Community-Based Organizations in Bibb County, Georgia:
A Spatial Analysis

by

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Executive Summary
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Background and Research Questions
Improving local neighborhoods used to mean identifying and combating local problems. Today, a new approach is being used by a number of foundations, public officials and activists to build the capacity of local communities. Based on asset-building theory, these models target the institutional strengths of local areas to promote the economic and social viability of the community. Because nonprofit and community-based groups are often viewed as neighborhood assets, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation asked the Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy (CNP) at the Urban Institute to analyze the size, scope and spatial dimensions of the nonprofit sector in Bibb County, Georgia, with special attention to the central city of Macon.

Three key questions guide this research:
• What types of community-based organizations are located in Bibb County?
• Are these groups evenly distributed across the county or are some areas underserved?
• Is there a spatial mismatch between the location of community-based groups and the needs of the most disadvantaged residents of Bibb County?

To address these questions, CNP built a database of community-based nonprofit organizations in Bibb County and supplemented it with information on for-profit firms, public and private schools, libraries, and other public institutions in the community. Socioeconomic information from the U.S. Bureau of the Census was also compiled. Together, these data provide the Knight Foundation with important insights into potential assets and gaps for building the capacity of community-based groups in Bibb County. The data can be used by the Foundation for planning its grantmaking strategies and working with the community to identify and prioritize local needs.

Key Findings
Residents of Bibb County, Georgia, generally are satisfied with their community. In a recent survey, 70 percent of Macon residents called it an “excellent” or “good” place to live, and three of every four said that they were happy living in Macon and would probably stay for
the next five years. Yet the county has many social and economic needs as evidenced by its relatively high level of poverty, particularly in its central city of Macon. One-third of the census tracts in Bibb County (14 of 43 tracts) have poverty rates of 30 percent or more, and all of these tracts are located—at least in part—within the city limits. Combating poverty and its related effects is an issue that affects both the city of Macon and the outlying areas of the county.

Characteristics of the nonprofit sector in Bibb County

The concentration of poverty in Macon makes it a focal point for community building efforts. Working from an asset model, CNP analyzed the characteristics of the nonprofit sector in Bibb County, especially the resources available in Macon. The findings suggest a relatively large and financially sound sector that is primarily centered in Macon.

- **The nonprofit sector in Bibb County is relatively large and geographically dense.** There are 588 community-based organizations in Bibb County. The majority (62 percent) are faith-based groups, with the remaining 225 organizations secular in nature. The size of the nonprofit sector in Bibb County is relatively large when compared to its population. There are more than 14 secular groups for every 10,000 residents in Bibb, compared with eight nonprofits per 10,000 persons nationally. If religious organizations are added, the density increases to nearly 36 community-based organizations per 10,000 residents in Bibb County.

- **Nearly three-quarters of nonprofits in Bibb County operate in one of the Foundation’s seven program categories.** The Foundation’s seven program categories cover a wide range of activities, including arts and culture, education, children and social welfare services, community development, literacy, citizenship and homelessness. Of the 225 secular nonprofits in Bibb County, 163 groups (73 percent) provide services in one of these seven program categories.

- **Among the Foundation’s seven program areas, the three most common types of services in Bibb County are children and social welfare services, arts and culture, and education.** Fifty-three nonprofits offer children and social service programs as their primary service activity. This category includes a wide array of groups that offer services such as job training, youth centers, food banks, and more. Arts-related organizations also are relatively numerous, with nearly 50 groups primarily providing arts and cultural programs to community residents. Nonprofit educational providers were the third largest program-related group in the county. One in five nonprofits (or 33 groups) fits this category. These groups include preschools, private primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities.

- **Only a handful of nonprofits focus primarily on the Foundation’s other program areas.** Twenty organizations primarily engage in community development initiatives, such as housing development, housing rehabilitation, and homeowners and tenant associations. Four nonprofits in Bibb County focus on building citizenship as their
primary organizational activity. Two groups promote literacy, and two other nonprofits primarily address the issue of homelessness.

• **Nonprofits in Bibb County tend to operate on relatively small budgets.** Although the nonprofit sector in Bibb is fairly large, the typical nonprofit in the county operates on a modest budget. Of the nonprofit organizations in Bibb County that reported financial information to the IRS in 1998, their median revenues were roughly $153,000 and median expenditures were $131,000. Median assets for these organizations were $221,000.

• **The typical nonprofit organization that fits into the Foundation’s program areas is smaller—but fiscally stronger—than other community-based organizations in Bibb County.** The budgets of nonprofit groups that operate in the Foundation’s seven program areas were slightly smaller than other types of nonprofits in Bibb County. Median revenues for program-related groups, for example, were $153,000, compared with $185,000 for the other nonprofits in the county. Despite their smaller size, organizations that engage in activities that the Foundation supports appear to be fiscally stronger than other nonprofits in Bibb County. Nearly 73 percent of groups in the seven program areas, compared with 62 percent of the remainder of the Bibb nonprofit sector, reported positive balance sheets in which revenues exceeded expenses at the close of 1998. This finding suggests that groups in the program areas may be slightly better positioned to withstand unexpected shocks in their funding streams than other nonprofits in the county.

