of person (e.g., number, name)
Address—at conviction
Address—upon release
Conviction charge (or top conviction charge)
Maximum sentence length
Actual time served (in days and years)
Reason for release (parole, court ordered, expiration of sentence, etc.)
Release date
Release location
Demographic data, including:
Sex
Race
Age
Date of birth
 Occupation at admission
 Marital status at admission
 Marital status at release
 Number of children at admission (number and categorical)
 Number of children at release (number and categorical)
 Education level at admission (number and categorical)
 Education level at release (number and categorical)
Program data, including:
 Drug/alcohol abuse and treatment
Health-related data (conditions, treatment, etc.)
Program participation data (including pre-release programming)
Employment/work-release data

***We would like these items at the individual level for the population released from [State Name] state prisons between [Time Period].**

Appendix E: Sample Memorandum of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Organization X and State Y Department of Corrections

I. Background

Organization X is an independent, not-for-profit research organization that provides data to meet the information needs of organizations concerned with public policy issues, community needs, and the quality of life. Organization X locates, develops, and collects information and consults with organizations on the use of data for planning, decisionmaking, and social policy analysis. Organization X does not advocate specific public policies or policy choices.

Organization X has begun the process of convening a local Reentry Employment Mapping Group (REMG), which will primarily focus on job access, projected job growth, and employment development policies as they relate to the current reentry population and the projected reentry population.

In recent years, the State Y Department of Correction (YDOC) has launched a number of efforts designed to support the successful return of prisoners to State Y communities... Governor Z launched a Statewide Community Safety and Reentry Working Group to provide guidance for the design of a new statewide reentry system focusing on 10 high-impact regions. YDOC's interests in reentry within City M suggest that the program efforts could benefit from a local analysis of where returning prisoners reside in relation to the risks and assets that exist in their communities.

II. Purpose of this Memorandum

To describe the mutual goals and responsibilities with regard to the sharing, analysis, and dissemination of YDOC data on returning prisoners and currently incarcerated persons in support of improving outcomes for this population.

III. County M Area Reentry Mapping Group (REMG)

The REMG will meet regularly over the course of the project to help guide the development of the research tools and analytic models. It will also be one of the vehicles for public policy use of the information generated by the project.

To form the REMB, Organization X has convened a diverse set of community stakeholders. At present, representatives from: [list of partners] have agreed to participate in it and we anticipate that other stakeholders will join in the near future.

IV. Mutual goals

Both Organization X and State Y DOC have an interest in better understanding the spatial patterns, relationships, and dynamics of prisoner reentry in County M. This requires the sharing, analysis, mapping, and dissemination of YDOC and local community data to identify concentrations of persons released from prison in relation to existing or prospective employment and social service resources. In furtherance of these goals, both parties agree to make every reasonable effort to fulfill the responsibilities outlined below.

V. Parties' Roles and Responsibilities

Organization X shall:

- a. Serve as the central entity to submit data requests on behalf of the Reentry Employment Mapping Group, identify data needs and submit requests to YDOC; designate one point of contact who will request data from YDOC, receive data from YDOC (hereinafter "the data") and share maps and analysis results with YDOC;
- b. Review requests for maps and analysis results from REMG members to ensure that the requests are consistent with REMG's goals of identifying reentry patterns and resource gaps. Requests that are not consistent with these goals will not be pursued.
- c. Fulfill requests from REMG members for analysis results; take all necessary and reasonable action by instruction or agreement with its employees, agents, and subcontractors to maintain security confidentiality, non-disclosure, and limitation of use of the data. Employees, agents, or subcontractors of Organization X may use data files to fulfill the purposes and obligations as set forth in this Agreement. Organization X shall not provide, copy, or disclose, directly or indirectly, to any third party any of the data provided by YDOC;
- d. Share all maps and analysis results with YDOC at least ten (10) days prior to dissemination by the REMG for the purpose of receiving YDOC clarification on such matters as definitions, nuances or anomalies with the data, as well as input on policy implications; clearly mark as "Draft—Not for Dissemination or Distribution" any maps or analysis results to be shared with the REMG that have not yet been reviewed by YDOC;
- e. Incorporate clarifications and input received from YDOC into "final products."
- f. Be the owner of analyses based on the data—including research reports, tables, indexes, maps, charts, and other exhibits that have been shared with YDOC ten (10) days prior to dissemination. Such analyses are the property of Organization X and may be publicly shared or posted on a web site without restriction.
- g. Attribute YDOC as data source in all charts, maps, tables and other exhibits that contain any data from the data files or are derived from the data files.
- h. Not assign rights or obligations under this Agreement to any third party without the prior written consent of the parties.

YDOC shall:

- a. Designate one point of contact for receiving and fulfilling data requests from Organization X;
- b. Provide timely access to the requested data;

- c. Provide clarification on data definitions and any nuances or anomalies with the data;
- d. Advise Organization X on the interpretation, analysis, and policy implications of the YDOC data;
- e. Maintain sole authority for use of original case-level data; and
- f. Review and provide feedback on any maps or analysis results produced by Organization X within ten (10) days of receipt of those products.

