

State of the County Report: Environmental and Social Justice

COMMUNITY COMPASS REPORT NO. 16-7

Hamilton County, Ohio



HAMILTON COUNTY
Regional
Planning
Commission

November 2004



The Planning Partnership is a collaborative initiative of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission. The Partnership – open to all political jurisdictions in the County and to affiliate members in the public, private, and civic sectors – is an advisory board that works to harness the collective energy and vision of its members to effectively plan for the future of our County. Rather than engaging in the Planning Commission’s short-range functions such as zoning reviews, the Planning Partnership takes a long-range, comprehensive approach to planning, working to build a community that works for families, for businesses and for the region. The Partnership firmly believes that collaboration is the key to a positive, competitive, and successful future for Hamilton County.

Visit planningpartnership.org and communitycompass.org for more information.

Community COMPASS (Hamilton County’s Comprehensive Master Plan and Strategies) is a long-range plan that seeks to address mutual goals related to physical, economic, and social issues among the 49 communities within Hamilton County. Through a collective shared vision for the future based on the wishes and dreams of thousands of citizens, Hamilton County now has direction to chart its course into the 21st century.

In developing a broad vision with broad support, Community COMPASS will help ensure that trends are anticipated, challenges are addressed, priorities are focused, and our collective future is planned and achieved strategically over the next 20 to 30 years. Through an in-depth analysis of all aspects of the County, the multi-year process will result in a comprehensive plan.

The State of the County report series outlines conditions, findings, opportunities, and key measures related to improving and sustaining quality of life in twelve major systems in our community. The individual reports lay the groundwork for an overall State of the County analysis or report card, and provide support for refining action strategies.

Abstract

Title:

State of the County Report: Environmental and Social Justice Community COMPASS Report No. 16-7

Subject:

Current conditions and trends regarding contemporary local and national research on environmental and social justice issues and initiatives in Hamilton County

Date:

November 2004

Synopsis:

This report presents existing conditions and trends in Hamilton County related to environmental and social justice issues. The report identifies important findings as well as the importance of trends associated with each finding, and provides key indicators for measuring progress toward the Vision for Hamilton County's Future.

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Context

COMMUNITY COMPASS COMPONENTS

- 1 **Vision**
(What do we want?)
- 2 **Initiatives**
(What strategies should we consider?)
- 3 **Indicators**
(What should we measure?)
- 4 **Trends**
(Where have we been?)
- 5 **Projections**
(Where are we headed?)
- 6 **Research**
(What's the story behind the trend?)
- 7 **Partners**
(Who can help?)
- 8 **Strategic Plans**
(What can we do that works?)
- 9 **Action Plans**
(How do we make it happen?)
- 10 **Performance Measures**
(Are actions making a difference?)

This Report

STATE OF THE COUNTY REPORTS

- Civic Engagement and Social Capital
- Community Services
- Culture and Recreation
- Economy and Labor Market
- Education
- Environment
- Environmental and Social Justice
- Governance
- Health and Human Services
- Housing
- Land Use and Development Framework
- Mobility

**STATE OF THE COUNTY REPORT:
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

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ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

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Executive Summary

FINDING 1

Locally unwanted land uses are often located in areas that impact some populations disproportionately.

- In the past various studies by the U.S. General Accounting Office, the United Church of Christ, and individual researchers have established a disproportionate concentration of “locally unwanted land uses” (or “LULUs”) in communities where Blacks are predominant. Studies published by the EPA often found racial and class disparities in the amounts of exposures humans receive to pollutants.
- Hamilton County shares parallels with other jurisdictions in the United States in that there is some spatial correlation between industries releasing toxic materials and the percentage of an area’s population that lives below the poverty line. In Hamilton County, Toxic Releasing Industries (TRIs) are concentrated in the Mill Creek Valley, which historically developed as an industrial corridor with many working family homes constructed nearby to provide access for workers to jobs. After construction of Interstate-75, further industries were attracted to the corridor, and the area became a less desirable place for residences. However, compared to locations of TRI in minority and poorer neighborhoods, Hamilton County has jurisdictions with TRI locations, which are predominantly White and well-to-do neighborhoods. Two areas within the City of Cincinnati, Lower Price Hill with industrial emissions and Winton Hills with a landfill, are perceived as cases for environmental inequities. Various interest groups and coalitions have launched initiatives or surveyed health of the community residents to uncover impacts of the pollutants. However, if existence of a LULU predates concentration of minorities and poor in an area then it is difficult to determine environmental injustice. According to researchers, LULUs such as chemical industries or toxic emitting facilities tend to attract other LULU in the area with a notion that existence of one more facility would not make much of a difference. According to others, there are cases where industries have located considering the situation that minority or poor may not have political clout to counter the decision.

FINDING 2

Advocacy for social and environmental justice is growing stronger in Hamilton County but disparities still exist.

- Historically, real and perceived disparities existed in many forms such as race-restricted housing covenants, red-lining, hate crimes, and under-representation of minorities in private corporations and on decision-making bodies. While there has been some progress, some of these disparities still exist.
- The Cincinnati region hosts different types of social and environmental interest groups addressing issues of disparities and inequities. Local governments have launched initiatives on community development and police and minority interrelationships. To name a few, Community Action Now (CAN) launched by the City of Cincinnati is combating social disparities for Blacks and includes community oriented policing. OKI has a newly formed environmental justice advisory committee to address issues of environmental justice in transportation planning.
- There are community groups attempting to repeal Article XII of Cincinnati City’s Charter, which sanctions discrimination based on sexual orientation, was recently repealed by the voters. Public interest groups have formed to address issues of public transportation. Church groups such as the AMOS Project and Christ Church Cathedral are working on different types of race interrelationship and community development initiatives. Recently, Cincinnati Association launched the Greater Cincinnati Commitment campaign. The opening of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati will contribute to the region’s ongoing social justice dialogue. Neighborhood groups have formed advocating for social and environmental justice issues in local areas. Despite efforts by different groups, a recent study analyzing four decades of socio-economic status (SES) finds that racial isolation increased in the lowest of the four social areas. The socioeconomic integration also did not improve much as most of the poor families remain concentrated in the core area of the metropolitan region.

