

The Understanding and Perceptions of Local Government:  
A Study of Position in Society, Municipality Size, and Gender

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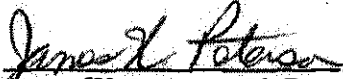
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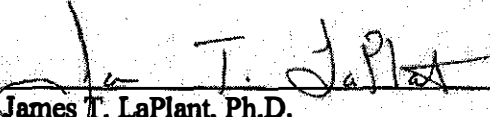
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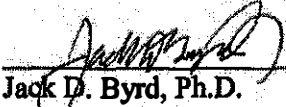
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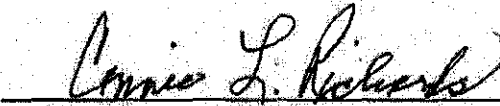
  
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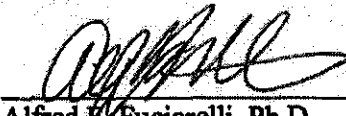
  
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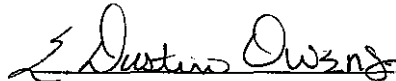
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## ABSTRACT

Community empowerment and social capital are terms that can be used to describe the interactions between neighborhoods and government in order to maintain democracy. Hunter (1953) and Dahl (1961) researched this topic by observing the interactions between elected officials and average citizens. In later years, Putnam (2001) studied the levels of social capital of adult populations. Lappe and DuBois (1995) and Diers (2004) studied the interactions among neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and average citizens.

Which population has the best understanding of its local government and outlook towards its neighborhood? The municipalities represented in the 2010 Regional Neighborhood Networking Conference were surveyed as part of this exploratory study. The data were divided into three categories: position in society, municipality size, and gender.

In regard to the first category, position in society, the cross-tabulations and difference of means tests demonstrated that neighborhood advocates responded more positively to community services, but advocates were least likely to correctly name their form of local government and were least satisfied with their quality of life. Elected officials were more likely to correctly name their form of local government, attend meetings, and be satisfied with the quality of life in the community. In regard to the second category, municipality size, participants from medium-sized cities were more likely to identify the municipality as participating in the National Flood Insurance Program, be satisfied with the quality of life in the community, correctly name their form

of government, and attend meetings. The third category of gender did not result in any statistically significant findings.

The combined data suggest that all members of society need additional educational opportunities in order to insure that democracy is maintained.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
MRSC	Municipal Research and Service Center
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NIMBY	Not In My Neighborhood
NUSA	Neighborhoods USA
RNNC	Regional Neighborhood Networking Conference

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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

#### *The Nature of the Problem*

“Community empowerment . . . means giving citizens the tools and resources they need to address their own priorities through their own organization,” is a statement made by Jim Diers, a Neighborhood Activist (21). Defined in these terms, community empowerment is best represented in the form of a neighborhood association or neighborhood watch. Since these affiliations often have a central figure head known as an advocate, a broad question one may ask is "When compared within a municipality, who has a better understanding of the programs offered by their local government and a more positive outlook towards their neighborhood?" Does the advocate have a better understanding, or does the elected official or average citizen understand their government's functions and have a more positive outlook towards their neighborhoods? The term 'understanding' is defined as knowledge of the responsibilities of a department or commission. An example is the advocate being aware of the City and Planning Commission's choosing not to adopt the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Flood Maps and Ordinance. According to FEMA (2010), "If a community chooses not to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program, property owners in that jurisdiction are not able to purchase federally backed flood insurance" (para.3). Federal grants, loans, disaster assistance, and federal mortgage insurance are unavailable

for the acquisition or construction of structures in the floodway and floodplain areas shown on the maps.

To understand the citizens' outlook towards the neighborhood, the Broken Window Theory (Wilson Kelling, 1982) and the Power of 10 (Kent 2004) will be used to support their claim. The Broken Window Theory focuses on monitoring, maintaining, and revitalizing neighborhoods in order to deter crime. An illustration is used when a city does not replace a light bulb in a streetlamp. The street is darkened which invites illegal activities as the shadows give criminals a sense of security because a person can go unnoticed. If the light bulb was replaced, the additional light would assist in deterring criminal activity because people are more easily noticed.

The Power of 10 is a notion from Fred Kent, Director of Project for Public Spaces, focusing on focal points. Public areas, including neighborhoods, require focal points to bring people into the locale. The construction of schools, sidewalks, museums, and parks are a few key items making an area more attractive for people to reside. The term notion means not only that there is a focal point, but that there is to be something to do at each destination. Kent (2004) describes the notion in this manner "A park is good but a park with a fountain, playground, and popcorn vendor is better" (para. 4). If each neighborhood had ten notions, the residents would have a positive outlook towards their municipality improving different regions.

The three sample populations for this study are the neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and the average citizens. The study will compare neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and the average citizens in the cities of the Regional Neighborhood Networking Conference (RNNC). With an understanding of how local

government works, neighborhood advocates should be able to assist elected officials in creating ordinances to protect their areas based upon a better understanding of planning and zoning techniques. This creates a more positive outlook because their area would be stable or improved; whereas the average citizens may become aware of these issues during the time of election season. The elected official should have a clear understanding of how government works, and they have adopted ordinances that would protect their neighborhoods. Finally, the average citizens have knowledge of their municipality from voting in elections which demonstrates a limited engagement in government activities.

Though one could take for granted neighborhood advocates would have a more positive outlook towards their neighborhoods due to their work and effort, the age of the neighborhood, lack of neighborhood support through ordinances, and additional factors can contribute to their outlook as being negative.

### *Objectives of Research*

The primary objective of the research is to provide an explanation of who has a better understanding of local government and their outlook towards their neighborhood area. Subsequently, research will be conducted on the municipality size and gender in order to provide an overview of the sample populations and how either role could impact one's understanding of government and perception of their neighborhood.

To assist in capturing a clear definition of how one understands government, participants were asked questions geared towards problems which could impact their daily life. An example of a question is "Has your city received Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds?" To apply for these funds, a municipality must either be deemed as an entitlement area by the United States Department of Housing and Urban

Development (HUD) or apply for the funds through their state's CDBG. A public meeting is required and is conducted to ensure that funds are going towards projects for those deemed to be low and moderate income. Next, elected officials must pass a resolution stating the public hearings have been held, the area meets the low-to-moderate income qualifications, and if any matching funds exist. Once the information is gathered, an application is submitted to the appropriate grant agency. The overall impact CDBG has on a community is beneficial to the entire sample population. The funds can be used to remove blight, purchase emergency management vehicles, rehabilitate houses, and extend water and sewer lines thereby generating a more positive outlook towards a neighborhood through the use of the program.

#### *Measurements and Research*

For the study to be conducted, a survey was administered to advocates, elected officials, and average citizens. The survey takes into consideration how the sample populations participate in their local government, recognizes if the municipality participates in programs, evaluates services offered to the community, and reviews theories built upon the community power structure. The outlook of neighborhood advocates found in Seattle, Washington, and Jamaica Bay, Massachusetts, should support the roles of how advocates are active in their government. The survey given to the participants at the 2010 RNNC is discussed in Chapter 3, Methodology. The RNNC, "consists of 20 member cities in five states: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee" (Lima, 2008 para. 2). Each city appoints a representative to the RNNC Steering Committee which assists the hosting municipality. Each year 400 to 500 neighborhood advocates, city officials, and elected officials attend the conference. The

day-long workshops allow participants to learn from one another about programs which can positively influence an area. Following the workshops, participants visit sites where local projects have been implemented with varying levels of success. One highlight of the conference is the keynote speakers who assist in motivating neighborhood advocates. Past keynote speakers have included “Nontombi Naomi Tutu, a global activist and the daughter of Archbishop Desmond Tutu; LaDoris Payne-Bell, international trainer and founder of WomanSpirit, Inc.; Jim Diers, ABCD Institute trainer, former director of the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods; and author of *Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way*; and Fred Kent, founder and president of the Project for Public Spaces, New York, NY” (Foley, 2006 para 6).

The conference does not discriminate based on finances. The cost to the participants is kept to a minimum in order to encourage participation. The majority of the cities offer a scholarship for those who want to participate. To keep the cost at a minimum, each host city gives the next host city \$5,000 in seed money to begin planning next year’s conference.

After the survey was distributed to neighborhood advocates at the conference, the information was compiled to determine which municipalities participated in the study. The first question in the survey was to list the municipality and state where the participant resides. The municipality name is important in order to compare the results from the survey to the information provided by the municipality. Next the elected officials living in the same municipality as the advocates were asked to participate in the survey via an e-mail message. Finally, the average citizens were surveyed by telephone.

First, the results of the comparison of neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and average citizens are contrasted to see if an overarching theme exists between residents in the five states. Questions arise about which population has the best understanding of their local government and if their perceived outlook of the neighborhood is impacted. The comparison of municipality size will then occur to try to find a statistically significant difference between cities that participate in the RNNC. The municipalities were divided into three population groups 50,000 residents and less, 50,001 to 250,000 residents, and 250,001+ residents. Finally, the role of gender is reviewed. The findings from this survey can assist those (i.e., neighborhood action coordinator) who help connect and educate advocates, elected officials, and average citizens.

### *Summary*

The understanding of local government pertaining to role in society has not been fully researched. One's understanding of how local government works and perceptions towards local neighborhoods is always evolving due to new laws, leadership, and educational opportunities. By studying the municipalities attending the RNNC in 2010, one can begin to have a basic understanding of not only one's role in society, but how municipality size and gender can have an impact. The findings of this study could identify educational opportunities for those who work in municipalities to assist in educating the residents.

## Chapter II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### *Problem Statement and Overview*

Though tools and resources exist for neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and average citizens to address situations, do they have a clear understanding of how their local form of government works and are they happy with their quality of life? Neighborhood advocates may seem to be outspoken and knowledgeable about their form of government, but do they understand the complexity of how the administration works? Do neighborhood advocates rely on government to intervene instead of talking to their neighbors? Do elected officials understand the system? Does the average citizen have a better understanding of government and how the system impacts their quality of life? To better understand these issues, one must have a basic understanding of the background of the neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and average citizens in addition to previous studies on the topic.

#### *The Education of Neighborhood Advocates*

The philosophy of neighborhood advocates stems from Neighborhood USA's (NUSA) "A Declaration of Neighborhood Roles, Rights, and Responsibilities" that was adopted on May 16, 1993. The Declaration states "As neighborhood people we have the right to self-determination and empowerment; to be advised and consulted on public policies and public/private initiatives affecting our neighborhoods" (NUSA 1993 para.1). The Declaration further proclaims "As neighborhood people we have the responsibility to

advise governments and others of neighborhood values, culture and history...” leading to the last section which declares “As neighborhood people we look to a variety of governments, voluntary organizations, businesses, and philanthropy to meet neighborhood needs for personal, social, and economic development” (NUSA 1993 para. 2). The fundamental portion of the document centers on local governments and policies which greatly affects the outlook of the neighborhood. A neighborhood advocate is normally defined as the leader of a Neighborhood Watch Organization which can be referred to as a Crime Watch, Block Watch, Business Watch or Homeowner’s Association. Watch programs can be based on a diversity of populations, including “boat owners, farmers, and business employees, and a diversity of locations, including car parks and marinas, and the courtside” (Bennett, 2008). For the intent of this research the term Neighborhood Watch is based on residents living in a neighborhood. Though some of the terminology has different mechanisms such as a Homeowner’s Association which regulates activities, levy assessments, and may impose fines unlike a Neighborhood Watch Association. However, the purpose of both programs is the same; being the improvement and safety of neighborhoods.

In 1972, the National Sheriff’s Association required assistance in the law enforcement realm, and created the National Neighborhood Watch Program. According to USA On Watch (2005), the main intent of the program was to bring together “a group of people living in the same area who want to make their neighborhood safer by working together and in conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime and improve their quality of life” (1). Out of the Neighborhood Watch Program, two additional groups were created: NUSA and the RNNC. These two organizations provide neighborhood advocates

with the opportunity to discuss programs in their area that have either worked or failed based upon the desired result.

#### *Reasons for Neighborhood Watch*

Neighborhood Watch programs are established for multiple reasons. USA On Watch (2005) points out the following motives:

1. A reduction in crime
2. A better quality of life
3. A greater sense of security, responsibility, and personal control
4. Building community pride and unity
5. Providing law enforcement agencies with volunteer support year round (3).

Each motive listed above assists in creating a stable living environment contributing to the way a neighborhood advocate perceives their area and how they interact with local government. If a crime wave hits a specific neighborhood, a neighborhood advocate would work with local law enforcement. The police department would increase patrols in the area and the neighborhood advocates would activate the phone tree to alert neighbors that criminal activity is occurring in the area. The combination of activity of the neighborhood advocates and the police department will increase the safety of the area. “Even when city budgets are flush with cash, police cannot be everywhere at once, and they cannot respond instantaneously to calls” (Howard, 2009 para. 5). In essence, confrontation is not the main focus of the neighborhood watch program; instead eye witnesses are needed to make this group a success. Witnesses can record license plate numbers, take pictures, and obtain additional pertinent information to assist the police department in capturing the criminals.

Some neighborhood coordinators suggest the main goal is to build confidence and hope in the idea of organization (Diers 2004, 8). This statement is made in regard to neighborhoods maintaining their identity. By winning small victories, neighborhood organizations will build confidence and create the skills to be able to tackle challenging issues. If a neighborhood is zoned for single family residential use, and a property owner wants to rezone their property for a multi-family use, the neighborhood may see the request as having a negative impact on their neighborhood. Residents should contact their planning commission members and elected officials to request that the proposal be denied. If the property is not rezoned, the neighborhood organization can celebrate a successful win because the zoning is enforced and maintained, which builds the organization's confidence. Berry, Portney, and Thomson (1993) believe that "City officials respond to the neighborhood associations not simply because they get lots of messages as to what each community wants, but because they know that the neighborhood associations are trusted by neighborhood residents" (288).

How does one start a neighborhood organization? Jim Diers, former Neighborhood Action Coordinator for the City of Seattle, Washington, suggests three easy steps. "First, start where the people are" (Diers 2004, 25). One does not want not begin a neighborhood watch in an area of high transition. Instead, a neighborhood watch should begin in an environment where people are located and wanting to spend time. The second step is to "organize people around issues that are immediate, concrete, and achievable" (Diers 2004, 26). By showing the impact of a neighborhood watch, citizens will continue to want to participate due to desired results being achieved because their voices were heard. Third, "organizers organize organizations" (Diers 2004, 26). One

person cannot dictate a neighborhood watch. Each resident has their own certain talents which must be utilized in order for the program to be a success. USA On Watch

Organization (2005) offers similar advice being:

1. Recruit and organize as many neighbors as possible
2. Contact your local law enforcement agency and schedule a meeting
3. Discuss community concerns and develop an action plan
4. Hold regular meetings and hold training on relevant skills
5. Implement a phone tree and take action steps (4).

Any of the above steps will assist a neighborhood advocate in creating a successful program. "There are more than 24,000 watch groups throughout the United States involved with over 2,000 law enforcement agencies" (USA on Watch 2010, para. 4). Information from the Community Associations Institute, the trade group for homeowners associations, indicates that "there are more than 250,000 associations in the United States" (Weinstein 2005 para. 1).

Besides decreased criminal activity, additional outcomes of neighborhood watch organizations include Future Land Use Neighborhood Plans, grants, and creating a sense of place. Neighborhood advocates use these additional results to bring people closer together to work towards tangible goals resulting in a sense of accomplishment. In addition, Kathi and Cooper (2005) believe that neighborhood advocates "provide a valuable process that initiates meaningful dialogue among citizens and public administrators that leads to an improved mutual understanding of service delivery" (560).