**Spatial Patterns of Nonprofit Organizations in Bibb County**

The ability of nonprofits to positively impact and improve local communities is linked in part to their ability to reach local residents. Access to residents comes in many forms: via websites, through mobile units, and at fixed locations. Because most nonprofits provide programs at fixed locations, these sites must be known to residents and within a reasonable distance. The spatial dimensions of nonprofits in Bibb County *vis-à-vis* local socioeconomic conditions showed the following patterns.

• **The vast majority of community-based organizations are located in Macon.** Although nonprofits are located throughout Bibb County, they tend to cluster within the city limits of Macon. Nearly four of every five groups in Bibb County are located in Macon. Faith-based groups and religious congregations are more widely dispersed than are secular organizations. Approximately 24 percent of faith-related organizations are located outside of Macon, compared with 16 percent of secular nonprofits. The greater geographic distribution of congregations is not surprising given that many congregations locate in areas that are easily accessible to their members.

• **Many nonprofits that target their services to low-income residents are located in distressed neighborhoods in Macon.** From a spatial perspective, there seems to be a fairly good fit between the location of services in Bibb County and community need. All of the organizations in Bibb County that focus primarily on literacy and homelessness are located in Macon. Four of every five community development organizations also are sited within the city limits. Moreover, the vast majority of child-related and social welfare providers are located in the central city, with more than half sited in high poverty...
areas. While this spatial pattern suggests that many nonprofit groups are situated in neighborhoods where they can help the neediest families in Macon, further study is needed to assess the capacity and effectiveness of these programs.

- **Educational providers, more than other program-related groups, are located in moderate or high income neighborhoods in Bibb County.** Nonprofit organizations that focus primarily on education are dispersed throughout the county, but tend to be sited in moderate and high income areas. About one-quarter of Bibb’s educational providers are in moderate income neighborhoods; another 40 percent are sited in high income areas. This locational pattern tends to mirror the geographic patterns of primary and secondary public schools in Bibb County.

- **Arts and cultural nonprofits tend to be clustered in the downtown area of Macon, forming a cultural center for the county.** More than one-quarter of arts-related groups in Bibb County are located in a tight geographic space that comprises Macon’s central business district. Some of these groups share space at the same location. This pattern may reflect not only the availability of affordable space, but also the desire to create a distinct cultural center for the county.

**Conclusion**

Although Bibb County is a community with geographic areas of deep poverty and substantial need, it also has the rudiments of a rich civic infrastructure. According to a recent survey, public support of local institutions is relatively strong and the majority of residents feel positively toward their community. Bibb County residents also are generous toward local causes. Two-thirds do volunteer work, and nearly all (90 percent) donate money or personal goods to local charities. Moreover, Bibb County has an expansive array of community-based organizations that provide a variety of services to local residents. Indeed, the density of nonprofit organizations in Bibb County significantly exceeds the national average.

The large and relatively healthy nonprofit sector has a strong presence in Macon and presents numerous opportunities for building community capacity through nonprofit involvement in the County. The concentration of nonprofits in the downtown area and many of the poorest neighborhoods of the city provides a nucleus of community-based groups that can help energize the community and improve local conditions. Public officials and foundation leaders may want to draw upon these organizational assets to create localized strategies to address issues of poverty and need. Nonprofit educational services are particularly lacking in lower income areas and may be a target of opportunity to fill an important niche in the community.

On the other hand, the clustering of nonprofits in the central city results in fewer potential partners in other sections of the county. Although these data do not show the extent to which nonprofits in Macon are providing mobile services to the county’s outlying areas, the geographic distribution of nonprofits suggests that the areas outside of Macon may be underserved.

Understanding the geographic distribution of nonprofits is an important starting point for developing a community building strategy. It provides a basis for identifying the potential
resources in the community and their geographic proximity to local needs. Additional information is needed, however, on the program content and organizational structure of these groups to understand more fully their potential for addressing community needs. The exploration of these issues and further dialogue with community residents can help formulate the next steps in a community building strategy for Macon and Bibb County, Georgia.

A copy of the full report is available by contacting The Knight Foundation (2 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami, FL 33131) or the authors at the Urban Institute (2100 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20037).
Background

To better understand the 26 communities in which it makes local grants, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation established the Community Indicators Project to document the social and economic health of these communities. As part of this broad initiative, the Foundation asked the Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy (CNP) at the Urban Institute to identify and inventory the nonprofit and other community-based organizations in four communities and to analyze their resources. These communities include Summit County (Akron), OH; Bibb County (Macon), GA; Lake County (Gary), IN; and Philadelphia County (Philadelphia), PA. The purpose of this research is to provide the Foundation with information on the size, scope, and spatial dimensions of the nonprofit sectors in these areas. This information will help the Foundation identify the locally based assets in each community and the possible gaps in service.

This report presents the findings of the organizational and spatial analysis of community-based groups in Bibb County, Georgia. The report is organized into three sections. First, it explores the environmental conditions of the Bibb County. Second, it analyzes the number and finances of community-based organizations in the County. Finally, groups are categorized by the Foundation’s seven program areas, and the locations of these organizations are viewed vis-à-vis the socioeconomic needs of Bibb County.