VI. Redissemination

Data and information furnished by YDOC to Organization X may not be used for any legal documents, such as search warrants, affidavits, or any document that may become public, or redisseminated or used for any purpose other than that for which it was requested, without the written permission of YDOC.

VII. Voluntary Disassociation

This MOU is a nonbinding agreement that both parties have entered into in good faith. Either party may disassociate from the effort without penalty or liability by so notifying the other in writing. Written notice shall be sent sixty (60) days prior to the disassociation.

VIII. Term and Amendment

This Memorandum shall be in effect for the period of one year beginning [Date]. Both parties reserve the right to renegotiate this Memorandum upon the mutual consent of the other party. At the conclusion of the one-year period, this Memorandum may be extended by common written consent of both parties. This Memorandum represents the entire understanding of both parties with respect to this partnership. Any modification of this Memorandum must be in writing and signed by the parties.

Signed by:

_____ Date: _____
 Representative,
 State Y Department of Corrections

_____ Date: _____
 Representative,
 Organization X

Appendix F: Sample Reentry Asset Mapping Protocol (Winston-Salem)

OVERVIEW

The goal of the reentry asset mapping strategy is to assess the location of services available to ex-prisoners in selected neighborhoods in Winston-Salem, and to document the safe and unsafe areas that surround them. This work mirrors similar projects conducted by the D.C. Public Agenda on youth assets, and by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice (CJCJ) and the Alliance of Concerned Men on assets for returning prisoners in Washington, D.C.. The CJCJ effort, which also focused on neighborhoods with high concentrations of returning prisoners, aimed to identify the strengths/assets of these neighborhoods, which are often discussed solely in terms of the economic and social disadvantages they face. Working in teams of two, staff persons from the CJCJ and the Alliance recorded and then mapped five categories of community assets: religious institutions; schools; government offices and community service agencies; businesses—goods/services; and businesses—restaurants/carry-outs/food sale establishments. In conjunction with the asset mapping, the CJCJ also conducted a series of skills surveys with residents in the target neighborhoods. These interviews helped to assess the human capital of these communities, but also lent weight to the argument that programs for ex-prisoners should and could be staffed by residents of the communities in which they are located.

We would suggest identifying similar categories of community assets as those used in the CJCJ work, with a particular focus on community service agencies. In addition, we would suggest going one step further to identify whether the areas surrounding services and goods available to ex-prisoners are positive or negative (e.g., would an ex-prisoner have to pass by an open-air drug market to reach a health clinic?) The decision on whether to invest in an additional skills survey effort would depend on what the Center thinks it could do with this type of information. The advantage of conducting such a survey is that this type of information would already be available if needed to mobilize community members to aid in the reintegration process. For instance, if there is a potential for launching a literacy program for ex-prisoners in a target community, it might be useful to have a documentation of community members with teaching/tutoring skills. We can discuss the benefits and costs of a community skills survey in further detail depending on your interest in the idea. What follows is the procedure we recommend for the asset mapping component.

PROCEDURE

1. Select Neighborhoods

Using the maps showing distributions of returning prisoners, identify which high-concentration areas would be the most interesting areas on which to focus your attention. The number of neighborhoods selected would, of course, depend on cost and staff restrictions. We recommend piloting the mapping procedures on a one- or two-square-block area to better estimate how much time this effort would require and to assess how large of an area could be covered within reasonable budgetary allowances.

2. Recruit ‘Mappers’

We suggest using one of your street workers in the recruitment process, since they know the returning prisoners in the area and have a good rapport with them. The ideal ex-prisoner for this kind of work would be from the community, familiar with the neighborhoods of interest, and have good interpersonal skills.

3. Train Mappers

The formality and extent of training will depend on the number of people recruited to serve as mappers. If only a few people will be involved in the effort, shadowing a Center member as they conduct the first few surveys on the street might be sufficient. If a larger group is involved, more formal training, including some role playing at the Center, might be more appropriate. Certain issues should be addressed in the training of any mappers used in this effort: the importance of legible handwriting, appropriate demeanor when interviewing people, attention to detail, documentation of labor hours, and dealing with sensitive issues. For instance, if a male ex-prisoner encounters a homeless shelter for women, he could simply make a note of its location and have a woman return to conduct the interview rather than potentially upsetting the residents by entering the facility.

4. Design Survey Instrument

We feel that it would be useful to consider the data collection methods used by CJCJ and D.C. Agenda in addition to our own ideas, so as not to reinvent the wheel when designing the survey instrument.

5. Conduct Survey

Once the data collection instrument has been designed, mappers can begin to canvas the selected neighborhood to catalog the assets. The pilot test should give you a better estimate of how much time would be required to entirely survey the areas of interest. One potential problem with this type of work is ensuring the validity of the survey results. A couple of different methods can be used to counteract this problem. If only a few mappers will be employed, it may work best if the surveys are conducted in teams of two—one person from the Center and one ex-prisoner. If a large number of mappers will be used, a Center member could validate a random subset of places that were listed as assets.