Creating a Future Land Use Plan is a benefit for neighborhoods. In 1999, the city of Seattle, Washington, approved 38 neighborhood plans that had input from over 20,000

citizens (Siranni 2007, 375). Since that time, Seattle has implemented the plans to give neighborhood advocates the resources to assist in determining the future of their area, creating an identity, and slowing down blighted areas. The southern areas of Seattle consisting of Beacon Hill, McClellan, and Othello, have a light-rail system that was deemed to be a priority in the 1999 Future Land Use Plan. The train brought growth to the area because commutes are easier from the suburbs to the downtown area. As of September 2010, the neighborhoods are preparing to update the plans. To update the document, sections containing the categories of demographics, zoning, housing stock, and transportation will need to reflect the current status of the suburbs.

Why update the Future Land Use Plan? The document assists neighborhood advocates and average citizens by informing elected officials and city employees of the needs of the areas. When a request for rezoning is made, the city employees, planning commission members, and elected officials will refer to the Future Land Use Plan before a decision is rendered. When a motion is made concerning the rezoning aspect, the member making the motion should refer to the document (i.e., a motion to accept the rezoning request which is requested by the owner and reflected in the Future Land Use Plan). If the planning commission or elected officials choose not to follow the adopted neighborhood plan, the document should be revised to keep the information current and relevant.

Many municipalities offer a grant program to improve their neighborhoods. The city of Bowling Green, Kentucky, offers the Select Neighborhood Action Program to active neighborhood associations (Foley, 2010 para.1). The grant program is geared towards the four aspects of a healthy neighborhood, "Image, Market, Physical Condition,

and Neighborhood Management” (Foley, 2010 para. 2). The image component focuses on the neighborhood as having a positive image that attracts investments from the community (i.e., business, government, and homebuyers). The outcome is that residents are confident in the future of the area. As property values steadily increase, the market component is reflected. The physical component is seen in the condition of the public infrastructure. Sewer lines, water lines, streets, and sidewalks, must be maintained and updated in order to validate the image and marketing components. Finally, the neighborhood management component includes the interaction between the residents on a day-to-day basis. Some of the strategies to strengthen neighborhoods using the above components include gateway signs, newsletters, community gardens, and targeted area clean-ups.

The outcome of creating a sense of place and a healthy neighborhood is examined in an interview with neighborhood advocate, Kathleen Hirsch. The community of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, (43,000 residents) was deemed to be in transition. With middle-class flight occurring due to drug deals and murders, Hirsch banded together her neighbors to fight for their sense of place being a community with charm, green space, and cultural diversity. “This place really is the product of everyday citizens and not about City Hall planners trying to get together and plan how to revitalize Main Street” (Gardener 1998 para.7). Hirsch (1998) notes that one of the products was rediscovered by Christine Cooper, who began the reclamation of the banks of Jamaica Pond which has now flourished with canoes, sailboats, and hiking trails. Though Jamaica Plain is just one place in the U.S. with a particular group of people revitalizing an area, there are multitudes of areas throughout the nation being rediscovered. For instance, the State of

Maryland (2008) launched a division of Neighborhood Revitalization in the Department of Housing and Community Development. Through funding and technical assistance, the Department wants to create sustainable neighborhoods while collaborating with local governments, businesses, and community groups. However, the voice of the neighborhood advocate has been omitted. In some select cities, neighborhood advocates form councils that work with the local municipality. For instance, "In Birmingham, Alabama, citizens elect neighborhood councils that negotiate regularly with city hall and for the first time, African-American neighborhoods are getting their share of much-needed capital improvements" (Lappe 1994, 7).

*Lack of Literature on Neighborhood Advocates Understanding Government*

Before the elected officials in Seattle embraced the neighborhood plans as being part of the Land Use and Transportation Plan, neighborhood advocates had difficulty working with local government. One reason, the difficulty stemmed from the interested parties having a different vision of the neighborhoods.

Often neighborhood advocates take issue with the NIMBY stance. An example of NIMBY is a neighborhood being zoned for single-family residences and a developer has requested that an adjoining parcel of land be rezoned to commercial. The neighborhood watch may not want a commercial parcel of land near them because the parcel could increase the traffic flow and noise pollution (i.e., a speaker box used at a drive-through restaurant) which creates additional complications. Because of intense neighborhood conflict and NIMBY stance, the complications to implement Seattle's 1985 downtown plan occurred. The municipality created a program to allow neighborhoods to develop their own Land Use Plan. After the initial neighborhood plan had been adopted, the city

set aside \$60,000 to \$100,000 (with additional funds set aside for urban centers and distressed areas) to conduct the second phase of actual planning, which occurred sporadically between 1996 and 1999 (Sirianni 2007, 374). The second round of planning required approval from city departments, the planning commission, and the city council before the document was executed. The two steps created a process that gave everyone the opportunity to participate and decide on a document affecting the future of an entire neighborhood.

The Neighborhood Land Use Plan is a reminder of what a best program should do “all government departments engage with the community” (Diers 2004, 173). However, the question remains about who would have a more positive outlook towards their neighborhood. According to Jim Diers, (2004) “Building inclusive, broad-based neighborhood organizations and bringing them together to work effectively at a citywide level are challenges that remain to be addressed” (174) but to be effective, the neighborhood advocates must understand their local form of government.

#### *Neighborhood Advocates Interaction With Local Government*

The communication between neighborhoods and local government is defined as a two-way street. The term “two-way street” means people give city hall power and in turn, city hall provides the power, resources, and tools to the people being represented. An example, of the exchange of power is found when commissioners are elected to office. These officials determine ordinances for the city. The ordinances are the laws, which the citizens live with and obey on a daily basis. If a city has an issue concerning blight, an ordinance could be adopted that would create a position for a codes officer to address the concern. In turn, the codes officer would adhere to the codes and ordinances that city has

adopted (i.e., upholstered furniture is not allowed outside). The position of a codes officer will empower neighborhood advocates because the codes officer is deemed to be a resource that will assist in improving the areas. The improvement will occur when the codes officer responds to complaints made by a neighborhood advocate that results in compliance (i.e., upholstered furniture that was located outside has been moved indoors). The notion of using the Division of Code Enforcement is part of the "Living Democracy" which Lappe and DuBois discuss in their book, *the Quickening of America*. The authors believe that advocates are not seeking more government. Instead Lappe and Dubois believe that advocates are developing effective roles for government, made accountable to citizens' real concerns. By advocates using the system in place, they are being more than just intelligent voters; instead they are beginning to solve a problem which in turn is not about running government rather than about running our lives.

Accessibility to code enforcement officers is just one step an advocate can take to solve problems. Cities contain multiple departments which a neighborhood advocate can utilize to solve issues. So how can a neighborhood advocate understand the function of their local government and determine which department is best equipped to assist the neighborhood? Some municipalities have published handbooks for their residents. For example, the city of Lexington, Kentucky, published a *Citizens' Handbook* in 2009. Within the document one can find a brief history of the city, council district map, organizational chart, listing of department and services, and court information. The handbook is listed on the city's Web site and can be mailed to citizens, who request the document from the Neighborhood Action Office.

Another municipality that has created a handbook to assist their residents is Bowling Green, Kentucky. The 2008 City of Bowling Green, *Citizens' Handbook* addresses such questions as: "How do I make a request or report a problem to a city department?" and "Where can I look up Bowling Green Ordinances?" The handbook is distributed by the neighborhood action coordinator at neighborhood watch meetings or the Bowling Green Coalition of Active Neighborhoods. In addition, residents can obtain a copy by contacting city hall.

The most important shared resource between a municipality and a neighborhood organization is the neighborhood action coordinator. This position serves as a liaison between the neighborhood groups and various city departments. The coordinator's main role consists of expanding the neighborhood watch program and maintaining a current list of participants, including names, addresses, home/work telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses. The neighborhood action coordinator offers crime prevention programs to the community. One such program is National Night Out. The National Night Out program is a night set aside to heighten awareness of anti-crime efforts. The *Murfreesboro Post* (2009) reported that more "than 25 agencies were represented from local churches, community organizations, state and local agencies" participated in the event. The night's activities included face painting, inflatables for kids, bingo, cakewalks, and free giveaways. In addition, the Police Department worked with neighborhood advocates in assisting them to resolve neighborhood issues. However, a time should occur where a neighborhood advocate can rely on one's self and takes the knowledge from participating in the programs to improve their neighborhood instead of relying on a neighborhood action coordinator or codes officer to resolve the issue.

In some instances, government has been asked to take a step back from participating. In the 1980s, the Kenilworth-Parkside housing project in Washington, D.C., was known as “an open-air drug market” (Lappe 1994, 149). The residents of the housing project were upset that advocates went to the local government and asked if they could manage the housing project. In response to this request, the mayor allowed the tenants to manage the housing projects. A constitution, bylaws, and policies were adopted by the residents and during the first four-years of tenant management, crime rates reached an all-time low. In addition, “rent collection increased 77 percent, welfare projections decreased 5 percent,” and by 1990 “the community of 3,000, once characterized largely by single-parent families on welfare is now a community of homeowners, the majority of whom work” (Lappe 1994, 50). The lesson from the Kenilworth-Parkside housing project is that sometimes instead of a single interaction a partnership needs to develop in order to insure success.

#### *The Education of Elected Officials*

Those elected into office are given opportunities to obtain useful information enhancing their leadership and decision-making skills. The Ohio Local Government Academy sponsored by The Ohio State University offers workshops for elected officials to learn more about the duties of public officials, standards of conduct, open meeting laws, conducting effective meetings, intergovernmental relations, and technology in local government. Besides academia, additional entities offer guidance to local elected officials “frustrated about not having good information on which to base program and budget decisions and to use for communicating with citizens” (National League of Cities, 2010 2). Both the National League of Cities and the Urban Institute under the guidance of a

local elected official advisory committee launched a program to provide elected officials the tools needed in order to “legislate for results” (NLC, 2010 2). The program consists of 10 Action Guides for elected officials to use in order to take the best decisions for their communities (i.e., Action Guide 1: Using Information in Strategic and Program Planning). These guides allow elected officials to consider the positive and negative effects of ordinances before the regulations are adopted. Having these resources available to make decisions, elected officials should have a better understanding about their local government and the implications of their decisions on the local neighborhoods.

#### *The Education of Average Citizens*

According to Jane Mansbridge (1995), a professor of sociology at Northwestern University, “Participation does make better citizens; I believe it, but can’t prove it” (para. 1). In *Social Capital: Measurements and Consequences*, Robert Putnam (2001) uses the Roper database (Storrs, CT) and searched for the percentage of Americans who had served as either an officer or committee member of a local organization. Putnam discovered that a dramatic drop of social capital occurred from the 1960s to the 1990s as evident by the decline of voter turnout and the average citizen’s attendance in public meetings. The number of Americans willing to volunteer was cut in half though those who volunteer have a higher social capital which yields many positive benefits. Though Putnam did not research specifically advocate, one can see the social capital they would receiving being a stronger partnership with departments in city hall that could strengthen neighborhoods (i.e., increase of police patrols). So how does this effect local government? “By almost every measure, American’s direct engagement in politics and government has fallen steadily and sharply over the last generation” (Putnam, 2001 45).

If average citizens only engage their local government during elections, then how do they perceive their neighborhoods when contrasted to those who participate in government? The Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) of Washington, D.C., have created strategies for reconnecting citizens to their local government. In a recent study, “two-thirds of the people surveyed could not name their representative in Congress and that most respondents were misinformed about how the federal (or local) budgets were spent” (MRSC, 2001 para. 5). However when average citizens were asked about specific programs that were funded by the local government, many of them deemed them to be successful. So a question remains, “Why do average citizens choose not to participate in government?” “A number of trends leave citizens with less time and opportunity to put down roots in their community or participate in community affairs” (MRSC, 2001 para 10). Examples of the trends include single-parent households, long-distance commutes, and economic conditions. In regard to neighborhoods, Putnam (2001) notes that “The proportion of Americans who socialize with their neighbors more than once a year has slowly but steadily declined over the last two decades, from 72 percent in 1974 to 61 percent in 1993” (47). Putnam (1995) defines social capital as “the collective value of all ‘social networks’ and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other”(65). If U.S. social capital is eroding in neighborhoods and citizens are not aware of how their local form of government affects their quality of life, then what will bring residents together? According to MRSC (2010), a Neighborhood Watch Program can be compared to local government in the sense that “local government can and should serve as a catalyst to bring resources, people, and plans together to accomplish goals” (8). However, without participation, does the average citizen have a better outlook of the

neighborhood if they understand their local form of government? To combat the lack of understanding in government, some municipalities have undertaken initiatives to involve their average citizens into the function of government. For example, Valdosta, Georgia, offers a Citizens' Orientation Program (Valdosta City Online Newsletter 2011). The course is designed to give residents a look at how their municipal government operates on a daily basis. All departments will be studied including public safety, municipal court, public works, finance, neighborhood development, and economic development. In 2011, The Valdosta City Online Newsletter reports the municipality will offer the Citizens 101 course for the second year (para 1).

#### *Basic Education Courses*

In 2008, former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor addressed the need for civics to be taught in high school. In her words, "The evidence is clear and should be profoundly disturbing we are failing to impart to today's students the information and skills they need to be responsible citizens" (O'Connor 2008 para.1). Furthermore, O'Connor (2008) mentioned "Too often, the texts now in use do not portray good government as flowing from the connection between the people and the state, but from institutional design" (para. 8). If students are not taught civics in school, where are the skills learned? More importantly if these students become neighborhood advocates, then do they have the necessary understanding of their local government that will assist them in creating and maintaining a more positive neighborhood outlook?

#### *Previous Studies on Local Governments and Neighborhoods*

*Community Power Structure* published in 1953 by Floyd Hunter was the first study of power within sociology. Focusing on municipalities, the "Regional City"

discovered that most people interviewed for Hunter's study believed that only a small number of people in the area could make changes within the municipality. The small group was found to live in the same neighborhood, participate in the same clubs, and sit on each other's boards of directors. However, Hunter concluded that there was not a hierarchy of power in "Regional City." Instead, there appeared to be overlapping cliques which caused different people to take on policy issues within the city. Support for taking the lead on policy issues is the notion Hunter asked, "What are the two major issues or projects before the community today?" (Domhoff October, 2005 para. 26). Twenty-three out of twenty-six responses stated the plan for growth. "Twenty years later, in 1970, when Hunter returned for the second study and asked the same questions, he received the same answers" (Domhoff October, 2005 para. 26). Thus, the individuals with power may not always be able to assist in correcting problems in the area.

Are the individuals with power really ruling a community? In 1961, Robert A. Dahl refuted the scholarly claims that elitism ruled local communities and instead found that overlapping factions played a significant role in society. Using New Haven, as a study site, Dahl proved that no social class was able to dominate the political sector because all of the resources, legitimacy, knowledge, and wealth were split into different groups. Dahl (1961) noted that "Politicians were therefore alert to 'citizens desires' and would try to be responsive if they could see an electoral payoff" (3). The result of "dispersed inequalities, the permeability of the political stratum, and political competition was pluralist distribution of power - not a ruling class, dominant class, or power elite" (Domhoff September, 2005 para. 7). The average citizens have more of an understanding of government and their input would be better received and more effective than the

perceived hierarchy described by the participants in a study on Regional City reported by Hunter (1969). The importance of Dahl's study that business leaders had trouble finding a chairman for the Citizens Action Commission. The Citizens Action Commission was not comprised of average citizens. Instead, "10 of the 18 original members of the Citizens Action Commission were members of the Chamber of Commerce" (Domhoff September, 2005 para. 121). Thus, the Citizens Action Commission appears to be a front group of businessmen pretending to represent the interests of average citizens.