The report is guided by three research questions:

- What are the community-based resources in Bibb County?
- Are community-based organizations evenly distributed across the County, or are some areas underserved?
• Is there a spatial mismatch between the location of community-based groups and the needs of the most disadvantaged residents of Bibb County?

The findings of this report, coupled with the Organizational Database of Selected Counties\textsuperscript{1} that CNP prepared for the Foundation, provide the Foundation with detailed information on potential assets and gaps in community-based programs in Bibb County. This information can be used by the Foundation for planning its grantmaking strategies and for working with the community to identify and prioritize local needs.

**The Socioeconomic Conditions of Bibb County**

Residents of Bibb County, Georgia, generally consider it a good place to live. In a recent survey, 70 percent of Macon residents called it an “excellent” or “good” place to live, and three of every four residents said that they were happy living in Macon and would probably stay for the next five years (Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1999). Downtown redevelopment is bringing cultural and economic opportunities to the city. The Georgia Music Hall of Fame and the Douglass Theatre are currently under renovation, and the Tubman African American Museum plans to relocate to a more spacious downtown location.

Despite these positive signs, socioeconomic indicators suggest that Bibb County lags behind state and national norms along a number of dimensions (see table 1). Median household income in the county ($31,355) is roughly 7 to 8 percent less than comparable measures for the state of Georgia ($33,623) and the nation ($34,076). Educational attainment also lags behind. In 1990, 68 percent of Bibb County residents, age 25 or older, had received a high school diploma, compared with 71 percent in Georgia and 75 percent in the nation.

\textsuperscript{1}A related component of this project was the development of a database of community-based organizations, primary and secondary schools, and selected for-profit and public institutions in the four pilot communities. The sources and methodology used to construct the database are provided in Appendix A.
Roughly 17 percent of Bibb County residents had obtained a college degree—somewhat lower than the share of college graduates in the state (19 percent) and the nation (20 percent).

Other measures of the community’s health and well-being also suggest that standards of living in Bibb County could be improved. The infant mortality rate in the county (15.8 deaths per 1,000 live births) is roughly 65 percent higher than the state norm (9.6) and more than double the national rate of 7.3. Rates of serious crime are also quite high. Roughly 9,900 serious crimes were reported per 100,000 residents in Bibb County in 1996, compared with approximately 6,200 in Georgia, and 5,100 in the nation. The overall poverty rate for Bibb County in 1995 (21.6 percent) was almost 40 percent higher than in the state of Georgia (15.6 percent) and 57 percent higher than in the nation (13.8). Child poverty also is high. In 1995, nearly one in three children was poor compared with one in four in the state and one in five in the nation.

Table 1. Socioeconomic and Health Indicators for Bibb County, the State of Georgia, and the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socioeconomic/Health Indicator</th>
<th>Bibb County</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income (1995)</td>
<td>$31,355</td>
<td>$33,623</td>
<td>$34,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% High School Graduates (1990)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% College Graduates (1990)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality Rate (1996)</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Crime per 100,000 Residents (1996)</td>
<td>9,913</td>
<td>6,228</td>
<td>5,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Living in Poverty (1995)</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Children in Poverty (1995)</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, various years.

Although these statistics suggest that the county has considerable social and economic needs, most of the poverty in Bibb is found within the city limits of Macon (see map 1). One-third of the census tracts in Bibb County (14 of 43 tracts) had poverty rates of
30 percent or more, and all of these tracts are located—at least in part—within the city limits. These high poverty neighborhoods contain nearly half of the poverty population in the county. Of the nearly 28,000 people living in poverty in the county, about 13,600 lived in these high poverty areas.

If one looks at the number of people in poverty, rather than simply the rate of poverty, a somewhat different picture emerges (see map 2). Ten of the 43 census tracts in Bibb County had at least 1,000 people living in poverty in 1990. Poverty is still concentrated in the city of Macon, but not just in the central downtown area. Many neighborhoods on the periphery of the urban core have at least 1,000 residents who are poor. By either measure—number of people in poverty or rate of poverty—the city of Macon has many more pockets of poverty than the remainder of Bibb County.

**Community-Based Organizations in Bibb County**

The geographic concentration of poverty in Bibb County highlights the need to study local neighborhoods and take stock of the community-based assets that can be used to leverage change. Indeed, civic efficacy in Bibb County is strong. Seven in ten residents believe that they can have a big or moderate impact in making their community a better place to live, with the majority (80 percent) saying that people need to get involved and volunteer their time (PSRA, 1999). These attitudes suggest fertile ground for introducing a strategy to build the capacity of community-based groups and promote civil society.

Developing a clear understanding of the size and scope of locally based resources in the county is a first step in determining how to target grantmaking activities to address local needs. Because nonprofit organizations, both secular and faith-based, are often seen as the
anchors or glue to community life, they are a critical starting point for assessing local resources. Four key factors stand out from the analysis of nonprofit groups in Bibb County.

The nonprofit sector in Bibb County is relatively large and geographically dense. Counting both secular and faith-based organizations, there are 588 community-based organizations in Bibb County. The majority (62 percent) are religious congregations and other faith-based groups, with the remaining 225 organizations secular in nature. Although religious organizations comprise the majority of community-based groups in Bibb, there is very little systematic information about their social ministry programs. Unlike the secular nonprofit organizations, religious congregations are not required to obtain tax exempt status and to report their financial activities to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Consequently, very few congregations do so. This leaves a void in determining what they do, who they serve, or the level of financial support used to sustain their program activities. As a result, most information about the nonprofit sector in Macon (and other communities) relates to secular nonprofit groups. While there is great interest among many policymakers to explore new partnerships with the faith community, there is little empirical evidence to understand how these groups currently complement, substitute, or supplement what is being done by other community-based organizations or government agencies.