STATE OF THE COUNTY REPORT:

Environmental and Social Justice

THE VISION FOR HAMILTON COUNTY'S FUTURE:

Clean, safe communities with inclusive populations, economic opportunities and open communication.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents existing conditions and trends in Hamilton County related to contemporary local and national research on discrimination, and relays how local social and environmental justice initiatives are attempting to combat these discriminatory practices. The report identifies important findings as well as the importance of trends associated with each finding, and provides key indicators for measuring progress toward the Vision for Hamilton County's Future.

Both social and environmental justice are related insofar as both require fair and equal treatment of all human beings. They are different, however, in that social justice focuses its attention on ensuring equity and fairness in the social world, while environmental justice is concerned with ensuring these things in the natural world.

Most would agree that justice implies "fairness". It also implies *contract*: people have to agree to a set of rules upon which to judge the behavior of themselves and others – that is, to determine what is "fair". Therefore, justice implies the existence of rules that are codified in written form (the U.S. Constitution, for example), or orally (for example, through a "gentlemen's agreement").

Calls for social justice have long existed and are inevitable as long as people live in groups. Recent calls for social justice have come from minority groups that may not necessarily have fewer numbers than the dominant population, but may have less power or influence in society. Many church groups undertake social justice initiatives by working to combat poverty or by fostering dignity to the powerless and disenfranchised. Government agencies enforce such initiatives through affirmative action programs and by prohibiting discrimination against citizens based on specific traits.

What all of these initiatives have in common is that they not only heed David Harvey's call that social justice be "a just distribution justly arrived at,"¹ but that they work to affirm equal treatment of all human beings who obey the country's laws. In the United States, these calls for social justice often use a federal statute, the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, to determine fair and unfair treatment. The Civil Rights Act further guarantees the right to vote, prohibits

The Vision Statement for Environmental and Social Justice, a component of *The Vision for Hamilton County's Future*, is based on recommendations from 12 Community Forums in the Fall of 2001 and the Countywide Town Meeting held January 12, 2002.

The Vision for Hamilton County's Future was reviewed and approved by:

- Community COMPASS Steering Team, July 30, 2002
 - Hamilton County Planning Partnership, Dec. 3, 2002
 - Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, Feb. 6, 2003
 - Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners, Nov. 26, 2003
-

discrimination in places of public accommodation and in administering federally-assisted programs, and ensures equal employment opportunities, amongst other regulations.

The growing calls for environmental justice also rely on the 1964 Civil Rights Act as a way to determine fairness. Federal agencies must also abide by Executive Order 12898 — a directive issued in 1994 by President Clinton mandating that,

*“...each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.”*²

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines environmental justice as fair treatment and “meaningful involvement” of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.³ Currently, environmental justice is considered by many to be a model or a lens through which one can examine developmental programs and policies.

However, both social and environmental justice are concerned with the fair distribution of infrastructure⁴ and with how equitably the repercussions of that infrastructure are dispersed. Environmental justice has as a specific aim that no group should bear a disproportionate share of negative environmental repercussions from governmental or commercial operations or from any governmental program and policies.

The EPA’s call for “*meaningful involvement* of all people” includes the affected community’s participation in the decision-making process, due consideration to concerns of every participant, communities influencing the decision, and EPA facilitating participation of those communities. Though they usually focus on a particular subset of population, almost all social and environmental justice movements are concerned with achieving what is believed to be *the common good* — an achievement that should not come at the expense of another group of people.

The environmental justice movement has generated much debate among scholars. Some contrast the environmental movement that gained momentum in the 1960s — which focused on pollution prevention and wilderness conservation — with the environmental

justice movement. The environmental justice movement, however, has brought grassroots organizations and other groups to the table to raise environmental justice consciousness in the population and to empower disadvantaged people.

Few scholars argue that consciousness-raising activities have drawn attention to disparities as well as contributed to the idea of group-identity. Instead of everyone joining together — regardless of race and class — for a better environment, disadvantaged groups have joined together to make themselves heard.⁵ Whatever the case, environmental justice now has its own identity and is recognized by many as a separate and important movement.

Calls for environmental or social justice imply that a person or a group of people witnesses a disparity or even discrimination in the society. While all discrimination implies the existence of a disparity, not all disparities are the result of discrimination. In the sense of environmental and social justice, discrimination is a *conscious* act of treating a person differently than one would treat another, given similar circumstances.

However, discrimination can result from long-standing or traditional practices

done subconsciously or unconsciously by people in power who don't question their actions. These practices may appear to outsiders to be a pattern of discrimination against a group of people, even though the person or group undertaking the action may not be doing so with the intent of discriminating.

Though it may have been either the result of overt actions, or through an estab-

lished pattern of traditional practices, federal and local government sanctioning of racial, ethnic, and class discrimination has been well documented. Because Blacks are Hamilton County's most sizable minority group, and because of discrimination against them in employment, education, housing, and many other facets of public life for much of the 20th Century, contemporary

discriminatory practices against members of that group are of considerable interest to many. However, other groups such as Latinos and persons from Appalachia also experience discrimination. Environmental justice issues also can appear with regard to homosexuals. In its charter, the City of Cincinnati explicitly condones discrimination against gays and lesbians.

FINDING 1

LOCALLY UNWANTED LAND USES ARE OFTEN LOCATED IN AREAS THAT IMPACT SOME POPULATIONS DISPROPORTIONATELY.

Various studies by the U.S. General Accounting Office, the United Church of Christ, and individual researchers have established a disproportionate concentration of "locally unwanted land uses" (or "LULUs") in communities where Blacks are predominant. A national level study of 2,083 counties conducted in 1995 found that minority populations and the poor are disproportionately affected by environmental hazards. Moreover, studies published by the EPA often find racial and class disparities in the amount of exposure humans receive to pollutants. These racial and class differences are reflected, respectively, in Figures 1 and 2.