The case studies of Hunter (1953) and Dahl (1961) inspired Clarence Stone (2005) to examine how a city (Atlanta) can discourage neighborhood groups and support businesses in order to achieve urban renewal and smart growth techniques. The notion of urban renewal is the idea of redeveloping areas of moderate to high-density urban land use. Urban renewal faced a multitude of challenges throughout the years. In the 1950s, primarily white neighborhoods fought this technique stating that the program was unconstitutional with respect to state law. The legislation was rewritten and passed in 1957 (Stone 2005, 58).

The first phase of urban renewal in Atlanta proved to be difficult because the urban renewal growth coalition lost to white racists due to the integration occurring in historical black neighborhoods that were being purchased for redevelopment. The black neighborhoods were deemed to be low-income, but the black population did not have anywhere to move. The white neighborhoods did not accept the black population and the price of the white neighborhood houses were more than the compensation the black population received for selling their land. "This proved to be the pattern just about

everywhere in the county where urban renewal was attempted” (Domhoff October, 2005 para. 48).

The second phase of urban renewal was highlighted by protests. Stone (1976) notes “If pluralist theorists are right, ‘the prizes go to the interested and active’” (52). However, the policies did not change. Only a few thousand of the promised housing units were constructed in the areas where property was purchased. City officials blamed neighborhood opposition. However, “Stone suggests that lack of business support was even more important because the business leaders had made it clear that they preferred low-income housing to be built outside the city” (Domhoff, October 2005 para. 89). Stone returned in the 1980s to review his study and noted nothing had changed since the first case study. The issue of power was noted by Lappe and DuBois (1994) who agree with Dahl (1961) and Hunter (1953), whom summarize the matter from a 1991 Kettering Foundation study,

“Americans feel as though they have been locked out of their own homes . . . evicted from their own property . . . People know exactly who dislodged them from their rightful place in American democracy, . . . They point their fingers at politicians, at powerful lobbyists, and . . . the media” (167).

So by becoming dislocated, residents no longer have a sense of power, though they may have a sense of civic duty. Lappe and Dubois (1994) agree with this notion quoting a Seattle man, who said “It’s not that people no longer have a sense of duty . . . it’s that they don’t have a sense of power” (167).

The sense of the loss of power extends to advocates. The municipality of Dayton, Ohio, has priority boards. City officials and administrators use the priority boards to make sound decisions about city policy and issues that are deeply rooted in neighborhoods. The priority boards allow hundreds of people to know what is occurring

in their area. However, the downfall of the priority board is the lack power and influence which they do not have. “For two years, Dayton has been battling over a site for a landfill in a black community” (Lappe 1994, 193). Thousands of residents and all of the members of the priority board are protesting against the location of the proposed landfill but in the end, the city council voted to allow the landfill.

### *Summary*

The notion, “the prizes go to the interested and active” (62) previously used by Stone (1976) is pertinent to this study. Will those with a better understanding of their local government be able to use that knowledge to increase their quality of life? Do advocates, elected officials, and average citizens have the same concerns about their neighborhoods? As Former Justice Sandra Day O’Conner (2008) has pointed out, the educational system in place does not provide the civics education needed for individuals to have a proper understanding of government, so are the needs of the citizens being met through neighborhood watch groups or by elected officials?

### Chapter III

## METHODOLOGY

### *Survey Sample*

The data focuses on three different demographics: neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and the average citizens. Since the hypotheses concentrated on three distinct sample populations, each category was surveyed separately though the same assessment was used. Before any of the surveys were administered, approval was obtained from Valdosta State University's Institutional Review Board (Appendix A). Once the information was obtained, the data was coded into a single dataset and the data analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version. 20.0. After careful review of the data, the determination was made to increase the scope of the study to include municipality size and gender.

### *Neighborhood Advocates: Scope of Surveying*

A booth was setup in the exhibit hall of the 2010 RNNC to survey neighborhood advocates. To entice neighborhood advocates to participate in the research, four \$25.00 VISA gift cards were raffled. The exhibition hall was open Friday, October 8, 2010, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. and Saturday October 9, 2010, from 8:00 a.m. until 10:30 a.m.

The RNNC was used to survey neighborhood advocates because the conference brought together neighborhood advocates from different states to one location for a weekend conference. By having the sample population in one location, the survey could be more easily conducted.

According to the History of The Regional Neighborhood Networking Conference (Lima, 2007), "The conference is run by neighborhood people for neighborhood people, giving attendees the tools to take back to their neighborhoods and continue to improve them" (para. 1). With this ideology in place, the conference lends itself to be an appropriate venue to survey the sample population needed to conduct the survey. The RNNC includes twenty cities in five states (Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee) and has a relatively short history. "The conference was spawned as a regional network after the Neighborhoods U.S.A. conference in 1986" (Lima 2007 para 2). Between 400 and 500 neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and city officials attended this conference. "Neighborhood representatives participate in an opening welcome reception on Thursday evening; a day-long series of workshop sessions presented by professionals from all five states on Friday; neighborhood bus tours of the host city on Friday evening; an early Saturday morning session; experience the motivation of three keynote speakers; and have ample time to network with each other to learn about a variety of innovative programs and topics from other cities" (Lima, 2007 para. 4). The RNNC has existed for 25 years solely based on the commitment of its member cities. The municipalities vary in size, governmental structures, philosophies, and political parties. As noted from the Lima, Ohio, conference in 2007, despite the diversity of its composition the RNNC has had many changes. These changes included mayoral, liaison, and fluctuating levels of commitment and participation by the member cities. There are no dues, bylaws, or officers which the member cities have to abide. Instead, the RNNC is a conference where past, present, and future collaborations are always conducted in a non-partisan manner. "The interaction of the city representatives

has transcended party politics and is based simply on trust, respect and genuine friendship that have evolved” (Lima, 2007).

#### *Elected Officials: Scope of Surveying*

The elected officials, who were represented by the neighborhood advocates at the RNNC, were solicited to participate in the survey. The elected officials participated through Survey Monkey online. The majority of information was to be collected during October and November of 2010; the decision to not contact the elected officials until January 2011 was made due to potential electoral changes. The elected officials would have concentrated more on the campaign rather than taking the time to participate in an electronic survey.

#### *Average Residents: Scope of Surveying*

The survey administered to the average citizens was the same survey administered to advocates and elected officials. The difference was the average citizens had the survey read to them over the phone. In cases where the phone will not suffice, average citizens were asked if they would like to take the survey through Survey Monkey. The majority of information was to be collected during October and November of 2010, though due to the lack of responses, the time was extended until May of 2011.

#### *Municipality Size*

The design of the survey allowed for additional hypotheses to be created. Does municipality size make a difference in participation, understanding of government, and a person’s outlook on their quality of life? To determine the municipality size, the 2010 U.S. Census was used as illustrated in Table 1. The information from the U.S. Census

pertaining to the residents living inside the city limits was used as the official population.

Any information pertaining to the metropolitan statistical area was discarded.

Table 1. Municipality Size (2010 U.S. Census)

Municipality	Municipality Size
Moraine, OH	6,307
Huber Heights, OH	38,101
Owensboro, KY	57,265
Springfield, OH	60,608
Decatur, IL	76,122
South Bend, IN	101,168
Peoria, IL	115,007
Springfield, IL	117,400
Evansville, IN	117,429
Dayton, OH	141,527
Fort Wayne, IN	253,691
Cincinnati, OH	296,943
Columbus, OH	787,033
Indianapolis, IN	820,718

### *Gender*

Due to the nature of the survey, the role of gender and participation/understanding of local government could be assessed. As seen in Table 2, 84 out of 100 participants reported their gender. Therefore, hypotheses could be established to see if gender does make a difference. Six key hypotheses were tested to see if gender plays a role in participation, understanding, and quality of life.

Table 2. Gender and Participants

Gender	Male	Female	Total
Number	35	49	84
Percentage	42%	58%	100%

### *Data Collection*

Before the elected official and average citizen surveys were conducted, correspondence was sent to the Police Chief of the municipality to advise the officer about the research being conducted. Since the focus was geared towards neighborhoods, a perception could be that the person conducting the survey was scoping out an area to commit a criminal activity (i.e., burglary).

### *Synopsis of Participating Municipalities*

In order to evaluate the responses given by the participants, the correct answers for survey questions were obtained from the municipalities. A synopsis of the 14 municipalities and referencing ordinances can be found in Appendix C, which support Table 3.

Table 3. Brief Synopsis of Each Municipality

Municipality	Form of Government	HUD Funds	Industrial Board	Comprehensive Land Use Plan	FEMA
Cincinnati, OH	City Manager-Council	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Columbus, OH	Mayor-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Dayton, OH	City Manager-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Decatur, IL	City Manager-Council	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Evansville, IN	Mayor-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Fort Wayne, IN	Mayor-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Huber Heights, OH	City Manager-Council	Yes	No	No	Yes
Indianapolis, IN	Unigov	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Moraine, OH	City Manager-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Owensboro, KY	City Manager-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Peoria, IL	City Manager-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
South Bend, IN	Mayor-Council	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Springfield, IL	Mayor-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Springfield, OH	City Manager-Council	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

### Format of the Survey

The questionnaire method is the choice for surveying the three sample populations. The survey given to the participants is located in Appendix B. The survey consisted of thirty-three questions.

The survey is analyzed in the following approach. Questions 1 and 2 are used to determine if the participant gave the correct responses to questions pertaining specifically to their municipality. Question 3 gives insight as to whether or not the person participates in the local neighborhood watch program, if one is offered. The questions which deal specifically with the municipality are questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, and 15. These questions reflect upon Justice O'Connor, who supports additional civics classes because the average citizens are not knowledgeable about their form of government. Question 10 shows how involved the participant is in their local form of government. Question 11 allows the participant to give reasons why participation may not occur. Question 12 gives the participant an open-ended response to showcase a program that is worthwhile. Question 16 is an open-ended question, which asks the participant what they would do if "A house near your neighborhood has let their grass grow over 6 inches." This question reflects the ideology behind USA on Watch's (2005) "A greater sense of security, responsibility, and personal control" (2). If the participants act on their own accord then a response of "I will talk to the neighbor about the grass" could be given demonstration that government intervention is not required. This response mirrors Hirsch's (1998) notion of creating a sense of place and a healthy neighborhood because the product is from every-day citizens and not city hall. However the question can allow for participants to state that local government should intervene in the upkeep of the property. By having

local government intervene, Lappe and DuBois would see the participant as an effective problem solver by making government effective. Question 27 compliments this question, because it asks if the residents are willing to work together to get things done.

Questions 19, 20, and 26 reflect two additional factors that were added to the survey to give insight on how residents perceived their neighborhoods. The two factors were Fred Kent's "Power of 10" and Henry G. Cisneros' "The Broken Window Theory" which are used as control measures for one to gauge how citizens view their areas. The "Power of 10" isn't as much reaching the number ten but rather creating focal points in areas for people to use and appreciate when enhancing and revitalizing areas in the town. In practical terms, one should build neighborhoods around public spaces which is called placemaking. Mr. Kent asks neighborhood advocates to imagine what if they had 10 places that every resident would have access to outstanding public spaces within walking distance of their own homes and the municipality itself could have hundreds of focal points. "That's the sort of goal we should set for all cities if we are serious about enhancing and revitalizing urban life" (Kent, 2010 para.6). The typical three answers which are to be anticipated from respondents are they like their neighbors, local parks, and the infrastructure. The park is deemed a focal point because multiple residents can use the area to interact socially with one another. A park can be enhanced, revitalized and create a sense of space. Kathleen Hirsch (1998) in *A Home In The Heart of A City* demonstrates the Power of 10 philosophy for park areas. The neighborhood of Jamaica Plain contained a hidden gem which was the pond covered by trash and thickets. Neighborhood advocates began to reclaim the area and residents began to move back.

Now the pond area has a symphony orchestra pavilion, sailing clubs, and multiple neighborhood watch groups.

The other factor that will be used in the survey is the "Broken Window Theory" written by Henry G. Cisneros when he was the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development though the theory was developed by Wilson and Killing (1982). The theory as used by Cisneros was published in a series of essays appearing in January 1995 entitled "Defensible Space: Deterring Crime and Building Community." The theory suggests that if accumulated trash, broken windows, and deteriorated building exteriors remain in the neighborhood for a long period of time, then residents of the area will feel more vulnerable and begin to withdraw from the area. In addition before withdrawing from the area, the residents will become less likely to address physical signs of deterioration. Noticing that the area is beginning to become run down, vandalism will increase which will cause residents to become more withdrawn from their areas. The atmosphere of the neighborhood then attracts more vandals, who sense the area has become vulnerable. The "broken window" theory suggests that a neighborhood should order strategies such as those listed to help deter the attraction of vandalism such as The "quick replacement of broken windows, prompt removal of abandoned vehicles, fast clean up of illegally dumped items, litter and spilled garbage, and quick paint out of graffiti" (Johnson 2009 para. 14).

Questions 18 and 22 focus on the studies by Hunter (1953) and Dahl (1961). Does urban renewal need to occur? Are the residents happy with their current community services and facilities? If residents are not happy, an open-ended question is asked, what

can be done to correct the issue? Participants are able to state that new officials should be elected or anything else to resolve the issues while taking the survey.

Questions 17, 21, 23, and 24 are focused on the residents' perception of their quality of life in their neighborhoods and satisfaction.

Questions 29, 30, 32, 32, and 33 are geared to the participant's demographics. Demographics are a description of the population characteristics of respondents. The characteristics of the survey participants are necessary to understand the community's needs as seen by the neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and the average citizens. Out of 100 surveys only 73 participants responded to the race section of the survey. The responses to the race section as listed in Table 4. The highlights include:

1. 2.7% consider themselves to be multi-racial
2. 76.9% of elected officials consider themselves white
3. 94.7% of average citizens consider themselves white
4. 41.5% of neighborhood advocates consider themselves black

Table 4 Demographics: Race and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Race	White	Count	22	10	18	50
		% within Position In Society	53.7%	76.9%	94.7%	68.5%
	Black	Count	17	3	1	21
		% within Position In Society	41.5%	23.1%	5.3%	28.8%
	Multi-	Count	2	0	0	2
	Racial	% within Position In Society	4.9%	.0%	.0%	2.7%
Total		Count	41	13	19	73
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Out of 100 surveys only 71 participants responded to the age section of the survey. The responses to the race section are listed in Table 5. The highlights include:

1. 57.9% of citizens were 20-44 years of age
2. 72.5% of advocates were 45-64 years of age
3. 16.7% of elected officials were 65+

Table 5. Demographics: Age and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Age Identification	20-44	Count	7	2	11	20
		% within Position In Society	17.5%	16.7%	57.9%	28.2%
	45-64	Count	29	8	7	44
		% within Position In Society	72.5%	66.7%	36.8%	62.0%
	65+	Count	4	2	1	7
		% within Position In Society	10.0%	16.7%	5.3%	9.9%
Total		Count	40	12	19	71
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The demographics section included a section on the participant's occupation. Table 6 is a breakdown of those positions. Though all elected officials are deemed to work in the public sector due to their office, only those stating as working in the public sector were calculated. The highlights of the demographic portion:

1. 31.5% of respondents work in government
2. 21.9% of respondents stated they were retired
3. 27.3% of elected officials define their occupation as being in the public sector
4. 54.5% of elected officials and 47.5% of advocates work in the private sector

Table 6. Job Sector and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Sector	Private	Count	19	6	9	34
		% within Position In Society	47.5%	54.5%	40.9%	46.6%
	Public	Count	12	3	8	23
		% within Position In Society	30.0%	27.3%	36.4%	31.5%
	Retired	Count	9	2	5	16
	/ At Home	% within Position In Society	22.5%	18.2%	22.7%	21.9%
Total		Count	40	11	22	73
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

### *Study Limitations*

This study has several key limitations and the data collected represent a single point in time for the municipalities located in the same region of the U.S. which participated in the survey. The first limitation was the location of the booth at the RNNC. If the booth was closer to the seminars offered to the participants, then more traffic would have occurred due to people coming in and out of the adjacent rooms. A second limitation was the low response rate from elected officials and average citizens. The third limitation was due to the survey being offered by Survey Monkey and telephone, generating a trust factor issue. The participants had to have faith that a doctoral student was surveying their community for educational purposes; participants may have had fear the information would be used for criminal activity. Did any of the elected officials or average citizens state they have a neighborhood watch in case the participant thought I was a burglar instead of responding no?