Looking only at the secular nonprofit organizations in Bibb County, they are quite numerous relative to the size of the population. In fact, the density of secular nonprofit organizations in Bibb County is more than 80 percent greater than the national average (see Stevenson et al., 1997). In Bibb County, there are more than 14 secular groups for every 10,000 residents, compared with eight nonprofits per 10,000 persons nationally. If religious
organizations are added, there are nearly 36 community-based organizations per 10,000 residents in Bibb County.

Nearly three-quarters of 501(c)(3) organizations in Bibb County operate in one of the Foundation’s seven program categories. The Foundation’s seven program categories cover a wide range of activities, including arts and culture, education, children and social welfare services, community development, literacy, citizenship and homelessness. Of the 225 secular nonprofits in Bibb County, 163 groups (73 percent) provide services in one of these program categories.

Children and social welfare services is the program area with the most nonprofits in Bibb County (see table 2). Fifty-three organizations (about one in three nonprofit groups in Bibb) offer children and social service programs as their primary service activity. This category includes a wide array of groups such as job training providers, neighborhood youth centers, and delinquency prevention services. They also are quite diverse in terms of their size. Some of the organizations, such as Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia, the Girl Scouts, and the Association for Retarded Citizens, had budgets of more than $1 million in 1998, while others, such as Macon-Bibb Respite Care, 4-H Clubs, and Big Brothers-Big Sisters of Macon, had revenues of less than $100,000.

Arts and cultural organizations also are relatively numerous in Bibb County. Nearly 50 groups primarily provide arts and cultural programs and services in the county. Indeed, arts and culture activities are fairly well attended by Bibb County residents. According to a recent survey, most county residents (59 percent) went to at least one arts or cultural event in the past year (PSRA, 1999). This is about the same percentage as those who saw a movie in the past 12 months (60 percent). Although these data cannot disentangle whether the
prevalence of arts and cultural organizations in Bibb County has led to good attendance or if
good attendance has created a demand for multiple arts and cultural groups, the two factors
appear to be strongly correlated.

Table 2. Distribution of Nonprofit Organizations by Knight Foundation’s Program
Categories in Bibb County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and Social Welfare</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Culture</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>163</td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Organizational Database of Selected Communities, prepared for the Knight
Foundation, August 2000.

The third largest group of nonprofit organizations in Bibb County offers educational
services as their primary service activity. One in five nonprofits in Bibb were in this
category. These groups include preschools, private primary and secondary schools, and
colleges and universities. Community residents tend to be supportive of these institutions.
Forty-two percent of Macon residents say they gave money to schools, colleges, or other
education organizations in the past year (PSRA, 1999).

Twenty organizations primarily engage in community development initiatives, such
as housing development, housing rehabilitation, and homeowners and tenant associations.
This category includes several large and well-known groups in Bibb County, such as the
Better Business Bureau of Central Georgia and the Macon Area Habitat for Humanity.
The remaining three Foundation program areas contain considerably fewer community-based groups. Four nonprofits in Bibb County focus on building citizenship as their primary organizational activity, while two groups (the Friends of the Macon Library and the Macon Literacy Action Plan) promote literacy issues. Literacy services is an area that could be considered for expansion. Perhaps reflecting the relatively low educational attainment levels in the county, nearly 70 percent of Bibb County residents said that illiteracy—that is, people who lack basic reading skills—is a problem in the county, according to a recent survey (PSRA, 1999).

Macon residents do not regard homelessness as a pressing problem for the county. About 40 percent of survey respondents said that it was “not a problem” and fewer than one in five regarded it as a “big problem” (PSRA, 1999). Indeed, homelessness ranked last in a list of problems confronting the county. Whether these perceptions reflect reality cannot be measured with these data, and suggest the need for a more formal needs assessment study. There are, however, two nonprofit groups in Bibb County that primarily focus on the issue of homelessness—Central Georgia Council on Family Violence and the Macon Coalition to End Homelessness. Although the number of organizations that specialize in services for the homeless is relatively small, other community-based nonprofits engage in these initiatives as secondary or tertiary activities. Goodwill Industries, for example, provides some services to the homeless, although Goodwill’s primary mission is as a social welfare organization.

Nonprofits in Bibb County tend to operate on relatively small budgets. Despite the relatively high density of nonprofit organizations in Bibb County, the typical nonprofit in the community operates on a fairly small budget. Of those reporting financial information to
the IRS in 1998, median revenues were roughly $153,000 and median expenditures were $131,000. Median assets for these organizations were $221,000.

Systematic, local area studies are just beginning to emerge in the literature, so there are limited data available for comparative purposes. A study of nonprofit groups in Washington, D.C., shows that organizations in the nation’s capital are roughly two to three larger than those in Bibb County (see De Vita et al., 2000). The typical nonprofit in Washington, D.C., reported median revenues of $408,000, expenses of $251,000, and assets of $251,000 in 1996.