According to Figure 1, for example, 34 percent of Hispanic Americans and 16.5 percent of Black Americans were located in areas that did not meet fed-

Air Pollutants	Whites (%)	Blacks (%)	Hispanics (%)
Particulate Matter	14.7	16.5	34.0
Carbon Monoxide	33.6	46.0	57.1
Ozone	52.5	62.2	71.2
Sulfur Dioxide	7.0	12.1	5.7
Lead	6.0	9.2	18.5

Race	Annual Family Income		
	Less Than \$6,000	\$6,000 - \$15,000	Greater than \$15,000
Black	68%	54%	38%
White	36%	23%	12%

**Figure 1
PERCENTAGE OF U.S. POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY LIVING IN AREAS NOT MEETING FEDERAL AIR QUALITY STANDARDS, 1992**

Source: *Environmental Equity: Reducing Risk for All Communities*; EPA, 1992⁶

**Figure 2
ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WITH BLOOD-LEVELS HIGHER THAN THE ACCEPTED STANDARD POPULATION, 1988**

Note: 15 µg/dl indicates micrograms per deciliter; income indicates annual family income.

Source: *Environmental Equity: Reducing Risk for All Communities*; EPA, 1992; Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), 1988.

eral standards for levels of particulate matter. These disparities may not rise to the level of legal definition of discrimination, in that historically, minorities have concentrated in the lower-income areas of metropolitan regions. It is these areas that are most likely to have high concentrations of air pollutants.

For a host of historical and economic reasons, minority populations tend to concentrate in a metropolitan region's central city and county. The Cincinnati region is no different in this regard. Concentration in the central city is often accompanied by poverty, joblessness, and urban blight. In terms of environmental concerns, racial minorities and the poor are generally at a disadvantage because central areas are often the

most polluted — with traffic-snarled highways and streets, aged housing units, and deteriorating infrastructure.

Manufacturing sites that produce harmful emissions can create health hazards to nearby residents. Hamilton County shares parallels with other jurisdictions in the United States in that there is a spatial correlation between industries releasing toxic materials and the percentage of an area's population that lives below the poverty line (Figure 3).

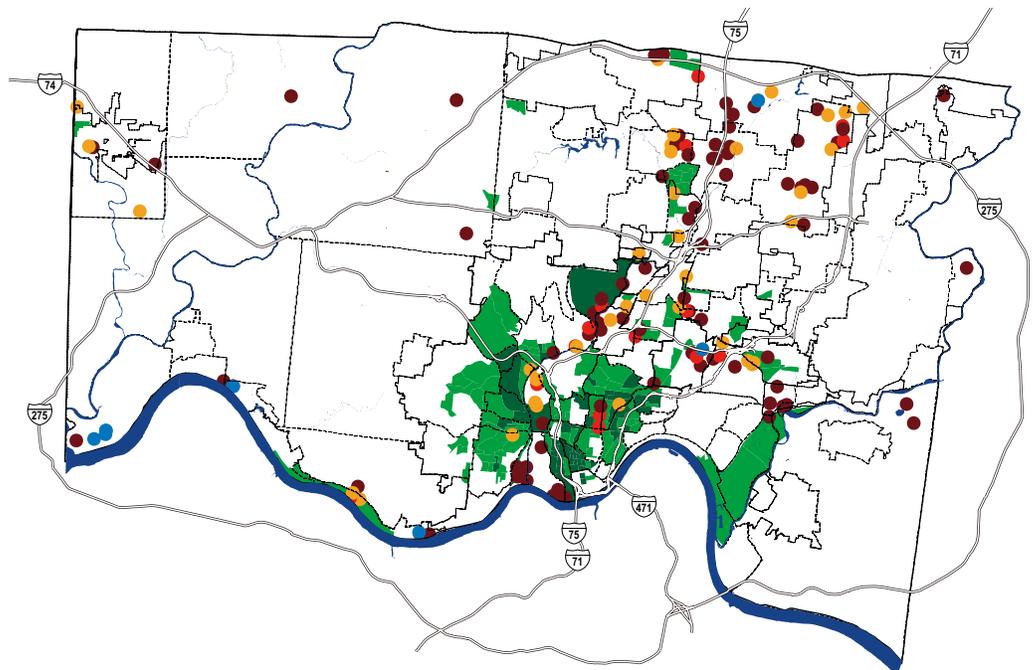
In Hamilton County, toxic-releasing industries (TRIs) are concentrated in the Mill Creek Valley. Further, many industries in this valley discharge into the Mill Creek. Historically, the Mill Creek developed as an industrial corridor

with many working family homes constructed nearby to provide access for workers to jobs. When Interstate-75 was constructed, further industries were attracted to the corridor, and the area became a less desirable place for residences. As can be seen in Figures 3 and 4, many poverty and minority areas are impacted by manufacturing facilities with high toxic emissions. It is not always the case, though, that toxic-releasing facilities tend to favor locating in heavily minority or poorer neighborhoods. The Village of Evendale, for example, has a cluster of industries releasing toxics, yet more than 90 percent of that jurisdiction's residents live above the poverty line and most are White.

Two areas within the City of Cincinnati have been

Figure 3
DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN POVERTY AND TOXIC-RELEASING FACILITIES (TRI)

- TRI Facility Land and Surface Water
- TRI Facility Air Emissions
 - TRI < 1,000 lbs./year
 - 1,000 < TRI < 10,000 lbs./year
 - TRI > 10,000 lbs./year
- % Population Below Poverty Level
 - 20.01 - 40
 - 40.01 - 81.45



Source: CAGIS, Toxic Release Inventory
EPA, Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission.