Besides the limitations, one should note that in 2010, the following municipalities elected not to send delegates to the convention: Bowling Green, Kentucky; Lexington,

Kentucky; Knox County, Tennessee; Louisville, Kentucky; Memphis, Tennessee; and Richmond, Kentucky. At a glance the neighborhood departments located in Bowling Green and Louisville, Kentucky, were realigned to different agencies. The moves resulted in a loss of personnel and funds which resulted in funds not being allocated for registrations for neighborhood advocates to attend the event. The transition was seen as neighborhood agencies having to do more with fewer funds. Lowe quotes Thomas Shiflet of Dayton, Ohio, who made the comment at the RNNC in Decatur, Illinois, on September 17, 2009: "Dayton's economy is primarily a manufacturing-based economy and as such, it's been plagued with a lot of job losses which has lead to community downsizing" (Lowe, 2009 para. 9). However, the conference appears to be expanding with more municipalities in attendance. The following municipalities were noted as being first time participants: Galesburg, Illinois; Springfield, Ohio; and Toledo, Ohio. With a small limited sample size, the results of the study cannot be generalized to all of the neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and average citizens in the communities that were surveyed. However this exploratory study can provide insight on the comparisons of the sample populations which can assist policy makers and neighborhood action coordinators in understanding their residents.

## Chapter IV

### RESULTS

The results and observations contained in this chapter are meant to be descriptive. The first portion of the chapter allows one to understand the neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and the average citizens' comprehension of services offered to them as well as their attitudes towards the municipalities. All participants are located in the region served by the RNNC. While these findings may not represent the future neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and residents, the information obtained in this chapter will provide those interested in the subject matter with a snapshot of how neighborhoods and local governments are understood in 2010. The second segment of the chapter focuses on whether or not the size of a municipality plays a role in the understanding and attitudes toward their community and local government. The last segment of the chapter focuses on gender, and explores if sex plays a role in the understanding and attitudes of those living in municipalities that participate in the RNNC.

#### *Results: Neighborhood Advocates, Elected Officials, and Average Citizens*

The main part of this study focuses on hypotheses which concern the sample population of neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and average citizens. Each hypothesis is accompanied with a rationale and result section. The rationale connects the hypothesis to studies and ideas in regard to activities that affect neighborhoods as well as the professional experiences which have occurred while working with the City of

Bowling Green, Kentucky's Department of Citizen and Information Assistance. The results portion explains whether the hypothesis or null hypothesis was accepted.

The following were the hypotheses used to test the participant's knowledge and quality of life:

- H1        The elected officials will correctly respond to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) question more than the neighborhood advocates or the average citizens.
- H2        The neighborhood advocates will give more excellent ratings in the community service section of the survey than the elected officials and average citizens.
- H3        The average citizens will state that people are not willing to work together in the area more than the neighborhood advocates and elected officials.
- H4        The elected officials will be more satisfied with their quality of life than the neighborhood advocates and average citizens.
- H5        When compared to the average citizens and elected officials, more neighborhood advocates will be able to name their form of local government correctly.
- H6        Neighborhood advocates have attended more kinds of governmental meetings when compared to elected officials.
- H7        The issues neighborhood advocates will identify in the opened-ended response will be similar to the elected officials' responses rather than the average citizens.
- H8        The neighborhood advocates and average citizens will have something in common in regards to their likes of the neighborhood.
- H9        Neighborhood advocates and the average citizens will rely more on government to solve their local problems.
- H10       Neighborhood advocates will participate more in neighborhood watch groups compared to elected officials and the average citizens.
- H11       Elected officials are more aware of the municipality receiving HUD funding when compared to neighborhood advocates and citizens.

- H12 Elected officials are more aware of the municipality having an Industrial Board than neighborhood advocates and citizens.
- H13 Elected officials are most aware of the municipality adopting a Future Land Use and Transportation Plan.
- H14 Elected officials and average citizens are more likely than neighborhood advocates to say their neighborhoods are better.
- H15 Neighborhood advocates will be more pessimistic about the future of their neighborhood than elected officials and citizens.
- H16 Neighborhood advocates and elected officials will identify common themes in the biggest threats to their neighborhoods.
- H17 Neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and citizens will have one common theme in preserving something in their neighborhood.

The first hypothesis predicted that elected officials will correctly respond to the NFIP question more than the neighborhood advocates or the average citizens. The rationale behind this statement is the fact that elected officials adopt the FEMA flood maps and ordinance on behalf of the municipality in order to enroll in the NFIP which is designed to help provide property owners a means to financially protect themselves from floods. The neighborhood advocates and average citizens would find out about the program through public hearings or notices from their financial institution, which has an interest in the property being insured. To evaluate the hypothesis, a chi-square and Cramer's V test were used. As noted in Table 7, 12 elected officials (70.6%) answered the question correctly about participating in the NFIP, 20 neighborhood advocates (39.2%) and 9 average citizens (32.1%) were able to identify participating in the NFIP. The chi-square test and Cramer's V reflect  $p = .03$ , which is statistically significant and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 7. Cross-tabulation of FEMA and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
FEMA	Correct	Count	20	12	9	41
		% within Position In Society	39.2%	70.6%	32.1%	42.7%
	Incorrect/	Count	31	5	19	55
	Not Sure	% within Position In Society	60.8%	29.4%	67.9%	57.3%
Total		Count	51	17	28	96
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 6.963\*; Cramer's V = .269\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The second hypothesis suggests neighborhood advocates as giving more excellent ratings in the community service section of the survey than the elected officials and average citizens. The notion focuses on the idea of neighborhood advocates reporting neighborhood issues that need to be corrected (i.e., potholes). Once the issue is corrected, the advocate would give public works an excellent rating. To evaluate the hypothesis, a difference of means test was used. The neighborhood advocate was compared first to the average citizens, then to the elected official. To score the results, the response of excellent was given a 5, adequate a 4, needs improvement a 3, and inadequate a 2. A response of don't know was not calculated into the difference of means test.

In Table 8, the advocates and average citizens were asked to rate eight services the municipality provides. Neighborhood advocates had a higher mean score on all eight items, but two of the services were statistically significant. The service of street lights produced statistically significant results with a  $t$  score of 3.225 and  $p = .020$ . Advocates (mean ( $X$ ) = 2.32, standard deviation (SD) = 1.077) averaged more excellent rating for this service than average citizens ( $X = 1.69$ , SD = .618). The services provided by the Parks and Recreation Department were statistically significant with a  $t$  score of 3.66 and

$p = .002$ . Advocates ( $X = 2.20$ ,  $SD = 1.107$ ) averaged more excellent rating for this service than average citizens ( $X = 1.46$ ,  $SD = .647$ )

Table 8. Difference of Means Test, the Evaluation of Community Services by Advocates and Citizens

	Position In Society	N	X	SD	<i>t</i>
Street Maintenance	Advocates	50	2.30	.814	.969
	Citizens	26	2.08	1.017	
Sidewalks	Advocates	50	2.26	1.026	.112
	Citizens	26	2.23	1.107	
Street Lights	Advocates	50	2.32	1.077	3.225*
	Citizens	26	1.69	.618	
Curbs/Gutters	Advocates	50	2.42	.950	1.510
	Citizens	26	2.08	.935	
Police	Advocates	50	2.06	.956	1.831
	Citizens	26	1.73	.604	
Traffic	Advocates	50	2.26	.944	1.640
	Citizens	26	1.92	.796	
Parks/Recreation	Advocates	50	2.20	1.107	3.66**
	Citizens	26	1.46	.647	
Planning/Zoning	Advocates	50	2.88	1.100	.864
	Citizens	26	2.58	1.604	

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

In Table 9, the neighborhood advocate and elected officials ratings of eight services offered by municipalities were analyzed. Using a difference of means test, four of the services had statistically significant results. The service of street lights resulted in being statistically significant at .05. Advocates ( $X = 2.32$ ,  $SD = 1.077$ ) averaged a more excellent rating for this service than elected officials ( $X = 1.72$ ,  $SD = .826$ ). The service of curbs and gutters results in a  $t$  score of 2.294. Advocates ( $X = 2.42$ ,  $SD = .950$ ) averaged a more excellent rating for this service than elected officials ( $X = 1.83$ ,  $SD = .924$ ). The difference of means test for the Police Department produced a statistically significant  $t$  score of 2.108. Advocates ( $X = 2.06$ ,  $SD = .956$ ) averaged a

more excellent rating for this service than elected officials ( $X = 1.61$ ,  $SD = .698$ ). The services provided by the Planning and Zoning Department were statistically significant with a  $t$  score of 2.166. Advocates ( $X = 2.88$ ,  $SD = 1.100$ ) averaged a more excellent rating for this service than elected officials ( $X = 2.06$ ,  $SD = 1.474$ ).

Table 9. Difference of Means Test, Evaluation of Community Services by Advocates and Elected Officials

	Position In Society	N	X	SD	$t$
Street Maintenance	Advocates	50	2.30	.814	1.933
	Elected	18	1.89	.758	
Sidewalks	Advocates	50	2.26	1.026	1.121
	Elected	18	2.00	.767	
Street Lights	Advocates	50	2.32	1.077	2.417*
	Elected	18	1.72	.826	
Curbs/Gutters	Advocates	50	2.42	.950	2.294*
	Elected	18	1.83	.924	
Police	Advocates	50	2.06	.956	2.108*
	Elected	18	1.61	.698	
Traffic	Advocates	50	2.26	.944	.366
	Elected	18	2.17	.924	
Parks/Recreation	Advocates	50	2.20	1.107	.444
	Elected	18	2.06	1.211	
Planning/Zoning	Advocates	50	2.88	1.100	2.166*
	Elected	18	2.06	1.474	

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The hypothesis is accepted because of the results from the difference of means test. The advocates gave more excellent responses in regard to their perception of community services than elected officials and the average citizen in services that produced statistically significant results. The elected officials and average citizens were reviewed for statistically significant results for evaluations of community services, but the results did not produce any statistically significant differences.

The third hypothesis focuses on the average citizens stating that people are not willing to work together in the area more than the neighborhood advocate and elected official because the citizens will not have a stronger connection. The rationale behind this statement is the willingness to work together is reminiscent of the neighborhood advocate's statement about the revitalization of the Jamaica Plain area. "This place really is the product of everyday citizens and not about City Hall planners trying to get together and place how to revitalize Main Street" (Gardener 1998 para. 8). The question needing to be addressed is, are the average citizens willing to work together or will the neighborhood advocates and elected officials do all of the work and think that no one else contributes?

To evaluate the hypothesis, a chi-square and Cramer's V test were used. As noted in Table 10, 15 advocates (33.3%), 2 elected officials (11.8%), and 6 citizens (27.3%) agreed with the statement that people are not wanting to work together to get things done for their neighborhood. With this information, the advocates are indicating that people will not work together more than the elected officials and the average citizens. The chi-square test and Cramer's V statistics were not statistically significant.

Table 10. Cross-tabulation of Not Willing to Work Together and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Not Willing To Work	Agree	Count	15	2	6	23
		% within Position In Society	33.3%	11.8%	27.3%	27.4%
	Neutral	Count	17	9	7	33
		% within Position In Society	37.8%	52.9%	31.8%	39.3%
	Disagree	Count	13	6	9	28
		% within Position In Society	28.9%	35.3%	40.9%	33.3%
Total	Count	45	17	22	84	
	% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square = 3.905; Cramer's V = .216

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The fourth hypothesis states that elected officials will be more satisfied with the quality of life than the neighborhood advocates and average citizens. The rationale is that "A number of trends leave citizens with less time and opportunity to put down roots in their community or participate in community affairs" (Municipal Research and Service Center, 2001, 2). Examples of the trends include single parent households, further commutes, and economic trends. However, citizens are not aware of city hall and how the decisions made are of value to their life. The elected official on the other hand becomes aware of how city hall can impact their individual lives. The elected official would then agree their quality of life is better than the average citizens or neighborhood advocate. However, one can reflect on the reason why a neighborhood watch program is formed; to enhance the quality of life. Thus, the neighborhood advocate may respond more to this question than the elected official. To evaluate the hypothesis, a chi-square test and Cramer's V were used. As noted in Table 11, 26 advocates (56.5%), 17 elected officials

(94.4%), and 14 citizens (60.9%) responded as having a satisfied outlook. The chi-square test and Cramer's V are statistically significant, and the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 11. Cross-tabulation of Quality of Life and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Quality of Life	Satisfied	Count	26	17	14	57
		% within Position In Society	56.5%	94.4%	60.9%	65.5%
	Neutral	Count	13	1	4	18
		% within Position In Society	28.3%	5.6%	17.4%	20.7%
	Dissatisfied	Count	7	0	5	12
		% within Position In Society	15.2%	.0%	21.7%	13.8%
Total	Count		46	18	23	87
	% within Position In Society		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = 9.934\*; Cramer's V=.2.39\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The fifth hypothesis states “When compared to the average citizens and elected officials, more neighborhood advocates will be able to name their form of local government correctly.” The rationale behind the statement is that neighborhood advocates have worked longer and more closely with their form of government. The hypothesis is linked to former Justice O'Connor's (2008) statement about “the evidence is clear and should be profoundly disturbing that we are failing to impart to today's students the information and skills they need to be responsible citizens” (para.1). One of the key pieces of information which is needed to be a responsible citizen is the basic understanding of their local form of government. Are citizens aware of their government structure being manager – council, mayor, or another form? How can citizens cast a vote if they are unaware of the duties of the elected official? The hypothesis is geared to see if those who are active in working with their local form of government can give the correct

name. To evaluate the hypothesis, a chi-square test and Cramer's V were used. In Table 12, 18 neighborhood advocates (35.3%), 13 elected officials (72.2%), and 14 citizens (50%) were able to correctly name their form of government. The chi-square Test and Cramer's V are statistically significant; however, the hypothesis and null hypothesis are rejected because elected officials are more likely to correctly identify their form of government and advocates are least likely.