The smaller size of nonprofit groups in Bibb County may reflect the local orientation of the sector. Indeed, many of the largest nonprofit organizations in the country have placed their headquarters in large urban centers such as Washington, D.C., New York, and Chicago. Such groups often do not directly address the needs of local residents, but engage in membership activities, lobbying, or advocacy work at a national level. In contrast, smaller urban areas, such as Macon in Bibb County, have nonprofit sectors that are more focused on the social and economic needs of local residents.

The typical nonprofit organization that fits into the Foundation’s program areas is smaller than other community-based organizations in Bibb County. The median revenues and expenses of groups in the Foundation’s seven program areas were $153,000 and $131,000, respectively, in 1998. Conversely, comparable median revenue and expenditure levels for the remainder of nonprofit organizations in Bibb County were $185,000 and $151,000 in 1998.

Roughly 27 percent of community-based organizations (163 groups) in Bibb County reported financial information on Forms 990 to the Internal Revenue Service in 1998.
Despite their smaller size, community-based groups that engage in activities that the Foundation supports appear to be fiscally stronger than other nonprofit groups in Bibb County. Nearly 73 percent of groups in the seven program areas, compared with 62 percent of the remainder of the Bibb nonprofit sector, reported positive balance sheets in which revenues exceeded expenses at the close of 1998.

Looking at the net income of these organizations (that is, the difference between revenues and expenditures), the groups that primarily provide services in the Foundation’s program areas tend to have larger “cushions” in their budgets than community-based groups providing other types of services. Median net income for organizations in the Foundation’s seven program areas was 8 percent of total revenues compared with 4 percent for other nonprofits. This finding suggests that groups in the program areas may be slightly better positioned to withstand unexpected shocks in their funding streams, although we are unable to determine if this cushion is the result of the types of services provided, sources of funding, management practices, or the economic conditions in Bibb County in the late 1990s.

The budgets of organizations that provide services in the Foundation’s seven program areas vary widely. Nonprofit groups that primarily provide child-related and social welfare services had the highest median expenditures ($284,000) and median revenues ($341,000), while groups focused on citizenship activities reported the lowest median expenditures ($51,000) and median revenues ($49,000), see table 3. None of the groups that target their resources to homeless services reported financial information in 1998.

Like child and social welfare service providers, educational service providers in Bibb County also have substantial budgets. Their median expenditures in 1998 were $214,000 and median revenues were $292,000. These figures mask substantial differences within this
category, however. Mercer University, for example, reported revenues of $170 million, compared with the PTA Georgia Congress that had revenues of $10,000.

In general, these financial data must be interpreted with caution. In some program areas, financial data were available for only a small proportion of groups that offer this service. Missing data could obscure the “true” financial base of the program area. In other program areas, the data may reflect the entire budget of the organization rather than any specific program area. A library, for example, may report its entire budget, not simply the portion that goes toward literacy activities.

Table 3. Financial Characteristics of Community-Based Organizations in Bibb County in 1998, by the Foundation’s Program Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Median Expenditures</th>
<th>Median Revenues</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and Social Welfare</td>
<td>$284,000</td>
<td>$341,000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>214,000</td>
<td>292,000</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>118,000</td>
<td>134,000</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>96,000</td>
<td>53,000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Culture</td>
<td>76,000</td>
<td>93,000</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>51,000</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All program areas            131,000  153,000  90

N/A indicates data not available.

NOTE: Financial data are rounded to thousands of dollars.

Source: Organizational Database of Selected Communities, prepared for the Knight Foundation, August 2000.

Findings of the Spatial Analysis of Community-Based Organizations in Bibb County

Community-based organizations deliver vital services and goods to local residents. Indeed, beginning with the War on Poverty, nonprofit institutions became the preferred vehicles to
supply health and human services as governments expanded and privatized their social service systems. In addition, nonprofits contribute to localities through activities that enhance or maintain community stability and build linkages between residents and their elected leaders. As problem solving initiatives continue to devolve to local areas, many public officials and grant makers have become increasingly interested in building the capacity of these organizations.

The ability of nonprofits to positively impact and improve local communities is linked, in part, to their accessibility to local residents. Access to local residents comes in many forms. Some nonprofits now operate solely in cyberspace, through websites and the Internet. Others follow a more traditional way of reaching people, that is through direct contact, either by mobile services (such as Meals on Wheels or hospice care) or at a fixed location (such as a museum, YMCA, or halfway house where clients come to a location to receive services).

The locational decisions of nonprofits are driven by many factors, including the types of services provided, the intended audience, the availability of affordable office space, public safety, the proximity to major transportation routes, and public policies such as zoning restriction. Choices also are predicated on the number of other organizations operating in a particular geographic area and the relative generosity of the community (Wolpert, 1989; McPherson & Rotolo, 1996). But a significant consideration of many nonprofits, particularly education, youth-related and social welfare providers, is to be located near potential clients and community needs (Bielefeld et al., 1997). Indeed, Wolch and Geiger (1983) found that the locations of nonprofit social welfare and community service organizations in Los Angeles County were related positively to need-based community variables, such as infant mortality.
rates, crime rates and the percentage of the population in certain age groups—the elderly or children, for example.