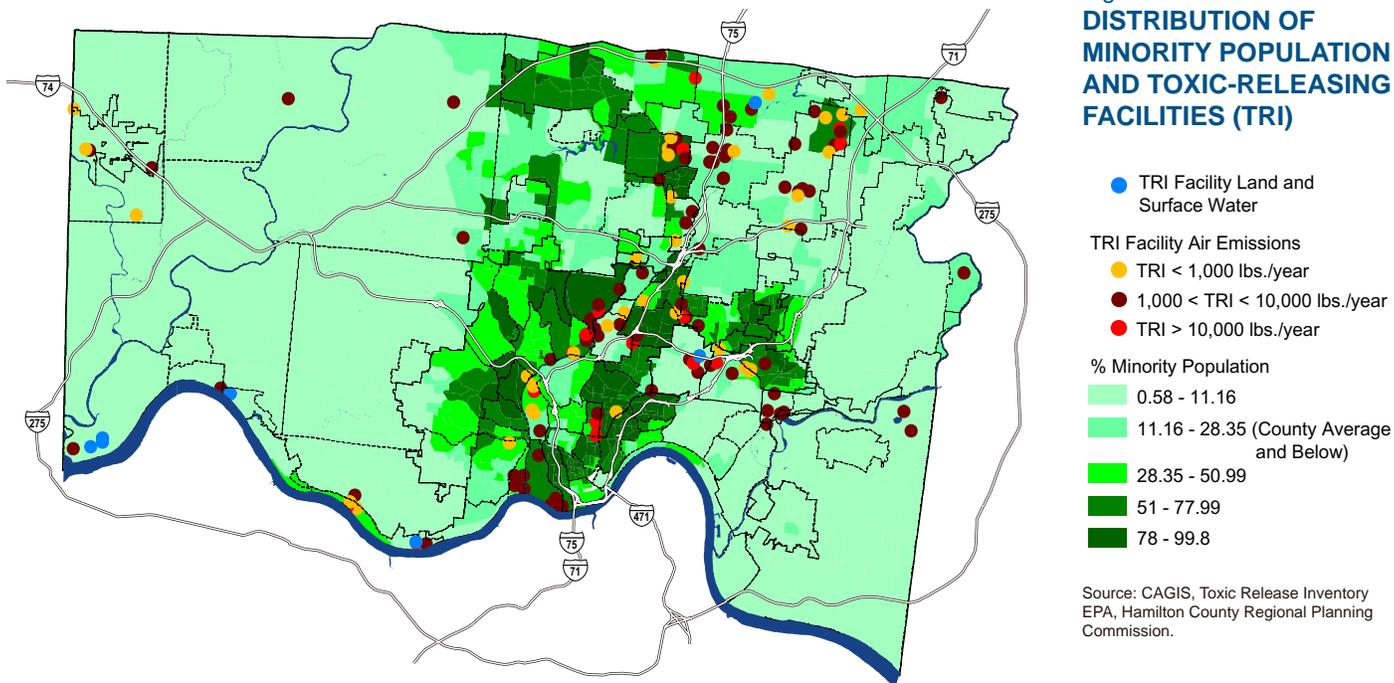
greatly impacted by what could be perceived of as environment justice inequities. In these two neighborhoods — Winton Hills with a landfill and Lower Price Hill with industrial toxic emissions — environmental justice groups are working to address the repercussions of such a concentration of industry being so close to the politically disadvantaged.

Grassroots organizations in Lower Price Hill, a neighborhood with a large population of poor Whites, many of Appalachian descent, contend with some 20 different industries and a Superfund site. In a documentary, *The Faces of Environmental Justice in Cincinnati*, residents of Lower Price Hill and Winton Hills stated that industries caused increased incidences of cancer, skin

diseases, hearing and learning problems in neighborhood children. A U.S. EPA controlled study on air quality in the year 2000 in Lower Price Hill found air quality poor, but not so bad as to cause cancer. The study found air quality in Lower Price Hill to be comparable to other urban areas in the country.⁷ However, the study did suggest that there are concerns about toxic chemicals routinely released in the area since they are known to affect the central nervous system, reproductive system, lungs, kidneys, blood, and skin.⁸

In 1989, a task force formed by the *Urban Appalachian Council* undertook a study comparing morbidity rates of children in Lower Price Hill to those of the entire city by using four years of primary discharge diagnosis data from Cincinnati

Children’s Hospital Medical Center. The research found that children in Lower Price Hill aged five to eleven years were over four times more likely to be discharged with diagnoses of acute respiratory infections than children from the City as a whole. Further, Lower Price Hill children under the age of five were over two times more likely to be discharged with a diagnosis of intestinal infectious diseases, viral diseases, inflammatory diseases of the central nervous system, diseases of the ear, and acute respiratory infections compared to the same aged children from the rest of the City.⁹ The report suggested that the pollution-related health problems suffered by children living in Lower Price Hill affected their school performance.



Researchers have different views regarding how LULUs end up being in poorer neighborhoods. According to some, the location of LULUs like hazardous waste sites, chemical industries, and sewage infrastructure often attract similar industries. The general assumption is since other LULUs are already grouped in one location, one more wouldn't make much difference. According to others, minorities and poor are often limited in their means and ability to counter new LULUs coming in the area. Neighborhoods with LULUs become undesirable places to live. Property values are reduced and homes often converted to low-income rentals, which in turn attracts more poor and low income persons into the area.

Coupled with the effect that LULUs have on nearby property values, rates of homeownership among racial minorities and the poor have historically been low in Hamilton County. In Lower Price Hill for example, nearly 80 percent of the housing units are rentals. In Winton Hills, that figure rises to 93 percent. Historically, when an area has a high percentage of renters, attempts at community mobilization and empowerment initiatives become more difficult. This apathy is compounded by the fact that many poor renters believe that their poverty diminishes their political clout.¹⁰

Whereas some see the presence of LULUs in poor and minority areas as the result of economic processes that are indifferent to the race

or social class of citizens, others see their placement as the result of discrimination. The United Church of Christ study, *Toxic Waste and Race in the United States*¹¹, found that commercial waste facilities were located in disproportionate numbers in Black communities. Similarly, Robert D. Bullard documented that Houston located every city-owned municipal landfill between 1920 and 1970 in Black communities, and six of the city's eight garbage incinerators were located in Black neighborhoods.