Table 12. Cross-tabulation: Name Government and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Name Their Government	Correct	Count	18	13	14	45
		% within Position In Society	35.3%	72.2%	50.0%	46.4%
	Incorrect /Unsure	Count	33	5	14	52
		% within Position In Society	64.7%	27.8%	50.0%	53.6%
Total	Count	51	18	28	97	
	% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square = 7.501\*; Cramer's V = .278\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The sixth hypothesis predicts that neighborhood advocates will attend more governmental meetings than elected officials. The rationale behind this hypothesis is the notion that elected officials do not have to attend local planning meetings. Instead, the local planning commission is independent in making their decisions about land division and recommendations to the elected body regarding to zoning changes. Also, this hypothesis lends itself to the concept of the "Regional City" which discovered that most people interviewed for Hunter's study believed only a small number of people in the area could make changes within the municipality. The small group was found to live in the same neighborhood, participate in the same clubs and sit on each other's boards of directors. However in his conclusions, Hunter determined there was not a hierarchy of

power in “Regional City.” Thus, neighborhood advocates will attend more kinds of meetings because the hierarchy does not exist. To evaluate the hypothesis, a difference of means test was used. The advocates received a mean of 2.15 for attending more kinds of meetings as compared to the elected official’s mean of 3.33 in Table 13. Using a difference of means test, there was a significant difference between the two groups with a *t* score of -3.099. The hypothesis and null hypothesis are rejected because the difference of means test yielded that the elected officials will attend most of the meetings.

Table 13. Difference of Means Test, Meeting Attendance of Advocates and Elected Officials

	Position In Society	N	X	SD	<i>t</i>
Number of Meetings	Advocates	52	2.15	1.764	-3.099**
	Elected Officials	18	3.33	1.237	

\**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01

The seventh hypothesis declares that the neighborhood advocates open-ended response to what they do not like about their neighborhood would be similar to the elected officials’ answers rather than average citizens. The rationale is neighborhood advocates work closely with the elected officials in order to resolve their issues, thus influencing their ideas about threats to their neighborhoods. In addition, two pieces of advice USA on Watch offers to advocates just starting a neighborhood watch is to contact your local law enforcement agency and schedule a meeting to discuss community concerns and develop an action plan. Attendees of the meeting include neighborhood advocates and elected officials are needed to implement the action plan addressing the neighborhood issues. The advocates and elected officials should have similar issues because the two populations have influenced one another by working closely together. Typically, the average citizens rarely have any dialogue with the other two participants

about issues facing the area. Thus, the average citizens may not have been influenced about the issues affecting the neighborhood and will give a different response. Table 14 illustrates that the common theme of property is found between each of the sample populations. However, the way “property” was defined varied and the specific answers were used. For neighborhood advocates, property was defined as either vacant or rental. The elected officials responded with lack of homeownership and housing not being up to code. The average citizens were focused on the issue of landlord/rental property. Lack of home ownership is equivalent to rental property, the response of landlords deals with a specific person rather than the act of owning property.

Table 14. The Issues Facing Advocates, Elected Officials, and Citizens

	Neighborhood Advocates	Elected Officials	Average Citizens
First Issue	Drugs/Crime (11)	Lack of Home Ownership (7)	Drugs/Crime (6)
Second Issue	Vacant Properties (10)	Traffic/Parking (4)	Roads (5)
Third Issue	Landlords/Rental Properties (5)	Housing Not Up To Code (3)	Traffic/Parking (4)
Third Tied	N/A	N/A	Landlords/Rental Properties (4)
Third Tied	N/A	N/A	Businesses, Lack of (4)

The issues of neighborhood advocates however are more similar. Both neighborhood advocates and average citizens list crime and rental properties as threats to their community whereas the elected official and advocate do not share a theme. Thus, the hypothesis of advocates and elected officials sharing similar issues is rejected.

The eighth hypothesis focuses on neighborhood advocates and average citizens having something in common in regard to their likes of the neighborhood. The rationale is that both the citizens and advocates will have a common theme because both sample

populations choose to reside in the areas. To test the hypothesis, the top three answers of the open-ended response were taken into account. As seen in Table 15, the themes of neighbors and location were the top two answers for both sample populations. However, the term green space was used more by advocates. The term green space may refer to a park or in other cases just an open space or natural environment; thus the terminology cannot be compared. With two similar top responses, the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 15. Advocate and Citizen 'Likes' in Their Neighborhood

Variable	Advocates	Citizens
Top Response	Neighbors (20)	Location (7)
Second Top Response	Location (14)	Neighbors (4)
Second Top Response (Tied)	N/A	Parks (4)
Second Top Response (Tied)	N/A	Schools (4)
Third Top Response	Green Space (9)	N/A

The ninth hypothesis asks if neighborhood advocates and the average citizens will rely on government to solve their local problems. The rationale is based on Domoff's (2005) statement of "Politicians were therefore alert to 'citizens desires' and would try to be responsive if they could see an electoral payoff" (para. 4). Will residents of a community expect government to solve their smallest problem? The following was asked in the survey, "A house near your neighborhood has let their grass grow over 6 inches. What do you do?" Will the neighborhood advocates and average citizens come to the same conclusion and ask for local government (i.e., Division of Code Enforcement) to intervene? The possibility exists that a neighborhood watch is formed for "A greater sense of security, responsibility, and personal control" which will override the need for the local government to be informed about the issue at hand?

As seen in Table 16, a response from 28 advocates (53.8%), 12 elected officials (66.7%), and 10 citizens (33.3%) requested local governments to intervene in the complaint of the property. To test the theory, Cramer's V was used. Although elected officials are twice as likely as average citizens to rely on government, the chi-square test reflect  $p = .060$  which misses being statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 16. Cross-tabulation of Rely on Government and Position in Government

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Rely On Government	Rely	Count	28	12	10	50
		% within Position In Society	53.8%	66.7%	33.3%	50.0%
	Does Not Rely	Count	24	6	20	50
		% within Position In Society	46.2%	33.3%	66.7%	50.0%
Total		Count	52	18	30	100
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 5.641; Cramer's V = .238

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The tenth hypothesis inquires if neighborhood advocates identify themselves as being in a neighborhood watch more than elected officials and the average citizens. The rationale is neighborhood advocates are the ones who organize neighborhood watch groups and would identify as being in one. As seen in Table 17, 35 advocates (71.4%), 15 elected officials (93.8%), and 10 citizens (43.5%) identify themselves as being part of a neighborhood watch group. The results of the chi-square test and Cramer's V are significant at the  $p < .01$  level. However, the cross-tabulation shows that elected officials responded as participating more in a neighborhood watch than neighborhood advocates, thus the hypothesis and the null hypothesis are rejected.

Table 17. Cross-tabulation of Participates in Neighborhood Watch and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Participates in NW	Yes	Count	35	15	10	60
		% within Position In Society	71.4%	93.8%	43.5%	68.2%
	No	Count	14	1	13	28
		% within Position In Society	28.6%	6.3%	56.5%	31.8%
Total		Count	49	16	23	88
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 11.530\*\*, Cramer's V=.362\*\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

HUD funding provides adequate housing and a suitable living environment, and expands economic opportunities, principally for low- to-moderate income persons. In order for a municipality to receive HUD funding, elected officials must pass an ordinance in order to accept the federal dollars which supports the eleventh hypothesis, elected officials are more aware of the municipality receiving HUD funding when compared to neighborhood advocates and citizens. In Table 18, 31 advocates (62%), 12 elected officials (75%), and 9 citizens (34.6%) were able to correctly identify their municipality as receiving HUD funding. The cross-tabulation results were statistically significant at the  $p < .05$  level. Since elected officials responded 75% correctly to the question, the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 18. Cross-tabulation of HUD Funding and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Average	
HUD Funding	Correct	Count	31	12	9	52
		% within Position In Society	62.0%	75.0%	34.6%	56.5%
	Incorrect/	Count	19	4	17	40
	Unsure	% within Position In Society	38.0%	25.0%	65.4%	43.5%
Total		Count	50	16	26	92
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 7.911\*; Cramer's V = .293\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The intent of an industrial board is to foster job growth and investment opportunities throughout the municipality which is the focus of the twelfth hypothesis. Elected officials create and fund such boards in order to recruit industries to supply jobs for the residents. In Table 19, when asked if the municipality had an Industrial Board, 11 advocates (21.2%), 11 elected officials (61.1%), and 8 citizens (26.7%) were able to correctly identify if their municipality had an Industrial Board. The findings for the cross-tabulation were statistically significant at the  $p < .01$  level. The hypothesis is accepted.

Table 19. Cross-tabulation of Industrial Board and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Average	
Industrial Board	Correct	Count	11	11	8	30
		% within Position In Society	21.2%	61.1%	26.7%	30.0%
	Incorrect/	Count	41	7	22	70
	Not Sure	% within Position In Society	78.8%	38.9%	73.3%	70.0%
Total		Count	52	18	30	100
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 10.393\*\*, Cramer's V = .322\*\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The Land Use and Transportation Plan is a document approved by the governing body which provides guidelines for growth and future needs for the residents. In the thirteenth hypothesis, neighborhood advocates have a stake in the Land Use and Transportation Plan because the document recommends future rezoning classifications for the area. Out of those surveyed, 38 advocates (73.1%), 18 elected officials (100%), and 15 average citizens (50%) correctly responded about being aware of the municipality having adopted such a plan. As reported in Table 20, the chi-square test and Cramer's V are statistically significant and with elected officials responding 100% correctly to the question, the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 20. Cross-tabulation of Land Use Plan and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Average	
Land Use Plans	Correct	Count	38	18	15	71
		% within Position In Society	73.1%	100.0%	50.0%	71.0%
	Incorrect/	Count	14	0	15	29
	Unsure	% within Position In Society	26.9%	.0%	50.0%	29.0%
Total		Count	52	18	30	100
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = 13.887\*\*; Cramer's V=.373\*\*

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01

Neighborhood advocates work towards making their area a better place. However, do advocates see their hard work as making a difference or does the sample population still see additional room for improvement in their neighborhood? In order to examine the difference the fourteenth hypothesis asked the sample populations if their neighborhood was better off, worse off, or the same. As seen in Table 21, the response given was 25 advocates (48.1%), 14 elected officials (77.8%), and 10 citizens (33.3%) perceived their area as being better off when compared to neighborhoods surrounding them. The



cross-tabulation resulted in a Cramer's V of .221 which is statistically significant. The hypothesis is accepted because 78% of elected officials responded to the question as their neighborhood being better off when compared to those surrounding the area.

Table 21. Cross-tabulation of Neighborhood Comparison and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Neighborhood Compared	Better	Count	25	14	10	49
	Off	% within Position In Society	48.1%	77.8%	33.3%	49.0%
	Worse	Count	7	0	4	11
	Off	% within Position In Society	13.5%	.0%	13.3%	11.0%
	The Same	Count	20	4	16	40
		% within Position In Society	38.5%	22.2%	53.3%	40.0%
Total		Count	52	18	30	100
		% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 9.755\*; Cramer's V = .221\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

“Is the future of the neighborhood bright?” is the premise of the fifteenth hypothesis. With neighborhood advocates having to struggle with ways to combat blight to improve the area, one would consider the sample population as having a more negative reaction to the question. In Table 22, 34 advocates (72.3%), 12 elected officials (75%), and 24 average citizens (85.7%) believe the future does look bright for their neighborhood. The chi-square test and Cramer's V are not statistically significant.

Table 22. Cross-tabulation of Does the Future Look Bright and Position in Society

			Position In Society			Total
			Advocate	Elected	Citizens	
Future Bright	Agree	Count	34	12	24	70
		% within Position In Society	72.3%	75.0%	85.7%	76.9%
	Disagree	Count	9	4	4	17
		% within Position In Society	19.1%	25.0%	14.3%	18.7%
	Neutral	Count	4	0	0	4
		% within Position In Society	8.5%	.0%	.0%	4.4%
Total	Count	47	16	28	91	
	% within Position In Society	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

chi-square = 4.799; Cramer's V = .162

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

For the sixteenth hypothesis, participants were given a list of potential neighborhood threats and were asked the question, "What are the top 3 biggest threats to your neighborhood?" The hypothesis is that neighborhood advocates may have influenced elected officials about the threats to the area due to numerous conversations and complaints. Table 23 shows 38 advocates and 8 elected officials agreeing that crime is one of the threats to their area followed by upkeep of properties (18 advocates and 8 elected officials) and rental property (17 advocates and 5 elected officials). With both advocates and elected officials having similar responses to the question, the hypothesis is accepted. Although age of the neighborhood is the top threat for elected officials, the issues was not on the list for neighborhood advocates. However, the next three issue items mentioned by elected officials match the top three for advocates being crime, upkeep of properties, and rental properties.

Table 23. Top Neighborhood Threats of Advocates and Elected Officials

	Advocates	Elected Officials
Top Threat	Crime (38)	Age of Neighborhood (9)
Second Top Threat	Upkeep of Properties (18)	Crime (8)
Second Top Threat (Tied)	N/A	Upkeep of Properties (8)
Third Top Response	Rental Properties (17)	Rental Properties (5)
Third Top Response (Tied)	N/A	Homes Purchased For Businesses (5)

The survey solicited an answer to “What one quality would you most want to preserve in your neighborhood?” to examine the seventeenth hypothesis. The top three answers for each sample population are taken into account. A common theme should appear in the open-ended questions because the residents living in the area should want to protect what makes their area unique. The top three answers for each sample population are listed in Table 24. Seven (7) advocates, 5 elected officials, and 3 average citizens agree that the most important item to preserve in their neighborhoods is historic homes. The second and third top answers do not have a common theme. The hypothesis is accepted because the number one quality that the sample population wants to preserve is historic homes.

Table 24. Preservation and Position in Society

	Advocate	Elected Officials	Average Citizens
Top Response	Historic Homes (7)	Historic Homes (5)	Historic Homes (3)
Second Top Response	Diversity (4)	Parks (3)	Neighbors (2)
Second Top Response (Tied)	N/A	Home Ownership (3)	N/A
Third Top Response	Trees (3)	N/A	N/A

### *Results: Size of Municipality*

Because neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and citizens represent several different sized municipalities, the survey allows a comparison of different sized municipalities. The size of the municipalities was broken down into the following population range categories:

1. 50,000 or less population
2. 50,001 to 250,000
3. More than 250,001

With the population breakdown in place, the following hypotheses were articulated:

- H18 A municipality with a population of more than 250,001 residents will have more people participate in a neighborhood watch program when compared to municipalities with less dense population.
- H19 Respondents in smaller municipalities will have a higher probability of correctly responding to the NFIP question than larger communities.
- H20 Respondents from larger municipalities will be most likely to state people are not willing to work together in the area.
- H21 Respondents in smaller municipalities are more satisfied with their quality of life than respondents from larger municipalities.
- H22 When compared to other municipality sizes, respondents in smaller municipalities will be most likely to correctly name their form of local government correctly.
- H23 Respondents from larger sized municipalities will rely on government more to solve their problems when compared to smaller municipalities.
- H24 Respondents in large municipalities will be most likely to correctly identify their community as receiving HUD funds.
- H25 Respondents in smaller municipalities attend more meetings than those in large municipalities.

Would increasing the size of a municipality cause more participation in a neighborhood watch? Small municipalities are often described as a place where people know each other whereas larger communities are less interconnected. With this in mind, larger municipalities would tend to have more people participate in neighborhood watch groups in order to connect people together. As seen in Table 25, 60 respondents (68.2%) participate in a neighborhood watch. Municipalities ranging in size of 50,000 or less had 40% of respondents state they participate in a Neighborhood Watch Association. Municipalities ranging in size a size from 50,001 to 250,000 had 75% participation in a neighborhood watch groups whereas a municipality with a size exceeding 250,000 had 66.7% participation. A Cramer's V of .171 ( $p = .277$ ) and chi-square of 2.570 ( $p = 0.277$ ) were found revealing that the results are not statistically significant.