To examine the spatial dimensions of community-based organizations in Bibb County vis-à-vis local socioeconomic conditions, we used information from the Organizational Database of Selected Communities. More specifically, we compared the locations of nonprofit groups in relation to community indicators of need, such as median household income and rates of poverty. The analysis revealed six key findings.

**The vast majority of community-based organizations are clustered in Macon.** As illustrated in map 3, community-based groups are located throughout Bibb County, but they are primarily sited within the city limits of Macon. Nearly four of every five groups in Bibb County are located in Macon, although faith-based groups and religious congregations are more widely dispersed than secular organizations. Approximately 24 percent of faith-related organizations are located outside of Macon, compared with 16 percent of secular nonprofits. The greater geographic distribution of congregations is not surprising given that many congregations locate in areas that are easily accessible to their members.

**Groups that are of primary interest to the Foundation are somewhat more likely to be located in Macon than other community-based organizations.** About 82 percent of the groups that focus on one of the Foundation’s seven program areas were located within the Macon city limits. In contrast, roughly 76 percent of other nonprofit organizations were sited in the city limits. Moreover, organizations that fit into the Foundation’s seven program areas are somewhat more likely than other nonprofits to be sited in neighborhoods of high need. While more than 40 percent of program-related nonprofits are located in areas where the poverty rate exceeds 30 percent, about 35 percent of the remainder of the sector is sited in
these highly distressed areas of Bibb County. These data suggest that there is a rich array of institutions that can be drawn upon by public officials, grantmakers and local residents to build community capacity in Macon, particularly in its poorest neighborhoods.

**Education providers, more than other program-related groups, are located in moderate or high-income neighborhoods in Bibb County.** Nonprofit organizations that focus primarily on education are dispersed throughout the county, but they tend to be in moderate and higher income areas (see map 4). About two of every five education providers are located in higher income areas, that is, where the median household income exceeds $25,000, and another 26 percent are sited in moderate income neighborhoods in which the median household income is between $15,000 and $25,000. Lower income neighborhoods appear to be less well served. About one in three nonprofit education groups are located in lower income neighborhoods where median income is less than $15,000. Median income for all households in the county is $20,000.

The locations of nonprofit organizations that supply educational services tend to mirror the geographic patterns of primary and secondary public schools in Bibb County. Roughly 40 percent of both nonprofit educational providers and public schools are sited in higher income areas, and the remainder in moderate or low-income neighborhoods. The cluster of nonprofit groups in the central portion of the city reflects the presence of Mercer University and a number of professional education associations.

**Arts and cultural nonprofits tend to be clustered in the downtown area of Macon.** As map 5 illustrates, the vast majority of local arts groups are located within the city limits of Macon. Of the 43 arts organizations that could be geocoded, more than one-quarter

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3See Appendix A for the methodology of the spatial analysis.
(or 12 groups) are located in the immediate downtown or central business district of Macon. This area, which is about 50 square blocks, contains nonprofit groups such as the Macon Arts Council, Grand Opera House, the Macon Heritage Foundation, and others. Some of these groups share space at the same location. Another 10 percent of Macon’s arts organizations are located in lower income neighborhoods where median income is less than $15,000. This spatial pattern may reflect not only the availability of affordable space, but also the desire to create a distinct cultural center for the county.

The siting of arts organizations in the downtown area and in lower income areas of the city apparently does not make them more accessible to lower income families, however. Younger residents, African Americans, and lower income residents are more likely than other residents to perceive a lack of arts and cultural activities as a problem (PSRA, 1999). More than twice as many African Americans as whites (31 percent versus 12 percent) said that the lack of cultural resources was a big problem in their communities.

Organizations that provide services to low-income residents also tend to be located in Macon. Like other types of nonprofit organizations in Bibb County, those that primarily provide child-related and social welfare services are located within the city limits of Macon (see map 6). Indeed, only six organizations are sited outside the city boundaries. Of those in the city, more than half are located in high poverty areas. While this spatial pattern suggests that many nonprofit groups are situated in neighborhoods where they can help the neediest families in Macon, it also suggests that children in other parts of the county may be underserved. More than 40 percent of children in Bibb County live outside the city of Macon.

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4Other nonprofit arts and cultural organizations that are located in the immediate downtown area of Macon include the Nutcracker—Middle Georgia; Dance South; Friends of the Cannonball House; the Douglass Theatre; the Georgia Trust for Historical Preservation; the Tubman Museum; Hay House; the Middle Georgia Historical Society and A Touch of Glass.
Other groups that target their services to low-income residents generally follow a spatial pattern similar to the one for youth and social welfare providers. As map 7 illustrates, all of the organizations in Bibb County that focus primarily on literacy and homelessness are located in Macon. Moreover, four of every five community development organizations are sited within the city limits. Many of these organizations are located in (or are in close proximity to) the highest poverty areas in the county. This finding suggests that the seeds for developing a community-based infrastructure designed to help low-income residents may already be in place. Further information about the programs and capacities of these organizations is required to determine how to enhance their services.