Hamilton County has not had the experience of Houston in siting waste facilities in minority communities. Figure 5 shows the location of more than a dozen solid waste facilities, including landfills, incinerators, and

Figure 5
**SOLID WASTE
 LANDFILL LOCATIONS
 AND TRANSFER
 STATIONS, 2004**

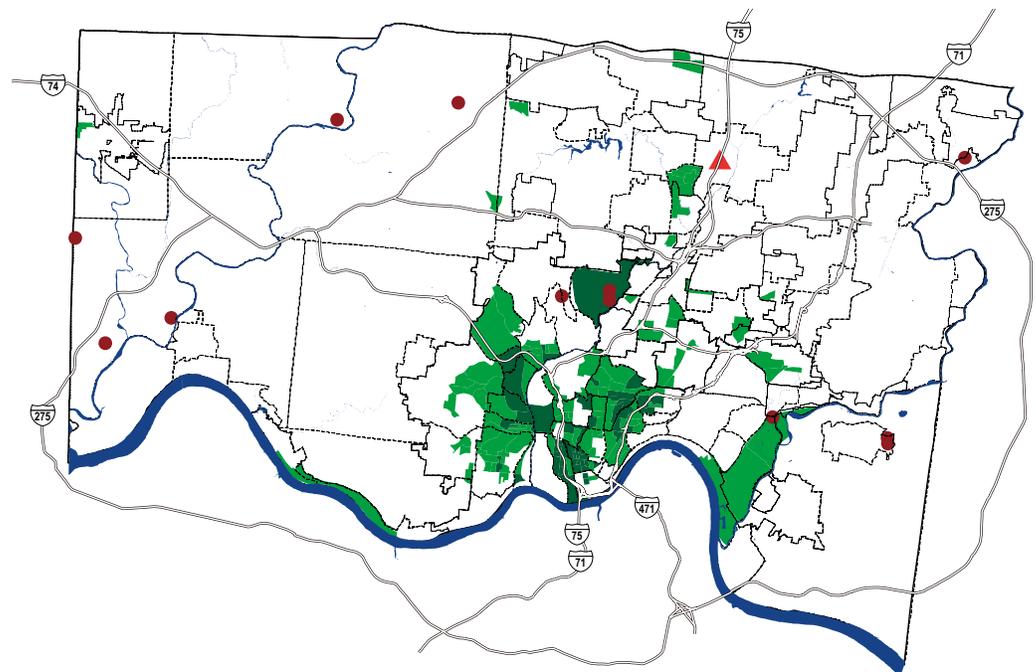
Solid Waste Infrastructure in Hamilton County

- Landfill
- ▲ Solid Waste Transfer Station

% Population Below Poverty Level

- 20.01 - 40%
- 40.01 - 81.45%

Source: CAGIS.



waste transfer stations dispersed throughout the County. Colerain Township's Rumpke Landfill, the largest in the region, is surrounded by low-density housing occupied by families with medium to high incomes.

On the other hand, Winton Hills is a poorer community that is the home of the City of Cincinnati's ELDA landfill, which is no longer active. After years of protest, community leaders successfully lobbied the City of Cincinnati's Board of Health to close Waste Management Inc.'s ELDA landfill, and to prevent the siting of a garbage transfer station there. Despite the City's refusal to issue a permit to Waste Management, and the City's moratorium on placing similar solid waste facilities in the neighborhood, the State of Ohio's Environmental Appeals Review Commission ruled in favor of Waste Management's owning of the transfer station. In rendering its decision, the Commission argued that Ohio does not have a law specifically related to environmental justice, even though the City of Cincinnati does.¹² The closed ELDA landfill is now being used to harvest methane gas created by the decomposing waste.

One example of Hamilton County's rural residents joining forces against an environmental injustice is

the community near the Fernald uranium processing plant in Crosby Township. In operation from 1951 to 1989, the plant refined uranium — a naturally-occurring, radioactive element — for metal that was used for atomic weaponry. In 1984, the U.S. Department of Energy, which operated the plant, reported that a byproduct of the enrichment process, uranium oxide (also radioactive), had been released into the environment over a number of years. They admitted that the byproduct had contaminated the nearby soil and an aquifer. In addition, silos that stored some of the material were vented in 1986, releasing radioactive material into the atmosphere.

Today, the Fernald facility is one of two Superfund sites of national priority in Hamilton County, the other being Pristine, Incorporated in Reading. Fernald and its secret contamination of an aquifer and the soil not only sparked involvement by the Department of Energy, but also caused a host of citizen groups to spring into action, among them: the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board; Fernald Residents for Environment, Safety, and Health (FRESH); and the Fernald Community Health Effects Committee — which are participating in planning future uses for the site.

Why Is This Important?

When examining environmental and social justice issues, do the disparities one sees in the United States and in Hamilton County rise to the level of discrimination? In the case of environmental issues, if the existence of the LULU predates the existence of the surrounding residential neighborhood, one would be hard-pressed to answer yes. In the case of social justice issues, the question would also be difficult to answer affirmatively, if there is no discernable pattern to the treatment given to particular groups.

With regard to environmental justice issues, new policies have been enacted to ensure that future decision-making incorporates a multitude of voices. Following the issuance of Executive Order 12898 in 1994, the EPA created the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC), a committee that advises EPA on environmental justice issues. The Council has recommended procedures to EPA for environmental justice in the permitting process and provided information on pollution prevention and community health in poorer neighborhoods. Through its subcommittees, including those on air and water protection, indigenous peoples, and waste facility

siting, NEJAC is advising EPA on ways to assure environmental justice is included in enforcement and compliance at all levels of government. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are working with state transportation agencies, metropolitan planning

organizations, and public transit providers to ensure that all future implementation policies for transportation are in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 12898. It is hoped that the inclusion of these policies will help prevent the concentration of LULUs and disadvantaged persons in

the same location thereby, empowering the historically disadvantaged, and preventing social unrest.