Table 25. Cross-tabulation of Participates in Neighborhood Watch and Size of City

			Maximum Size of City			
			50,000	250,000	250,000+	Total
Participates in NW	Yes	Count	2	24	34	60
		% within Size of City	40.0%	75.0%	66.7%	68.2%
	No	Count	3	8	17	28
		% within Size of City	60.0%	25.0%	33.3%	31.8%
Total		Count	5	32	51	88
		% within Size of City	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 2.570; Cramer's V = .171

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Smaller municipalities will correctly respond to the NFIP question more than the larger communities. The idea behind the statement is due to the municipality's participation in the FEMA Flood Ordinance, advertising inclusion, and holding a public hearing. Smaller communities would be more aware of the meetings because the

distribution of news is more mainstream, whereas larger municipalities have different advertising venues.

As seen in Table 26, municipalities with a maximum size of 50,000 had 25% of respondents answering correctly as compared to municipalities with a maximum population size of 250,000 having 69.7% of respondents answering correctly. Municipalities with a size of 250,000+ had 29.4% of respondents answering correctly. A statistically significant relationship is evident in Table 26. Since the cross-tabulation demonstrates municipalities with populations at the maximum amount of 50,000 to 250,000 having more correct responses, the hypothesis and null hypothesis are both rejected.

Table 26. Cross-tabulation of FEMA and Size of City

			Maximum Size of City			Total
			50,000	250,000	250,000+	
FEMA Correct	Count		3	23	15	41
	% within Size of City		25.0%	69.7%	29.4%	42.7%
Incorrect/Not Sure	Count		9	10	36	55
	% within Size of City		75.0%	30.3%	70.6%	57.3%
Total	Count		12	33	51	96
	% within Size of City		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 22.589\*\*, Cramer's V = .343\*\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Participants within larger municipalities will state people are not willing to work together in the area at a higher percentage than smaller communities. The rationale is based on smaller communities are more willing to work together to maintain the small town atmosphere that could be endangered due to crime and blight. In Table 27, a municipality with a maximum size of 50,000 had 25% of respondents agreeing with the statement, while a municipality with a maximum of 250,000 had 43.8% of respondents

agreeing. The larger municipality size of 250,000+ had 15% of respondents agreeing. The chi-square resulted in a score of 7.983 ( $p = .092$ ) and the Cramer's V test was .218 ( $p = .092$ ) revealing that the results are not statistically significant.

Table 27. Cross-tabulation of Not Willing To Work and Size of City

			Maximum Size of City			Total
			50,000	250,000	250,000+	
Not Willing To Work	Agree	Count	3	14	6	23
		% within Size of City	25.0%	43.8%	15.0%	27.4%
	Neutral	Count	5	11	17	33
		% within Size of City	41.7%	34.4%	42.5%	39.3%
	Disagree	Count	4	7	17	28
		% within Size of City	33.3%	21.9%	42.5%	33.3%
Total	Count	12	32	40	84	
	% within Size of City	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Pearson Chi-Square = 7.983; Cramer's V = .218

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Smaller municipalities are more satisfied with their quality of life than larger

municipalities. The idea is residents in a smaller community will have more input on their areas, thus making them more satisfied about their quality of life. In Table 28, municipalities with maximum populations of 50,000 had 61.5% of respondents stating they were satisfied with their quality of life. A municipality with the maximum size of 250,000 had 84.4% of respondents indicating they were satisfied. Municipalities with over 250,000 had 52.4% of respondents stating they were satisfied with their quality of life. The results of the cross-tabulation show a statistically significant relationship has occurred, but the hypothesis and null hypothesis are rejected because the medium-size municipality is more satisfied with their quality of life.

Table 28. Cross-tabulation of Quality of Life and Size of City

			Maximum Size of City			Total
			50,000	250,000	250,000+	
Quality of Life	Satisfied	Count	8	27	22	57
		% within Size of City	61.5%	84.4%	52.4%	65.5%
	Neutral	Count	2	1	15	18
		% within Size of City	15.4%	3.1%	35.7%	20.7%
	Dissatisfied	Count	3	4	5	12
		% within Size of City	23.1%	12.5%	11.9%	13.8%
Total	Count	13	32	42	87	
	% within Size of City	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

chi-square = 13.365\*\*; Cramer's V = .277\*\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

When comparing municipality sizes, residents in smaller municipalities will be able to name their form of local government correctly. As seen in Table 29, a municipality size of 50,000 had 30.8% respondents being able to name their form government as compared to those in a municipality of 250,000 having 75.8% of respondents being able to correctly name their government. A municipality size of 250,000+ has 31.4% of respondents being able to name their form of government. The results of the chi-square and Cramer's V produced a probability of .000 which is statistically significant. The hypothesis and null hypothesis are rejected because more respondents in medium-sized municipalities were able to name their form of government correctly than other respondents.

Table 29. Cross-tabulation of Being Able To Correctly Name Government and Size of the City

			Maximum Size of City			Total
			50,000	250,000	250,000+	
Name Their Government	Yes	Count	4	25	16	45
		% within Size of City	30.8%	75.8%	31.4%	46.4%
	No/No	Count	9	8	35	52
	Answer	% within Size of City	69.2%	24.2%	68.6%	53.6%
Total		Count	13	33	51	97
		% within Size of City	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 17.344\*\*; Cramer's V = .423\*\*

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Participants from larger-sized municipalities will rely on government more to solve their problems when compared to smaller municipalities. The rationale is larger municipalities offer more services than their smaller counterparts. In Table 30, a municipality with 50,000 had 40% of respondents relying on government when compared to municipalities with a size of 250,000 having 66.7% of respondents stating they would rely on government. A municipality of 250,000+ residents had 42.3% of respondents relying on government. The chi-square test resulted in a score of 5.497 ( $p = .064$ ) and Cramer's V resulted in .234 ( $p = .064$ ). With  $p = .064$ , the results are not statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

Table 30. Cross-tabulation of Relying on Government and Size of City

			Maximum Size of City			Total
			50,000	250,000	250,000+	
Rely On Government	Yes	Count	6	22	22	50
		% within Size of City	40.0%	66.7%	42.3%	50.0%
	No	Count	9	11	30	50
		% within Size of City	60.0%	33.3%	57.7%	50.0%
Total		Count	15	33	52	100
		% within Size of City	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 5.497; Cramer's V = .234

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The majority (more than 50% of the respondents) of the larger-sized municipalities will correctly identify themselves as receiving HUD Funds. Table 31 illustrates these responses. In the responses, a municipality with 50,000 correctly had 14.3% of respondents identifying themselves as having their municipality receive HUD funds. A municipality with the maximum size of 250,000 had 60.6% of respondents giving a correct answer. A municipality with the size of 250,000+ had 59.6% of respondents giving a correct answer. A chi-square resulted in 5.608 ( $p = .230$ ) and Cramer's V test of .175 ( $p = .230$ ). With  $p = 0.230$ , the results were not statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

Table 31. Cross-tabulation of HUD Funding and Size of City

			Maximum Size of City			Total
			50,000	250,000	250,000+	
HUD Funding	Correct	Count	1	20	31	52
		% within Size of City	14.3%	60.6%	59.6%	56.5%
	Incorrect/	Count	6	13	21	40
	Not Sure	% within Size of City	85.7%	39.4%	40.4%	43.5%
Total		Count	7	33	52	92
		% within Size of City	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 5.608; Cramer's V = .175

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Respondents in smaller municipalities will attend more meetings than those from larger municipalities. The rationale is that a smaller community is more active in their government because the residents are aware of how local government impacts their daily lives. As seen in Table 32, the mean for respondents living in a municipality of 50,000 is 1.87 with a standard deviation of 1.885. Respondents living in a municipality with the maximum population of 250,000 resulted in a mean of 2.33 with a standard deviation of 1.814. The  $t$  score of the difference of means test is -.804 with a probability of .419 which is not statistically significant.

Table 32. Difference of Means of Meetings and Maximum Municipality Sizes of 50,000 and 250,000

Maximum Size of City		N	X	SD	$t$
Number of Meetings	50,000	15	1.87	1.885	-.804
	250,000	33	2.33	1.814	

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

In Table 33, the mean for respondents living in a municipality of 50,000 is 1.87 with a standard deviation of 1.885. Respondents living in a municipality with the maximum population of 250,000+ resulted in a mean of 1.52 with a standard deviation of

1.686. The  $t$  score from the difference of means test is .644 which is not statistically significant.

Table 33. The Difference of Means Test of Meetings and Maximum Municipality Sizes of 50,000 and 250,000+

	Maximum Size of City	N	X	SD	$t$
Number of Meetings	50,000	15	1.87	1.885	.644
	250,000+	52	1.52	1.686	

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Though the hypothesis focuses on respondents from the smaller municipality, the results of the maximum population of 250,000 and 250,000+ were compiled. In Table 34, the mean for respondents living in a municipality with a maximum population of 250,000 is 2.33 with a standard deviation of 1.814. Respondents living in a municipality with the maximum population of 250,000+ resulted in a mean of 1.52 with a standard deviation of 1.686. The  $t$  score is 2.072 and resulted in a probability of .042 which is statistically

significant at the .05 level. The hypothesis and null hypothesis were rejected because the results of the difference of means test showed that respondents in smaller municipalities did not attend the most meeting. Instead, the results with a statistically significant finding were that respondents in medium-sized cities are twice as likely to attend meetings when compared to their counterparts in larger municipalities.

Table 34. Difference of Means Test, Number of Meetings and Municipality Sizes of 250,000 and 250,000+

	Maximum Size of City	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	$t$
Number of Meetings	250,000	33	2.33	1.814	2.072*
	250,000+	52	1.52	1.686	

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

### *Results: Gender*

The role of gender is important in understanding how one comprehends and participates in government. The following hypotheses were used in analyzing gender:

- H26 Females will participate more than males in neighborhood watches.
- H27 Males will correctly respond more to the NFIP question than females.
- H28 Females will be most likely to state that people will not work together in the area.
- H29 Males will be more satisfied with their quality of life than females.
- H30 Males will be able to correctly name the form of government more than females.
- H31 Females will rely on government more than males.

Which gender will participate more in a neighborhood watch? For the hypothesis, females were chosen because women may want to bring neighbors together in order to improve the area for their children and increase the safety. When asked if they participated in a neighborhood watch, 20 males (66.7%) and 34 females (70.8%) responded as belonging to an organization. The chi-square (1.50) and Cramer's V (.044) resulted in a probability score of 0.698. The results are not a statistically significant relationship.

Table 35. Cross-tabulation of Gender and Neighborhood Watch

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Participates in NW	Yes	Count	20	34	54
		% within Gender	66.7%	70.8%	69.2%
	No	Count	10	14	24
		% within Gender	33.3%	29.2%	30.8%
Total		Count	30	48	78
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 1.50; Cramer's V = .044

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Which gender can correctly respond to the NFIP question? The male gender was specified in the hypothesis because the ordinance focuses on where construction can occur. The male gender was selected because the “construction workforce is comprised of 83% men” (National Association of Women In Construction 2012). As noted in Table 36, 16 males (45.7%) and 19 females (38.8%) were able to state whether or not their municipality was participating in the NFIP. The chi-square (.4040) and Cramer's V (.069) resulted in a probability score of 0.814 which is not statistically significant.

Table 36. Cross-tabulation of FEMA and Gender

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
FEMA	Correct	Count	16	19	35
		% within Gender	45.7%	38.8%	41.7%
	Incorrect/ Not Sure	Count	19	30	49
		% within Gender	54.3%	61.2%	58.3%
Total		Count	35	49	84
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = .404; Cramer's V = .069

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Will females be more pessimistic about citizens working together? The female gender was chosen due to a 2008 gender study entitled “Are Women More Risk Averse or Men More Optimistic” by Ben Jacobsen of Massey University which reports that men are more optimistic than females. When thinking about who may have a more pessimistic view of their neighborhood, 10 males (34.5%) and 9 females (20.5%) agreed that people will not work together for their neighborhood. Table 37 shows a chi-square of 2.195 and Cramer’s V score of 0.17 that are not statistically significant.

Table 37. Cross-tabulation of Not Willing To Work Together and Gender

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Not Willing To Work	Agree	Count	10	9	19
		% within Gender	34.5%	20.5%	26.0%
	Neutral	Count	11	17	28
		% within Gender	37.9%	38.6%	38.4%
	Disagree	Count	8	18	26
		% within Gender	27.6%	40.9%	35.6%
Total	Count	29	44	73	
	% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

chi-square = 2.195; Cramer’s V = .173

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Which gender perceives their quality of life as being more satisfied? If females in Ben Jacobsen’s study are more pessimistic about life, then females should be less satisfied with their quality of life for this study. Table 38 shows 22 males (73.3%) and 27 females (58.7%) as being satisfied with their quality of life. A chi-square (3.644) and Cramer’s V (.219) resulted in a probability of 0.162 which is not statistically significant.

Table 38. Cross-tabulation of Quality of Life and Gender

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Quality of Life	Satisfied	Count	22	27	49
		% within Gender	73.3%	58.7%	64.5%
	Neutral	Count	3	13	16
		% within Gender	10.0%	28.3%	21.1%
	Dissatisfied	Count	5	6	11
		% within Gender	16.7%	13.0%	14.5%
Total	Count	30	46	76	
	% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

chi-square = 3.644; Cramer's V = .219

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

The next hypothesis is in regards to males being able to name their form of government more correctly than females. The rationale is the National Center for Educational Statistics' 2010 "National Assessment of Educational Progress at Grades 4, 8, and 12" of Civics, shows females in Grade 12 as having a decreased score in understanding civics. If the females have a lower score than males, will the same occur past their high school education? Table 39 shows 18 males (52.9%) and 20 females (39.2%) as able to correctly identify their form of government. A chi-square (1.55) and Cramer's V (.135) resulted in a probability of 0.212 which is not statistically significant.

Table 39. Cross-tabulation of Name Correctly Naming Their Government and Gender

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Name Their Government	Correct	Count	18	20	38
		% within Gender	52.9%	39.2%	44.7%
	Incorrect	Count	16	31	47
		% within Gender	47.1%	60.8%	55.3%
Total		Count	34	51	85
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

chi-square = 1.555; Cramer's V = .135

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

Which gender will rely on government to intervene with their problems concerning their neighbors? Table 40 shows that 19 males (54.3%) and 25 females (47.2%) would rely on government. A chi-square (.427) and Cramer's V (.07) resulted in a probability score of 0.513 which is not statistically significant.

Table 40. Cross-tabulation of Relying on Government and Gender

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Rely On Government	Yes	Count	19	25	44
		% within Gender	54.3%	47.2%	50.0%
	No	Count	16	28	44
		% within Gender	45.7%	52.8%	50.0%
Total		Count	35	53	88
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = .427; Cramer's V = 0.07

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

### Summary

This is an exploratory study limited to respondents whose municipalities participated in the 2010 RNNC. The original intent of the study was to identify areas that may show where either advocates, elected officials, or citizens had a better understanding of the working knowledge of the government, better perceived outlook of their

neighborhoods and themes found within common issues facing their municipality. The position of neighborhood advocates yielded statistically significant results in the following: awarded more excellent ratings in community services and being more pessimistic about the future of their area. In the open-ended questions, the advocates shared themes with elected officials in regard to threats to their neighborhoods being crime, upkeep of properties, and rental properties. These findings suggest that advocates know the services that can be provided by the municipality and have connections to both elected officials and the average citizens in regard to their neighborhood. However, due to their hard work, advocates tend to have a more pessimistic view of their neighborhood. The position of elected officials yielded statistical significant findings for being satisfied with their quality of life, awareness of the municipality as having received HUD funding, adopting a Future Land Use and Transportation Plan, participating in FEMA, as well as having an Industrial Board. With the exception of being satisfied with their quality of life, the rest of the statistical significant findings have to go before the local elected body. Thus, elected officials are aware of ordinances which the legislative body has adopted. Three results from the cross-tabulations were statistically significant, but the hypotheses and null hypotheses were rejected. These results illustrated the hypotheses with respect to the advocate being able to name their form of government correctly, attending more various kinds of meetings, and participating in a neighborhood watch. In each case, the elected official was in the majority. The cross-tabulations for people working together and relying on government were not statistically significant. In the hypotheses of advocate and elected officials issues, the answers from the advocates being drugs/crime and landlord/rental properties parallel the responses give by the average citizens. The

results for the hypothesis concerning threats to the neighborhood, has advocates and officials giving parallel responses being crime, upkeep of properties, and rental properties.