**Nonprofits that focus on citizenship issues are the most centralized.** As map 8 shows, the four organizations in Bibb County that focus primarily on citizenship issues are all located within a one-half square mile area of the downtown area. These groups include Kids Voting Georgia, Macon-Bibb Citizen Advocacy, Inc., Montpelier Station, and Youth Leadership of Bibb County. Although the reasons for their locational decisions are not known, their presence in the downtown area provides them with a central point from which to develop community-wide initiatives. The close proximity to one another provides enormous potential for collaboration among these groups.

**Conclusion**

Although socioeconomic indicators show that Bibb County is a community with geographic areas of deep poverty and substantial need, it also has the rudiments of a rich civic infrastructure. Public support of local institutions is relatively strong and the majority of residents feel positively toward their community (PSRA, 1999). More than four of every five residents say they know the names of their neighbors, and three of every four say that they
will probably stay in the area for the next five years. Bibb County residents also are generous toward local causes. Two-thirds do volunteer work, and nearly all (90 percent) donate money or personal goods to local charities.

In addition to these positive signs of civic engagement, Bibb County has an expansive array of community-based organizations that provide a variety of services to local residents. Indeed, the density of nonprofit organizations in Bibb County significantly exceeds the national average.

The vast majority (80 percent) of nonprofit organizations in the county are located within the city limits of Macon, which suggests that many areas of the county are underserved. On the other hand, if the Foundation’s goal is to build a civic infrastructure to address the needs of low-income residents, the presence of nonprofit organizations in the downtown area and in many of the poorest neighborhoods of the city provides a nucleus for change. Findings from a recent survey conducted by PSRA (1999) indicates that a clear priority among community residents is to improve downtown Macon. Roughly three of every five residents in Bibb County believe that improving the quality of housing and revitalizing downtown businesses are important.

Understanding the geographic location of community-based organizations is a good starting point for developing a community building strategy. It provides a basis for identifying the potential resources that currently exist in the community and their geographic proximity to local needs. Additional information is needed, however, on the program content and organizational structure of these community-based groups to understand more fully their potential for addressing community needs. The exploration of these issues and further
dialogue with community residents can help formulate the next steps in a community building strategy for Macon and Bibb County, Georgia.
Map 1. Percentage of People in Poverty by Census Tract in Bibb County

Source: Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, The Urban Institute
Note: Census tracts are roughly equivalent in population size.
Map 2. Number of People in Poverty by Census Tract in Bibb County

Source: Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, The Urban Institute
Note: Census tracts are roughly equivalent in population size.
Map 3. Locations of Community-Based Organizations in Bibb County

Source: Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, The Urban Institute
Note: Census tracts are roughly equivalent in population size.
Map 4. Locations of Nonprofit Education Providers by Median Household Income in Bibb County

Source: Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, The Urban Institute
Note: Census tracts are roughly equivalent in population size.
Map 5. Locations of Arts and Cultural Organizations by Median Household Income in Bibb County

Source: Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, The Urban Institute
Note: Census tracts are roughly equivalent in population size.

Source: Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, The Urban Institute
Note: Census tracts are roughly equivalent in population size.
Map 7. Locations for Other Services for Low-Income Residents by Percentage Living in Poverty in Bibb County

Source: Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, The Urban Institute
Note: Census tracts are roughly equivalent in population size.
Map 8. Locations of Groups Focused on Citizenship by Median Household Income in Bibb County

Source: Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, The Urban Institute
Note: Census tracts are roughly equivalent in population size.
Appendix A. Research Methodology and Technical Documentation

The statistical information used in this report was compiled from a number of sources. A brief description of the data and the methodologies used in writing the report is provided below.

Data Sources

Two types of data were used to document the organizations and social and economic conditions of four communities in which the Knight Foundation provides grants. These communities include Bibb County, GA; Lake County, IN; Summit County, OH; and Philadelphia, PA. First, CNP collected sociodemographic and economic data to understand community characteristics, such as income, poverty levels, and age of the residents. We also gathered organizational data to document the size, scope and location of the nonprofit and selected for-profit and public organizations in these communities.

Sociodemographic and Economic Data

These data were obtained from the 1990 U.S. Bureau of the Census. The decennial census is the most complete (and sometimes only) source of data to examine sociodemographic and economic features of small geographic areas. These data were used to construct maps that reflect a variety of sociodemographic and economic patterns across the communities at the census tract level.

Organizational Data

An important goal of this research was to create a timely and usable database on which the Foundation could draw information on organizations in the four communities. Thus, the Organizational Database was produced in an ACCESS format to allow CNP and the Foundation to identify various types of groups operating in the four areas. This Organizational Database included three key components, including data files of community-based organizations, schools, and selected for-profit and public agencies that may operate as institutional amenities or disamenities in local neighborhoods.

Community-Based Organizations.

The dataset of community-based groups was compiled from several sources. CNP used the 1996–1998 IRS Return Transaction Files (RTF) as a starting point in the development of this data file. These files contain roughly 35 financial variables for all 501(c)(3) organizations that file Forms 990 with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and represent the primary sources of organizational and financial information on nonprofit organizations in the United States. Because no single source of information can capture all of the nonprofit organizations in the four communities, we combined several sources of data with the RTF data to build a more representative picture of the number, size, and types of nonprofit organizations located in these counties.