Key Indicators:

- *Poverty and minority populations impacted by toxic-releasing facilities (TRI) (Figures 3 and 4)*

FINDING 2

ADVOCACY FOR SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IS GROWING STRONGER IN HAMILTON COUNTY BUT DISPARITIES STILL EXIST.

Feelings of disparate treatment based on race, ethnicity, or class do not just appear in the environmental arena. Historically, real and perceived disparities existed in many forms such as race-restricted housing covenants, red-lining, hate crimes, and under-representation of minorities in private corporations and on decision-making bodies. While there has been some progress, some of these disparities still exist.

To combat some of the social disparities for Blacks, the City of Cincinnati initiated *Community Action Now* (or “Cincinnati CAN”). This organization — formed in the aftermath of racially-tinged riots sparked by the death of a Black man by a White police officer in 2001 — strives to “achieve greater

equity [and] opportunity by addressing the disparities that impact people in need.”¹³

Cincinnati CAN is working toward a more socially-just Cincinnati, particularly in the criminal justice system. Among Cincinnati CAN’s current initiatives is the implementation of “The Cincinnati Plan,” which includes a “community problem oriented policing” program or CPOP; usage of the Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment model (SARA)¹⁴ to improve community-police interactions; and the creation of community-based juvenile courts. For example, the organization is trying to end the disparity in how first-time juvenile offenders are treated in the City of Cincinnati compared with the rest of

Hamilton County. Unlike Hamilton County, the City of Cincinnati requires that the records of first-time juvenile offenders be made public.

Disparate treatment in the social sphere also exists with regard to sexual orientation. There have been on-going attempts by groups such as Citizens to Restore Fairness and Stonewall Cincinnati to repeal Article XII of Cincinnati’s City Charter. Article XII effectively sanctions the discrimination of gay and lesbian citizens, stating that:

“The City of Cincinnati and its various Boards and Commissions may not enact, adopt, enforce or administer any ordinance, regulation, rule or policy which provides that homo-

sexual, lesbian, or bisexual orientation, status, conduct or relationship constitutes, entitles, or otherwise provides a person with the basis to have any claim of minority or protected status, quota preference or other preferential treatment."

Cincinnati is the only city in the United States that prevents the extension of protection to gays and lesbians.¹⁵ However on November 2nd, 2004, Article XII was repealed by the voters.

Another issue repeatedly raised by social and environmental justice groups is accessibility to public transportation. The 2002 ballot proposal for a sales tax increase to implement the Metro Moves Plan, which includes light rail and expanded bus service in the Cincinnati region, met with mixed response and was ultimately defeated. Proponents of the Plan claimed that its implementation would, among other things, improve accessibility for minority, poor, disabled, and aged populations thereby leading to more job, shopping, and recreational opportunities.

Environmental and social justice concerns are being heeded by a host of public agencies, civic organizations, and individual persons in Hamilton County. Many local religious organizations are spearheading

initiatives on equity and fairness on issues such as education, transportation, and the criminal justice system. An example of one is the AMOS Project, a national foundation with a local chapter committed to "living out their faith through public action."¹⁶ Another religious organization, Christ Church in downtown Cincinnati, is currently implementing an initiative on reconciliation to improve race relations.

The Coalition for a Just Cincinnati is a collection of not only religious groups, but civil rights organizations and labor rights activists. Among other long-standing community organizations in the Cincinnati area committed to issues of social justice are Cincinnati Association, Women's City Club, and League of Women Voters.

Some neighborhood groups concerned with social justice have also been involved with environmental justice issues. Community groups such as the Lower Price Hill Environmental Leadership Coalition have teamed up with other local civic groups and local universities to raise awareness of environmental justice issues.

With regard to social justice issues, the aftermath of the 2001 Cincinnati riots prompted not just Cincinnati CAN, but the *Neighbor to Neighbor* series. Spon-

sored by the Cincinnati Enquirer, the objective of *Neighbor to Neighbor* was to engage people from different races and backgrounds to talk to each other about racial segregation and how to improve race relations. More than 2,100 people from nearly every Tri-State neighborhood broke a polite silence to engage in difficult talk on race relations.¹⁷

Similarly, Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati have supported collaborative efforts such as the Hamilton County Environmental Priorities Project, which included a working group on environmental decision-making and public participation. The County and City also have community environmental advisory councils, which include Hamilton County Environmental Action Commission and Cincinnati Environmental Advisory Council to help guide projects that may affect, or may be affected by, the natural environment.

The opening of the *National Underground Railroad Freedom Center* will also contribute to the region's social justice dialogue. Opened in August 2004 in downtown Cincinnati, the Freedom Center is expected to spur research on the history of social justice movements in antebellum America. The museum will also host many ex-

"The Greater Cincinnati Commitment"

The years of slavery, followed by years of racial injustice cannot be undone, nor should they ever be forgotten. In this new millennium we can and we must, however, move forward to remove those vestiges of racism from our city, our country and our individual lives.

In this spirit, I make this commitment:

- *To use my individual and collective strength to intellectually, politically, economically, spiritually, and morally remove racist behaviors and attitudes from my environment.*
 - *To work toward the removal of institutional racism in our city and country.*
 - *To openly and willfully seek to serve as a catalyst for dismantling racism by opening the doors that will ensure all Americans the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*
-

hibitions and educational programs on a variety of topics dealing with issues of justice and freedom in the modern era.

Recently, Inter-Group Relations Action Team of the Cincinnati Association launched "The Greater Cincinnati Commitment" campaign. The campaign calls for members of the association and others to pledge the commitment to remove vestiges of racism from the city, country, and their individual lives.