In regard to the hypotheses which focus on the respondents from a certain municipality size, only three cross-tabulations were statistically significant with respondents in medium-sized municipalities having a higher probability of correctly responding to the NFIP question, being more satisfied with the quality of life, and being able to name their form of local government correctly. The respondents from the medium sized municipalities attended the most meetings.

When the hypotheses focused on gender, the results were not statistically significant. The results will be examined further in Chapter 5, Discussion.

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## Chapter V

### DISCUSSION

Since the creation of the National Neighborhood Watch Program, significant studies on advocates, elected officials, and average citizen's knowledge of local government and perceptions about their neighborhood have not been conducted. Studies, (i.e., Floyd Hunter's *Community Power Structure*) were conducted before the creation of the RNNC, NUSA, and the National Neighborhood Watch Program. Lappe and DuBois (1994) reviewed communities in the sense of the residents as participating in a "Living Democracy" and weave in examples of how advocates contribute to their local form of government. Putnam (2001) examines "social capital" which is slowly eroding away while O'Conner's (2008) shares her concerns about citizens' lack of education on civics. All of these studies and theories assist in understanding the hypotheses of this study.

The cross-tabulations and difference of means tests yielded statistically significant results for those responding as neighborhood advocates. One of the reasons why neighborhood advocates may have awarded the community services more excellent ratings in the difference of means test is because the sample population can be viewed as rewarding the department for correcting a neighborhood issue. In this case, an advocate may have requested an additional street light to assist in deterring crime on a darkened street. Once the street lamp has been erected, the advocate would award the department with an excellent rating as a form of celebration. This is reminiscent of Diers' (2004)

belief that neighborhoods should celebrate small victories. By celebrating, neighborhood organizations will build confidence to begin tackling more challenging issues.

In regard to advocates being more pessimistic about the future of their area, Lappe and DuBois (1994) tell the story of Wib Smith from Memphis, Tennessee, who had become upset that nothing has changed in his neighborhood. "He had participated in citizen protests to try to get more city resources directed to poor and black neighborhoods, but in the end the protests seemed fruitless" (27). This could indicate why only 56.5% of advocates are satisfied with their quality of life and why 48.1% of advocates see their neighborhood as being better off when compared to those around them. When advocates continue to try to improve their areas and outcomes are not reached, becoming pessimistic is hard to avoid.

The cross-tabulation in regard to quality of life resulted in 94.4% of elected officials responding as being satisfied. A correlation to Dahl's study (1961) could be derived. Are elected officials the one's in complete power? If so, are they more satisfied with their quality of life because of the discretion that can be used to solve the issues of their neighborhood? An example of such discretion would be when elected officials in Dahl's study created the Citizens Action Commission, which was basically the members of the local Chamber of Commerce, to address the average citizen's needs. This allowed for elected officials to address the concerns which they wanted to tackle instead of trying to solve the problems of neighborhood advocates or the average citizens.

As to who was more aware of the municipality as having received HUD funding, adopting a Future Land Use and Transportation Plan, participating in FEMA, as well as having an Industrial Board, the elected officials produced the most correct responses.

Because elected officials actively participate in government and all three programs require approval from the elected body the answers provided tend to be more correct. However, these statistically significant findings reflect O'Connor's (2008) concerns that civics needs to be reintroduced into the classroom. When asked if the municipality had received HUD funding, the majority of advocates (62%) and elected officials (75%) were able to correctly identify their government as receiving funds from the federal government under this program. Of the average citizens, 34.6% were able to correctly identify the municipality as receiving the funds. Shouldn't the average citizen be aware of how federal dollars are spent in their community? The statistics are similar for the adoption of the Future Land Use Plan. The advocates (73.1%) and elected officials (100%) were able to correctly identify that the municipality has adopted the document. However, 50% of average citizens were able to identify the document. The trend is not as significant in the participation of FEMA. Seventy percent (70%) of elected officials were able to identify the municipality as being a participant. However, the advocates' correct response rate of 39.2% is lower than responses given for the questions concerning HUD funds and the Future Land Use and Transportation Plan. Roughly one-third of average citizens correctly answered questions pertaining to FEMA and HUD funds.

The statistically significant results from the cross-tabulations stemming from the HUD and Future Land Use and Transportation Plan hypotheses reveal that elected officials and advocates' awareness of these programs exist. The awareness could exist due to the direct impact the sample populations have with these programs. With HUD funding, elected officials must pass ordinances to accept the financial resources, while advocates often request the funds to be spent on projects that can improve their area. The

Future Land Use and Transportation Plan is adopted by the elected officials, but advocates are often sought out for their visions of the area. Finally, to be able to participate in the NFIP, elected officials must adopt the FEMA ordinance. The score for the neighborhood advocate is lower, which is probably due to the lack of input which the sample population has concerning the issue.

The results from the cross-tabulation concerning the establishment of the Industrial Board did not reflect a higher correct response rate from both elected officials and advocates. The results revealed that 61.1% of elected officials were able to correctly identify the municipality as having established an industrial board as compared to 21.2% of neighborhood advocates, and 26.7% of average citizens. One reason why advocates performed lower on this question is the notion that an Industrial Board does not directly impact a neighborhood when compared to HUD funds and a Land Use Plan.

The hypotheses focusing on advocates being able to name their form of government more correctly, attending more various kinds of meetings and participating in a neighborhood watch ran contrary to the initial premise. In each instance, the statistical analysis of the cross-tabulations resulted in the elected official outperforming the neighborhood advocates.

Why were neighborhood advocates chosen to be able to name their form of government more correctly? The notion was that with the government outreach programs (e.g., such as Priority Boards in Dayton, Ohio; little city halls in Seattle, Washington; and neighborhood councils in Birmingham, Alabama) advocates would have become more familiar with their government and been able to name it more correctly. However, the hypothesis focusing on naming one's local government was mislabeled. The elected

officials would have firsthand experience of their local form of government stemming from their participation in local meetings. Typically the agenda for the elected official's meeting would state the local form of government.

In regard to the respondents participating in various meetings, (e.g., budget, city council/county commission, planning/zoning, and strategic planning) advocates were expected to participate in more meetings because elected officials do not have to attend planning commission meetings since this body makes recommendations to them. The difference of means test resulted with elected official having a mean score of 3. as compared to the advocates mean score of 2.15. The results from the difference of means test supports Hunter's (1953) idea of overlapping cliques which caused different people to take on policy issues within the city, though elected officials do attend an additional meeting on average.

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As far as an advocate's participation in a neighborhood watch, one would think the primary role of creating a neighborhood watch is to "organize people around issues that are immediate, concrete, and achievable" would cause the sample population to identify themselves as being part of this group (Diers 2004, 26). However with 71.4% of advocates and 93.8% of elected officials responding as participants, the hypothesis and null hypotheses were rejected. One reason why elected officials may have a higher response rate for participating in a neighborhood watch is because they feel this is a way for them to be in contact with citizens, who are concerned about the area. Lappe and DuBois (1994, 27) illustrate this through the story of the Shelby County Interfaith, a local citizen organization in Tennessee, whose members became excited that the mayor did come to one of their meetings. The connection could inspire the members to vote for the

candidate in the next election cycle because the elected official had listened to their concerns. Also, the elected officials could use the neighborhood watch to assist in creating their platform on the vision of the municipality. An additional survey would be needed to follow-up on why advocates do not see themselves as participants of this group and why elected officials belong to neighborhood watches.

This study hypothesizes that average citizens will state that people are not willing to work together in the area more than the neighborhood advocate and elected official. The rationale was that average citizens would not identify themselves as part of a group that would make a difference in their area, and thus would consider themselves to be loners. Part of this ideology stems from an article written by Putnam (1995) entitled "*Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital*," where he states "The proportion of Americans who socialize with their neighbors more than once a year has slowly but steadily declined over the last two decades, from 72% in 1974 to 61% in 1993" (76). In this study, advocates (71.4%) and elected officials (93.8%) have a higher participation rate in neighborhood watches, when compared to the average citizen (43.5%). The next logical step would be that average citizens feel more isolated and believe that people would not work together to improve their area. However, the results of the cross-tabulation did not result in any statistically significant findings.

The hypothesis on neighborhood issues focused on the relationship between elected officials and advocates. Lappe and DuBois (1994) focus on the "Living Democracy" as a way to solve problems. Advocates and elected officials are supposed to listen, negotiate, evaluate and more importantly problem solve. With advocates establishing neighborhood watches around issues which in turn cause elected officials to

take notice, one would think their issues would be similar. However, after review, the issues of the advocates were more aligned with the average citizen, because both sample populations were concerned about drugs/crime and landlord/rental properties. The elected officials shared the concern about rental properties, but addressed the situation as being a lack of home ownership. An interesting note is that elected officials did not respond to drugs/crime as a top concern. Advocates and elected officials responses to threats concerning their neighborhood parallel one another. Both sample populations are concerned with upkeep of properties, rental properties, and crime. One of the major purposes of having a neighborhood watch according to USA On Watch (2005) "is to reduce crime" (2). With elected officials stating they participate more in neighborhood watches than advocates, a concern is raised when the topic of crime is overlooked. Do elected officials believe crime is not active in their area? Since the cross-tabulation indicated that 77.8% of elected officials believe their neighborhood as being "Better Off," does the sample population have a different perception of crime as compared to advocates and citizens? A follow-up study would need to be conducted to address these questions.

The results of the cross-tabulation focusing on relying on one's government missed being statistically significant by .01. Though the results were not statistically significant, it is interesting to note that both advocates (53.8%) and elected officials (66.7%) rely on a division in their local government to address problem of a residence with overgrown grass where as average citizens (33%) rely on government intervention. For Lappe and DuBois (1995, 8), the advocates and elected officials are using the government's effective role by making citizens' accountable for their actions.

When the cross-tabulations focusing on the respondents from a certain municipality size were reviewed, only four results were found to be statistically significant. In all three cases, the hypothesis and null hypothesis were rejected. The findings were respondents from medium-sized municipalities were more aware of their municipality participating in the NFIP, able to name their form of government correctly, and more satisfied with their quality of life. The respondents from the medium-sized municipalities might be skewed towards higher income individuals or higher levels of participation.

The role of gender did not result in any statistically significant findings and speak toward O'Connor's (2008) concern of why schools should place civics back into the classroom. The National Center for Education Statistics 2010 Civics Study shows that 8<sup>th</sup> graders and 12<sup>th</sup> graders understanding of civics regardless of gender has roughly remained the same at the lower percentile. During the study, students were asked basic questions regarding civic life, politics, and government. For the understanding of civics to improve, a greater emphasis will need to be placed into the classroom.

The open-ended questions in the survey tried to find a relationship to the Power of Ten (Kent 2004) to the participants as well as a connection to the Broken Window Theory (Wilson and Kelling 1982), remembering that the Power of 10 isn't as much reaching the number ten but rather creating focal points in areas for people to use and appreciate when enhancing and revitalizing areas in the city. Participants were asked two questions to see if focal points had been established. For the first question, participants were asked to name three things they like about their neighborhood. Both advocates and citizens did not respond with specific focal points. Instead the answers given were

generalized (i.e., location, greenspace). The generalization occurred again when participants were asked "What would they like to preserve in their neighborhood?" The generalized answers included themes such as historic homes, parks, and trees. The term preservation could have lead the participants to respond with historic homes, since the term preserving homes is prevalent in society. An example would be the National Trust for Historic Preservation has forums on "How One Can Preserve Their Historic Homes." In hindsight, when the Power of Ten is studied, participants should be asked what brings people to their areas instead of asking what the participant likes about their neighborhood. The Broken Window Theory focuses on monitoring, maintaining, and revitalizing neighborhoods in order to deter crime. When asked what three things participants do not like about their neighborhood, the responses should reflect the theory. However, the theory did not reflect on problems that could be easily fixed. The issues of drugs and crime were the top concerns neighborhoods have to deal with on a day-by-day basis. This leads to the question of "Were there issues that lead to the drugs and crimes to locate in the area?" The Broken Window Theory is set up to believe the smaller issues, if not attended, to will lead to larger issues. For example, if a vacant house has a few broken windows and they are not repaired, there is a tendency for vandals to break more windows. Eventually, the dilapidated property affects surrounding property and the area will become filled with blithe and more criminal activity (i.e., drugs) will occur in the area. To answer the issue of why drugs have become prevalent in neighborhoods, an additional survey focusing on where the sample population believes the root problem originates from would need to be conducted. Another issue that all of the participants were concerned about was rental property. The problem with rental property is the notion

that renters may not take care of their property in the same fashion as homeowners. The comments should reflect views on landlords and their inability to take care of the property, make necessary repairs, and attract responsible tenants. Overall, the concept of the Broken Window Theory and Power of 10 could not be proven in this study. The questions relating to these theories would need to be rewritten in order to receive a more specific answer that could create a stronger correlation.

Though the study focuses on the 2010 RNNC, future annual conferences could be studied to try to establish a pattern if advocates, elected officials, and average citizens understand their local form of government and perception of their neighborhoods. Besides studying the RNNC, one could examine NUSA. By surveying participants in NUSA, one would examine advocates and elected officials from across the U.S. Once the surveying of advocates and elected officials is complete, one would have to survey the average citizens to examine their understanding of their local form of government and perceived outlook of their neighborhoods.

The implications of this study provide neighborhood action coordinators insight on how to improve their programs and outreach. The neighborhood action coordinator's role is to work closely with neighborhood groups and city departments to assist in delivering services. With neighborhood advocates having a higher rate of not being able to name their local form of government, neighborhood action coordinators can implement training sessions to assist advocates in understanding services and programs offered by their local form of government. Examples of outreach include programs such as City Hall in the Mall, training sessions to be eligible for Select Neighborhood Action Program Grants, Mayor for the Day, and summer strolls. City Hall in the Mall is a program where

a municipality creates a satellite office in a mall in order to interact with more citizens. Coral Springs, Florida, began their City Hall in the Mall in 1995 in order to provide dozens of resources for residents. "Its prime location in the Coral Square mall makes it convenient for citizens seeking fast, reliable service while they are out shopping" (Coral Springs, 2012 para. 1). Bowling Green, Kentucky, offers citizens trainings sessions in order to be eligible for SNAP grants. The training sessions focus on key government issues (e.g., how ordinance are adopted). The trainings sessions are then counted as part of the grant eligibility requirement which can assist neighborhoods in a beautification project. Mayor for the Day is traditionally a program focused on students enrolled in grades 6-12. Students enter into an essay contest which allows them to shadow the mayor for the day. City Mayor Blad of Pocatello, Iowa, "believes the program is a great way to educate our youth about politics and government, especially local government" (Scardino 2011 para. 11). Finally, citizens can interact and learn more about government through summer strolls. The summer stroll program allows elected official and city employees to walk through one's neighborhood to see the programs first hand. The city of Bowling Green, Kentucky, offers the strolls to residents during Tuesdays in June, July, and August. Residents must schedule a stroll with the neighborhood action coordinator, who then alerts the media of the events as well as placing a sign indicating where the summer stroll where state in the neighborhood. During the stroll, neighborhood advocates, elected officials, and the average citizens have the opportunity to discuss solutions to problems in the area.