But nonprofits with less than $25,000 in gross receipts are not required to file a Form 990 with the IRS. Therefore, CNP collected data from four additional sources to include in the database as many organizations that would potentially fall below this threshold. We obtained lists of grantees from the local United Way chapters in each of the four counties. Included in these lists were basic geographic information for United Way grantees, as well as
descriptions of their programs and services. More specifically, we obtained information from
the United Way of Bibb County 1999 Campaign Brochure and their website, www.uwbibb.org; the 1998 Lake Area United Way Annual Report and campaign brochure; and the website and 1999 Campaign Brochure of the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania’s (www.uwsepa.org). We also received the Agency Programs Database from the United Way of Central Georgia.

We also added community-based groups to the database from the Unified Database of Arts Organizations. This dataset was produced through the collaborative efforts of the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Assembly of State Art Agencies, and the National Center for Charitable Statistics at the Urban Institute. The Unified Database of Arts Organizations was compiled from IRS data sources and State Art Agencies’ mailing and grantee lists.

Because religious congregations are not required to file the Form 990 with the IRS, the majority of faith-based groups are not included in the IRS Data. Therefore, CNP also used the 1997 PhoneDisc CD and a list of congregations in the four areas from the American Church Lists, Inc. (www.americanchurchlists.com), to supplement the Organizational Database. The PhoneDisc CD allows users to search for businesses by their Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes and limit these searches by geographic area. The SIC code, 866101, defined as “Churches, Temples, and Shrines” was used for this analysis. Data from the American Churches Lists, Inc., includes basic, descriptive information on congregations in the four communities.

Finally, we added to the organizational database information received from the Knight Foundation on its grant applicants in the four communities. Included in the database is grant application and recipient information, as well as data on organizations that had their grant applications rejected.

Schools.
Primary and secondary schools are important elements of civil society. In addition to providing educational opportunities for local youth, they also serve as meeting ground for local civic organizations and residents. Thus, a second data file in the Organizational Database contains information on elementary and secondary education schools in the four communities. We extracted these data on local schools from the Common Core of Data 1993–1994. This database provides a complete list of public elementary and secondary schools in the country. It also includes information on the number of students per grade, number of student by race/ethnicity, number of students eligible for free lunch, and the number of full-time classroom teachers.

Selected For-Profit Organizations and Public Agencies.
Organizations coexist in local neighborhoods, but often work for different community or individual goals. Some for-profit organizations and public agencies have goals that tend to foster community capacity and growth or provide goods and services to local residents that assist in economic independence, while others engage and activities that may promote the social pathologies that plague local communities. The former group is labeled as institutional amenities, and includes firms such as groceries, banks, transportation services, libraries, police and fire departments, and libraries. The later set of organizations is identified as
institutional disamenities, which include bars, liquor stores, pawn shops, and massage parlors.

The Foundation expressed an interest in understanding the breadth of these institutional types in the four communities. Thus, we used the Dunn and Bradstreet Market Place CD, 1997, to extract nearly 6,000 businesses in the four counties that serve as institutional amenities or disamenities in local communities. The Dunn and Bradstreet database allows for the identification of businesses by industry and area. The extract from Dunn and Bradstreet provides a third data file in the Organizational Database.

**Database Construction**

Nonprofit data from the IRS Return Transaction Files were combined with the organizations obtained from the United Way organizations; congregations from the Phone CD and American Church Lists; arts and culture organizations from the Unified Arts Database; and grant applicant information from the Knight Foundation to create the Organizational Database. After data from sources were merged, they were checked for duplication and corrected for consistency.

Using the National Taxonomy of Except Entities (Core Codes), CNP classified the community-based organizations by their organization’s primary purpose. The NTEE is a mixed notation classification system that consists of 26 major group categories and 645 subgroup categories. The codes reflect the types of activities conducted by nonprofit organizations. Several organizations, such as the Foundation Center, the AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy, and Philanthropic Research, Inc., use NTEE in their reports and publications to provide comparability among data collection systems. Using the NTEE system, we also classified the community-based organizations along the Foundation’s seven program areas, including arts and culture, children and social welfare, citizenship, community development, education, homelessness, and literacy.

To examine the relationship between socioeconomic characteristics of the four areas and their community-based resources, CNP prepared the database for geographic mapping. Working from street addresses, we “geocoded” each organization (that is, it was assigned a longitude and latitude code) through a computer software mapping program. This procedure allows us to plot the location of organizations on the maps that are presented in this report.

Not all organizations, however, can be geocoded. Some groups reported addresses that could not be located; others provided post office box information that cannot be mapped accurately with spatial software. To address this problem, CNP mailed a survey to organizations for which geographic information was missing in the database of organizations. These were organizations that had Post Office boxes instead of street addresses. Five hundred organizations were surveyed to obtain their street location. We achieved a response rate of 36.6 percent (183 organizations). There were 36 cases where the survey was returned as “Return to Sender;” these case were deemed as dead organizations and deleted from the Organizational Database. After processing the survey information, approximately 92 percent of groups in the Organizational Database could be mapped using spatial software.

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5For more information on the construction of the NTEE system, see Stevenson et al. (1997) *State Nonprofit Almanac 1997: Profiles of Charitable Organizations* and [http://nccs.urban.org/ntee-cc/index.htm](http://nccs.urban.org/ntee-cc/index.htm).
Bibliography