6. Reimburse Participants

Since we do not yet know how much time this type of work would involve, it is also unclear how mappers should be paid. For instance, would it be more appropriate to pay by the hour or by the geographic area covered? Once again, a pilot should help you to think through these issues and determine the most suitable payment approach.

7. Create Products

Once all of the data have been collected, members of the Center staff will geocode each address by type of service/asset. Maps can then be created to show where different kinds of services are located. Different landmarks can be added to the maps, such as bus routes and bus stops. Finalized maps can serve a number of functions. They can be given to ex-prisoners as a resource. They may also be used by the Center staff to further assess the availability of services, determine gaps, and identify potential areas for action by the Center. In addition, they could add another layer to the concentration maps we have already created.

CPEC Prison Reentry Policy Brief

Connecticut Policy and Economic Council, Inc.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Ex-offenders face numerous barriers but without a high school degree or GED their chances for employment become even harder. While there are educational opportunities in jail, the opportunities vary on the facility and there is very little available data that links offenders to services.

This brief is part of a series of briefs on Prisoner Reentry that are produced by the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council as part of being a partner in the Urban Institute's Reentry Mapping Network, an innovative partnership that uses data analysis and GIS mapping to help mobilize local leaders and residents to identify and address the challenges of prisoner reentry.

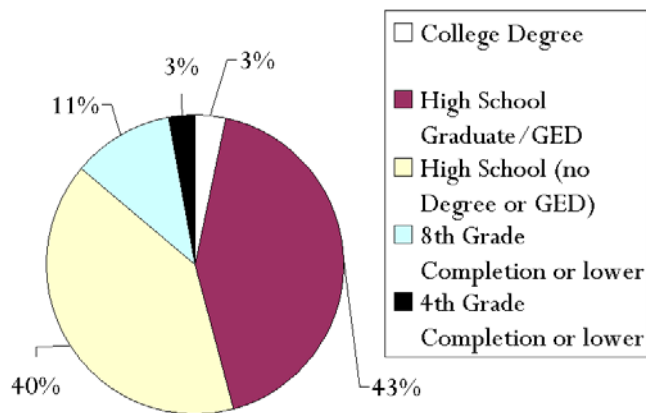
Incarceration data in this brief was collected from the Connecticut Department of Corrections during the spring and summer of 2005. The data on the offender population is a snapshot of the prison population that claimed Hartford as their address from January 2003—July 2005. Parole data furnished by the Connecticut Department of Corrections is a snapshot of the parole population in Hartford on July 1, 2005.

Incarcerated Population

Almost half of all inmates from Hartford have at least a high school degree or GED. When disaggregated by age, gender, and race some patterns on education access begin to emerge.

As inmates get older, their chances for degree completion decrease. Between ages 18-19 over 58% of inmates do not have their high school degree or GED. By age 20-29, that number decreases to 44%. However, among offenders over 50 years old 84% do not have a high school degree or GED.

Incarcerated Offenders Educational Attainment: July 2005



Educational attainment differs by gender in some significant ways. While 53% of men and 55% of women do not have a high school degree or GED, the education levels still vary significantly. Of the 53% of men without a high school degree or GED, 15% of them do not have any high school education, while 7% of females without a high school degree do not have any high school education. Additionally, 19% of women have a college degree compared to 3% of men.

When educational attainment among women is teased out by race what emerges is that both black and white women have high levels of college completion. A gap emerges in both rates of college degrees and those with high school education but no degree between white and Hispanic women. Nearly 2 out of every 3 Hispanic women in prison do not have a High School Diploma or GED compared to only 1 out of every 5 white women. This shows a need for more education services among women of color to assist them in getting a GED or high school diploma.

Educational Attainment for Female Offenders by Race: July 2005

	Black Women	White Women	Hispanic Women	Asian Women
College Degree	21%	42%	12%	100%
High School Graduate/GED	32%	37%	18%	
High School, no graduation or GED	43%	21%	58%	
No High School	4%		13%	

PAROLEES/ AFTER INCARCERATION

While offenders without a high school degree come from South Meadows, Barry Square, and Clay Arsenal, parolees without a GED/high school degree settle into Behind the Rocks (10%), Barry Square (15%), South End (11%). Compared to census figures, the proportion of parolees residing in Hartford neighborhoods who do not have a high school degree/GED is higher than the proportion of residents of those neighborhoods without a high school degree/GED.

Educational Attainment of Paroles and Residents

Neighborhood	Residents	Parole	Neighborhood	Residents	Parole
Asylum Hill	33%	41%	Northeast	42%	57%
Barry Square	48%	68%	Parkville	47%	88%
Behind The Rocks	42%	63%	Sheldon-Charter Oak	51%	67%
Blue Hills	26%	31%	South End	34%	67%
Clay Arsenal	55%	42%	South Green	47%	71%
Downtown	31%	67%	South Meadows	38%	100%
Frog Hollow	51%	64%	Southwest	40%	50%
North Meadows	39%	0%	Upper Albany	41%	61%