Environmental justice issues have also been the subject of much research in the academic world. Local universities and non-governmental organizations are involved in collaborative studies regarding the health impacts of polluted environments. IMBY or "in my back yard" is a community health and environmental research center at the University of Cincinnati that has issued a variety of local public health surveys such as the Lower Price Hill Children's Health Survey and the Women's Health Survey. The Cincinnati area has a new policy for environmental justice issues in place at OKI, the metropolitan planning organization for the Cincinnati metropolitan region. The policy expands OKI's effort of public involvement in transportation decision making and provisions for equity of trans-

portation investments.¹⁸ For example, issues and recommendations ensuing from OKI major investment studies for highway corridors must consider environmental justice issues in their methodology. Additionally, OKI also has a newly formed environmental justice advisory committee comprised of community representatives and elected officials that will oversee the development and implementation of a policy aimed towards minorities, low income, elderly, disabled, and zero car households. Although now oriented towards transportation planning, it is anticipated to be expanded to other areas in the future, such as disadvantaged and minority business enterprises.

Why Is This Important?

Because of Executive Order 12898, federal agencies are requiring local governments to address issues of environmental justice if they want federal dollars. This is the federal government's attempt to address inequalities among its citizens. Beyond the monetary incentives, though, is the growing awareness that benefits and consequences should be distributed fairly.

While groups calling for equal treatment for the disadvantaged have long

existed in Hamilton County — in particular with criminal justice and education — it is only relatively recently that these and newer groups have seen that power may also be discriminately exercised through less well-known types of infrastructure such as transportation, education, and housing.

Despite ongoing efforts by social and environmental groups and non-discriminatory policies in housing, racial isolation not only exists in the central city, but also has increased in the last three decades. In a recently published study analyzing areas of socioeconomic status (SES) in the Cincinnati region, scholars uncovered that racial isolation increased dramatically in SES I, the lowest of the four social areas.¹⁹ Many inner city neighborhoods fall under SES I. These social areas are determined on a complex socioeconomic index comprising median family income, education, overcrowding, family structure, and occupation. The research also uncovers lack of socioeconomic integration as most of the poor families in our metropolitan area²⁰ live in Hamilton County.

Though it is impossible to predict what specific challenges lay ahead, it is inevitable that public interest groups will form to address the disparate or discrimina-

tory treatment that results from a government's provision of services. The resulting public outcry almost always calls upon government — whenever and wherever possible — to give parity to the powerless. The current trends of more awareness by citizen groups, collaborations, media, leadership attitude, and commitment to change have strengthened that public outcry.

Key Indicators:

- *Number of implemented CAN recommendations (City of Cincinnati)*
- *Number of individuals who sign "The Cincinnati Commitment" (Inter-Group Relations Action Team, Cincinnati Association)*
- *Racial isolation in social areas (The Social Areas of Cincinnati: An Analysis of Social Needs, 2004)*
- *Socioeconomic segregation in social areas (The Social Areas of Cincinnati: An Analysis of Social Needs, 2004)*
- *Transit access from low income neighborhoods to job centers*
- *Academic achievement test scores in low income neighborhood public schools (Ohio Department of Education)*

Appendix A

Endnotes

1. Harvey, David. *Social Justice and the City*. The Johns Hopkins University Press: Maryland. 1973. PP.98.
2. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. As of June 25, 2004, the order has not been rescinded. www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/FHLaws/EXO12898.cfm.
3. Environmental Protection Agency. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts estimates total employment as full time plus part time employment by place of work. www.epa.gov/oswer/ej/aboutej.htm
4. In this report, “infrastructure” is defined as that phenomena, often provided by government, that allows modern society to function. Therefore, “traffic infrastructure” includes such things as roads, road signs, and sidewalks; “solid waste infrastructure” includes landfills, incinerators, and recycling centers; etc.
5. Dawson, Jane. “The Two Faces of Environmental Justice: Lessons from the Eco-Nationalist Phenomenon.” *Environmental Politics*. No. 9. Vol. 2. PP 22-60.
6. Wernette, D. and L. Nieves, 1991. “Minorities and Air Pollution: A Preliminary Geo-Demographic Analysis.” Presented at the Socioeconomic Research Analysis Conference- II.
7. *The Faces of Environmental Injustice in Cincinnati*. VHS. Produced by The Sierra Club, Urban Appalachian Council, Sunshine Productions N.C., and Communities United for Action. 2002.
8. Ibid.
9. Obermiller, Phillip J. and M. Kathryn Brown. *Appalachian Health Status in Greater Cincinnati: A Research Overview*. Urban Appalachian Council Working Paper No. 18. www.uacvoice.org/wp/workingpaper18.html.
10. Faber, Daniel and Deborah McCarthy. 2001. “The Evolving Structure of the Environmental Justice Movement in the United States: New Models for Democratic Decision-Making.” *Social Justice Research*. 14.4. 405-421.
11. *Toxic Waste and Race in the United States*. United Church of Christ. 1987.
12. “Appeal ruling may allow Winton Hills garbage transfer station, April 21, 2004.” *The Enquirer*. www.enquirer.com/editions/2004/04/21/loc_wastetransfer21.html.
13. www.cincinmatican.org.
14. Following the riots in 2001, U.S. Department of Justice and Cincinnati Police Department came into an agreement to improve efficiency of the police force by introducing race related and community policing programs. CPOP is part of this collaborative agreement, a five-year plan. SARA is one of the methodologies to implement the CPOP. It consists of scanning or identifying problems and concerns in the community; analysis to determine causes of those concerns; determining strategies for the community; and finally assessing achievements of those strategies.
15. Citizens to Restore Fairness. 2004. “About Article XII.” Campaign to Repeal Article XII. Accessed 30 July 2004. www.citizenstorestorefairness.org/.
16. www.bellarmineschapel.org/the_amos_project.htm.
17. “Neighbor to Neighbor: A Collaborative Community-wide Model for Deliberative Dialogue and Solutions.” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, April 7, 2002.
18. OKI Environmental Justice Policy. Accessed on 02 July 2004. www.oki.org/transportation/environjustice.html.
19. Maloney, Michael and Christopher Auffrey. *The Social Areas of Cincinnati: An Analysis of Social Needs*. University of Cincinnati and UC Institute for Community Partnerships. 2004. PP. 12.
20. To have a consistent geography through the last three decades, the report studies the seven-county Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) comprising Hamilton, Clermont, Warren, Boone, Kenton, Campbell, and Dearborn Counties.