Why should one care about the role and understanding of advocates, elected officials, and the average citizens? The words of former President Lyndon B. Johnson (1965) come to mind,

The American city should be a collection of communities where every member has a right to belong. It should be a place where every man feels safe on his streets and in the house of his friends. It should be a place where each individual's dignity and self-respect is strengthened by the respect and affection of his neighbors. It should be a place where each of us can find the satisfaction and warmth which comes from being a member of the community of man. This is what man sought at the dawn of civilization. It is what we seek today (240).

Today, do residents understand their communities? President Johnson believed that a community is where every member has the right to belong, and to find satisfaction. However, if one cannot name their local form of government or understand the services being provided, can a resident find satisfaction? The intent of this study was to obtain a better understanding of who was more knowledgeable about their local form of government and to the extent if residents were satisfied about services being offered. In the future, the hope is that residents should be able to give more correct answers due to the efforts of former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and Neighborhood Activist Jim Diers, who are concentrating on educating and inspiring the public to participate more in democracy.

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**APPENDIX A:**  
**Valdosta State University**  
**Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol Exemption Report**



***Institutional Review Board (IRB)  
for the Protection of Human Research Participants***

**PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT**

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**PROTOCOL NUMBER:** IRB-02615-2010

**INVESTIGATOR:** Eric Dustin Owens

**PROJECT TITLE:** Neighborhood advocates and their perception of activism

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**DETERMINATION:**

- ☒ This research protocol is exempt from Institutional Review Board oversight under Exemption Category(ies) 2. You may begin your study immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator ([irb@valdosta.edu](mailto:irb@valdosta.edu)) before continuing your research.
  - ☐ Exemption of this research protocol from Institutional Review Board oversight is pending. You may **not** begin your research until you have addressed the following concerns/questions and the IRB has formally notified you of exemption. You may send your responses to [irb@valdosta.edu](mailto:irb@valdosta.edu).
- 

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:**

Although not a requirement for exemption, the following suggestions are offered by the IRB Administrator to enhance the protection of participants and/or strengthen the research proposal. If you make any of these suggested changes to your protocol, please submit revisions so that IRB has a complete protocol on file.

**Barbara H. Gray**

Date: 8/14/120

*Thank you for submitting an IRB application.*

Barbara H. Gray, IRB Administrator

***Please direct questions to [irb@valdosta.edu](mailto:irb@valdosta.edu) or 229-259-5045.***

cc: Dr. James W. Peterson (Dept. Head & Advisor)

Form Revised: 09.02.2009

## APPENDIX B:

### Survey

## Survey

(Questions for the survey are on the front and back side of each sheet)

- 1) Municipality and State: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) How long have you lived at your present address: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Is your Neighborhood Watch/Association, currently active: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4) What is your form of local government:  
☐ Mayor –Council ☐ Manager-Council  
☐ Commission-Administrator ☐ Other
- 5) How many elected officials are on the above board: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Has your city been deemed by HUD as receiving Entitlement Grants:  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure
- 7) Does your municipality have an Industrial Board?  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure
- 8) Does your municipality have a Comprehensive Land Use Plan:  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure
- 9) Does your municipality participate in the National Flood Insurance Program:  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure
- 10) In the past year, have you (Mark all that apply)  
☐ Attended a city budget meeting  
☐ Attended a City Council or County Commission Meeting  
☐ Attended a Planning and Zoning meeting  
☐ Attended a Strategic Planning Meeting
- 11) If you do not attend any of the above meetings, why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 12) What activity does your municipality hold that strengthens the ties between the local government and neighborhood associations?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 13) Does your city have a Neighborhood Action Office or Office of Neighborhoods?  
☐ Yes (Go to question #14) ☐ No (Go to question #16)

- 14) In the past three years, has the budget for the Neighborhood Action Office  
       \_\_\_ Decreased        \_\_\_ Increased        \_\_\_ Not Sure        \_\_\_ Remained the same
- 15) What role would you like to see the city's Neighborhood Action Coordinator's Office take to better assist the organized neighborhoods:  
       \_\_\_\_\_  
       \_\_\_\_\_  
       \_\_\_\_\_
- 16) A house near your neighborhood has let their grass grow over 6 inches. What do you do?  
       \_\_\_\_\_  
       \_\_\_\_\_
- 17) When comparing your neighborhood to those around you, do you feel the area is  
       \_\_\_ Better Off                      \_\_\_ Worse Off                      \_\_\_ The Same
- 18) What are the top 3 biggest threats to your neighborhood?  
       \_\_\_ Lack of Planning and Zoning  
       \_\_\_ Crime and Safety  
       \_\_\_ Lack of Adequate Code Enforcement  
       \_\_\_ Upkeep of Properties  
       \_\_\_ Ability to Compete in Local Real Estate Market  
       \_\_\_ Lack of Ordinances on Rental Property  
       \_\_\_ Lack of Funding to Support the City's Neighborhood Action Office  
       \_\_\_ Age of Your Neighborhood  
       \_\_\_ Homes Being Purchased For Businesses or Other Institutions  
       \_\_\_ (Other \_\_\_\_\_)  
       \_\_\_ None
- # 1 – Biggest Threat  
 # 2 – Not as bad as the biggest threat  
 # 3 – Not as bad as #1 or #2

19) List three things you Do Like about living in your neighborhood.

1.

2.

3.

20) Please list three things you Do Not Like about living in your neighborhood.

1.

2.

3.

21) The future for this neighborhood looks bright. (circle one)

1 - Strongly agree

2 -- Agree

3 – Neutral

4- Disagree

5- Strongly disagree

22) Rate the adequacy of the following community services and facilities in your neighborhood

	Excellent	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Inadequate	Don't Know
1. Street Maintenance					
2. Sidewalks					
3. Street lights					
4. Curbs and gutters					
5. Police					
6. Traffic Control					
7. Parks/Recreation					
8. Planning/Zoning					
9. Other _____					

If you marked “needs improvement “ or “inadequate” on the community services in the above table then what role should the municipality play in achieving a better score :

---

---

---

---

If more funding is needed to improve the above sections, where should funds be derived:

---

- 23) How satisfied are you with the quality of life in your neighborhood? (circle one)
- |                    |                       |             |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| 1 – Very satisfied | 2 – Satisfied         | 3 – Neutral |
| 4 – Dissatisfied   | 5 – Very Dissatisfied |             |

- 24) Which one of the following words best describes the way you feel about your life in your neighborhood. (circle one)

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1 - Happy      | 6 - Hurried   |
| 2 - Frustrated | 7 - Anxious   |
| 3 - Lonely     | 8 - Fulfilled |
| 4 - Peaceful   | 9 - Fair      |
| 5 – Dull       |               |

- 25) What are some of the major changes, if any, that you have seen occur in your neighborhood over the past five years, if any?
- 
- 

- 26 ) What one quality would you most want to preserve in your neighborhood:
- 
- 

- 27) People will not work together to get things done in this neighborhood (circle one)
- |                    |                       |             |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| 1 – Strongly Agree | 2 – Agree             | 3 – Neutral |
| 4 – Disagree       | 5 – Strongly Disagree |             |

- 28) How many Stations/Substations does each department have in your municipality:
- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ Police Station | _____ Police Substation |
| _____ Fire Station   | _____ Fire Substation   |

Participant Information:

- 29) How many Regional Neighborhood Networking Conferences have you participated in : \_\_\_\_\_
- 30) Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Male or \_\_\_\_\_ Female
- 31) Age: \_\_\_\_\_
- 32) Race: \_\_\_\_\_
- 33) Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

*"This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229- 333-7837 or [irb@valdosta.edu](mailto:irb@valdosta.edu)."*

**APPENDIX C:**  
**Synopsis of Municipalities**

## Synopsis of Municipalities

The City of Decatur, Illinois, has a city manager-council form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, and six council members. The municipality received HUD funding in 2009, in the form of Economic Stimulus Act of 2008. In order to attract industries to Decatur, the municipality has formed an Industrial Board Corporation with Macon County. The municipality has a Planning Department that works with the Industrial Board Corporation by enforcing land use regulations. In addition, the Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the FEMA Flood Ordinance was adopted on June 2, 2011, that assists the municipality with their desired growth plans. The Planning Department houses the Neighborhood Inspection Division which serves the community by reporting criminal activity, building neighborhood relations, and assisting the community in maintaining the area. The municipality has one police station and seven fire stations.

The City of Peoria, Illinois, has a city manager-council form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, and ten council members. The municipality received HUD funding in 2009 in the form of the Economic Stimulus Funds. In order to attract industries and businesses to Peoria, the municipality has a Department of Economic Development. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan with a completion date of 2010 and the FEMA Flood Ordinance is under review. The Neighborhood Action Office is part of the Division of Community Development. The municipality has one police station and one substation as well as twelve fire stations.

The city of Springfield, Illinois, operates under the mayor council form of government consisting of one mayor and ten council members which represent their

wards. The municipality received 2009 Stimulus funds from HUD. Industries and businesses are recruited to the area by the Department of Planning and Economic Development. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan with a horizon date of 2020. The FEMA Flood Regulations were adopted in Ordinance Number 689-10-05 and went into effect on October 4, 2005. The neighborhood watch program stems from the police department. The police department consists of one station and three substations. The fire department has twelve stations throughout the community.

The city of Evansville, Indiana, operates under the mayor council form of government though a movement is underway to change the charter to a consolidated form of government between the city and county. The municipality has one mayor and nine council members. The Evansville Area has been deemed to be an entitlement area and receives HUD funding. To attract businesses and industries, a public/private nonprofit partnership was created in 2007 named the Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan with a horizon date of 2025 and the FEMA Flood Regulations were adopted in ordinance G-2011-4 § 1 on March 15, 2011. The Neighborhood Action Office is a nonprofit agency called "Unified Neighborhoods of Evansville" though the police department will assist those neighborhoods wanting to become organized. The police has one headquarter and one substation. The fire department has one headquarter and 17 substations.

Fort Wayne, Indiana, has a mayor council form of government consisting of one mayor and nine council members. The municipality has been deemed as being an entitlement area and receives HUD funding. The City of Fort Wayne and Allen County have formed a nonprofit organization named "The Alliance" to bring industries and

businesses to the area. The Division of Planning had a Comprehensive Land Use Plan that was adopted in 2010 and the FEMA Flood Ordinance was adopted in 1995. The Neighborhood Action Office is located in the Mayor's Department. The municipality has one police station and 18 fire stations.

The city of Indianapolis, Indiana, is a consolidated government known as Unigov. The government consists of 1 mayor, 25 city councilors, and 4 members at large. The government receives HUD funds due to being designated as an entitlement community. The government has partnered with private entities to create the Industrial Board known as Develop Indy. The Division of Planning adopted a Comprehensive Land Use Plan in 1991 and the Government Ordinance 96, 2009, § 12 adopted the FEMA Flood Ordinance. The Mayor's office hosts the Division of Neighborhood Liaisons. According to Public Information Officer Adams, the Police Department utilizes six community district locations and one central headquarter. There are several other buildings which house different functions within the police department, i.e. training academy, horse patrol, and K9. Public Information Officer, Ptl. Kendale Adams (2011) notes that "Police substations are difficult to nail down mainly due to the fact that communities across the city of Indianapolis offer officers small amounts of space to type reports and other related functions." The fire department has 1 central headquarter and 64 substations.

South Bend, Indiana, has the mayor-council form of government consisting of one mayor and nine council members. The municipality received HUD funds from the 2009 stimulus package. To bring industries and businesses to the area, the South Bend Advisory Commission on Industrial Development was formed. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the FEMA Flood Ordinance was adopted on

September 13, 2010. The Neighborhood Action Office is housed in the Division of Community Development and sponsors the Neighborhood Resources Corporation, a nonprofit organization. The city has one police station, one fire station, and eleven fire substations.

The city of Owensboro, Kentucky, has the city manager form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, and four commissioners. The municipality has received HUD funding. The focus of bringing businesses and industries to the area is the responsibility of the Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation. The Division of Planning serves the county as well as the city. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the FEMA Flood Ordinance was adopted on May 5, 2009. The Neighborhood Action Office is part of the Division of Community Development. The municipality has one police station and one substation. The fire department has five stations and one station dedicated to training.

The municipality of Cincinnati, Ohio, has a city manager form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, and nine council members. Cincinnati received HUD funds in 2009 from the Stimulus package. To attract industries and businesses to the area, the City has a Division of Economic Development Industrial Board under the Office of City Manager. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the Ordinance No. 035-2010, § 5. The municipality adopted FEMA Flood Regulations on February 10, 2010. The Neighborhood Action Office is housed in the Division of Community Development and is responsible to work with diverse neighborhood partners to leverage financing and other funding for quality housing, distinct commercial properties, small business development opportunities, and

community-based programs. The police department has one headquarter and fove substations. The department is divided into 4 fire districts with 26 fire stations.

The city of Columbus, Ohio, has a mayor-council form of government consisting of one mayor, and seven council members. Columbus received HUD funding in the form of 2009 Stimulus Funds. In order to attract industries and businesses, the government has a Department of Economic Development. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan with a horizon date of 2010 and Ordinance No. 1177-2010 adopted the FEMA Flood Maps. The Neighborhood Action Office is located in the Department of Development and is entitled "Neighborhood Pride." The municipality has 5 police stations, 1 fire station, and 21 fire substations.

The city of Dayton, Ohio, has a city manager form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, and four council members. Dayton received 2009 Stimulus Funds. To attract industries and businesses to the area the Dayton Development Coalition was formed with a Board of Trustees as a public/private entity. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan with a horizon date of 2020 and Ordinance 30418-04, passed December 29, 2004 adopted the FEMA Flood Regulations. The municipality has 1 police station with 3 substations as well as 12 fire stations.

The city of Huber Heights, Ohio, has the city manager form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, six wards, and two members voted at-large. The municipality has received HUD Funds from Montgomery County. Businesses and industries are brought to area by the "Business First!" organization. The Division of Planning is currently revising the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the FEMA Flood

Regulations was adopted on October 25, 2004 Ordinance 0-1528. The municipality has one police department and two fire stations.

The city of Montgomery, Ohio, has a city manager form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, and six council members. The municipality received HUD funds in the form of a 2003 Community Development Block Grant. Industries and businesses are brought to the municipality by the Chamber of Commerce. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan that was adopted in 2007. The FEMA Flood Regulations were adopted by Ordinance 7-2004. The police have one station which houses the neighborhood watch program. The fire department has one station.

The city of Moraine, Ohio, has a manager council form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, four council members, and two members elected at large. The municipality has received funds from HUD. Businesses and industries are brought to the area by the Department of Economic and Community Development. The Division of Planning has a Comprehensive Land Use Plan dated 1995-2015. The FEMA Flood Regulations were passed by Ordinance 1557-04 and was passed on December 9, 2004. The neighborhood watch program is offered by the police department which has one station. The fire department has one station and two substations.

The city of Springfield, Ohio, has the city manager form of government consisting of one city manager, one mayor, and four commissioners. The municipality received HUD funds in the form of 2009 Stimulus Recovery funds. Businesses and industries are brought to the areas by the Joint Economic Development Board. The Division of Local Planning adopted a Comprehensive Land Use Unified Plan in 2007. The FEMA regulations were adopted in No. 09-318. The neighborhood action office is divided into

two departments. The first department for neighborhoods is housed in the stabilization office and is financed by HUD Funds. The second department for neighborhoods is housed in the police department which has one headquarters and one substation. The fire department has seven stations.