Appendix B

Sample of Organizations with Social and Environmental Justice Emphasis in the Cincinnati Metropolitan Region

Social Justice Emphasis

African-American Chamber of Commerce	Greater Cincinnati Inter-faith Holocaust Foundation
Against Racism Committee	Over the Rhine Housing Network
Agape Fellowship	Hands Across the Campus, the American Jewish Committee
American Jewish Committee	Hillel Jewish Student Center
Archdiocese of Cincinnati	Hispanic Catholic Community of Greater Cincinnati
Association to Stop Racism Against Blacks	Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cincinnati
Baha'I Faith Community	Housing Opportunities Made Equal
Black Lawyers Association of Cincinnati	IMPACT Over -the-Rhine
Catholic Social Action	Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center
Center for Peace Education	Institute for Managing Diversity in the Workplace
Character Council of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky	Integrity Development Corporation
Christ Church Cathedral (Center of Reconciliation)	Inter-Ethnic Council of Greater Cincinnati
Cincinnati CAN	International Family Resource Center
Cincinnati Human Relations Commission	Jewish Community Relations Council
Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency	Just Community Initiative, University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati Association (Inter-Group Relations Action Team)	Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition
Citizens for Civic Renewal (Social Equity Task Force)	Mercy Health Partners
Citizens to Restore Fairness	Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati
Community Oriented Policing	NAACP, Cincinnati Branch
Council of Christian Communion	National Underground Railroad Freedom Center
Diversity Committee, League of Women Voters	Ohio Civil Rights Commission, Cincinnati Regional Office
Drums for Peace	Ohio Commission of Hispanic-Latino Affairs
E Pluribus Unum, Xavier University	Ohio Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio	Queen City Foundation, Inc
Evanston Community Council	Stonewall Cincinnati
Food for Thought Program, Greater Cincinnati Foundation	Strong Woman Ministries, Inc.
Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network	Students Together Against Racism
Greater Anderson Promotes Peace	The AMOS Project
Greater Cincinnati Community Shares	United Way and Community Chest
Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce	Urban League of Greater Cincinnati
Greater Cincinnati Faith Community Alliance	Woman's City Club

Environmental Justice Emphasis

Cincinnati Environmental Advisory Council

Environmental Community Organization

Fernald Residents for Environment, Safety, and Health (FRESH)

Fernald Citizens Advisory Board

IMBY- In My Back Yard; University of Cincinnati

Lower Price Hill Environmental Leadership Coalition

League of Women Voters (hosting Friends of Tri-State Public Transit)

NAACP, Cincinnati Branch

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, EPA

OKI, Environmental Justice Advisory Committee

Urban Appalachian Council (Environmental Leadership Coalition)

Appendix C

Community COMPASS Publications

The following Community COMPASS reports are components of Hamilton County's Comprehensive Master Plan and Strategies. The reports are available at the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission and can be downloaded at www.communitycompass.org.

1. Project Design -- Scope and Process (Oct. 2001)
2. The Community Values Survey (Jan. 2001)
3. Special Research Reports
 - 3-1. Inventory of Research (2002)
 - 3-2. Conflicting Views on Suburbanization (Sept. 1999)
 - 3-3. Spreading Out: The March to the Suburbs (Oct. 1999; revised 2003)
 - 3-4. Summary Report -- Spreading Out: The March to the Suburbs (Oct. 1999; revised 2003)
 - 3-5. The Use of Public Deliberation Techniques for Building Consensus on Community Plans: Hamilton County Perspectives on Governance (A Guide for Public Deliberation) (Dec. 2002)
 - 3-6. Hamilton County's Comparative and Competitive Advantages: Business and Industry Clusters (Oct. 2003)
 - 3-7. Census 2000 Community Profiles: Political Jurisdictions of Hamilton County
 - 3-8. Community Revitalization Initiative Strategic Plan (Aug. 2003)
4. The Report of the Community Forums --Ideas, Treasures, and Challenges (Nov. 2001)
5. The Report of the Goal Writing Workshop (2001)
6. The Countywide Town Meeting Participant Guide (Jan. 2002)
7. Hamilton County Data Book (Feb. 2002)
8. A Vision for Hamilton County's Future --The Report of the Countywide Town Meeting (Jan. 2002)
9. The CAT's Tale: The Report of the Community COMPASS Action Teams (June 2002)
10. Steering Team Recommendations on The Vision for Hamilton County's Future (Jan. 2002)
11. Planning Partnership Recommendations on The Vision for Hamilton County's Future (Jan. 2003)
12. The Vision for Hamilton County's Future (Brochure) (Feb. 2003)
13. Initiatives and Strategies
 - 13-1. Steering Team Recommendations on Community COMPASS Initiatives and Strategies (2002)
 - 13-2. Steering Team Prioritization of Initiatives -- Methodology and Recommendations (Aug. 2002)
 - 13-3. Planning Partnership Recommendations on Community COMPASS Initiatives and Strategies (revisions, findings and reservations) (Dec. 2002)
 - 13-4. Community COMPASS Initiatives and Strategies -- Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission Recommendations (Jul. 2003)
14. External Influences: The Impact of National Trends on Hamilton County's Future (Mar. 2003)
15. Population
 - 15-1 Summary Report (Nov. 2004)
 - 15-2 Atlas / comprehensive report (2005)
16. State of the County Reports (Key trends, Issues, and Community Indicators) (Nov. 2004)
 - 16-1 Civic Engagement and Social Capital
 - 16-2 Community Services
 - 16-3 Culture and Recreation
 - 16-4 Economy and Labor Market
 - 16-5 Education
 - 16-6 Environment
 - 16-7 Environmental and Social Justice
 - 16-8 Governance
 - 16-9 Health and Human Services
 - 16-10 Housing
 - 16-11 Land Use and Development Framework
 - 16-12 Mobility
 - 16-13 Executive Summary
17. 2030 Plan and Implementation Framework (Nov. 2004)

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