Community Quality-of-Life Indicators:
Best Cases IV
The Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases book series is a collection of books, each containing a set of chapters related to best practices of community quality-of-life indicators projects. Many communities (cities, towns, counties, provinces, cantons, regions, etc.), guided by their local planning community councils and local government, develop community indicator projects. These projects are designed to gauge the “social health” and well-being of targeted communities. These projects typically involve data collection from secondary sources capturing quality-of-life indicators (i.e., objective indicators capturing varied dimensions of economic, social, and environmental well-being of the targeted communities). The same projects also capture community well-being using primary data in the form of survey research. The focus is typically subjective indicators of quality of life such as community residents’ satisfaction with life overall, satisfaction with various life domains (e.g., life domains related to social, leisure, work, community, family, spiritual, financial, etc.), as well as satisfaction with varied community services (government, nonprofit, and business services serving the targeted communities). The book series is intended to provide community planners and researchers involved in community indicator projects with prototypic examples of how to plan and execute community indicator projects in the best possible ways.

For further volumes:
http://www.springer.com/series/8363
Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases IV
Community indicators projects are plentiful. These projects capture the quality of life in towns, cities, counties, metropolitan regions, and larger geographic regions. Community quality-of-life (QOL) indicators are increasingly being integrated into overall planning and other public policy activities. The community indicators project reports are used not only in monitoring and evaluation applications but also in the context of increasing citizen participation in guiding communities towards achieving desired goals.

This is the fourth book in a series covering best practices in community QOL indicators. Each volume presents individual cases (chapters) of communities at the local or regional levels that have designed and implemented community indicators programs. In Volume IV, we present nine chapters from a variety of contexts: cities such as the City of Phoenix (Arizona, USA), Jacksonville (Florida, USA), and Bristol (UK), suburban communities areas such as Long Island (New York, USA) and Sydney (Australia), larger regions such as Vancouver (Canada), and townships such as Sobantu (South Africa).

The focus could be on general QOL indicators (e.g., City of Phoenix or the Long Island Index) or specific set of indicators focusing on topics such as race relations (e.g., Jacksonville), mental health (Dallas, USA), and gender equality (European cities). Each chapter in this volume presents a history or context, followed by a description of how the indicator systems were selected and applied, and then discussion of policy implications and outcomes. What is clear in this volume is the continuing evolution of QOL indicator systems and their applications so that decision making in communities and regions is enhanced.

Chapter 1 (Improving the Quality of Life in a City of Phoenix, Arizona Neighborhood through Collaborative Investment) is co-authored by John Burk and Richard C. Knopf. The chapter describes the community indicators project of the City of Phoenix. The indicators project involves a set of 18 indicator variables reflecting neighborhood stability. Through interviews and focus groups, the project documented the neighborhood’s assets and the citizens’ collective vision for improving the QOL in their community along each of the 18 indicators. Needed action was identified and prioritized guided by the literature on community health.

Chapter 2 (The Long Island Index: New Approaches to Telling a Region’s Story) is authored by Ann Golob. The chapter describes the Long Island Index. The authors
describe the characteristics Long Island shares with similar suburban communities as well as its distinctive features. Long Island has 14% of New York State’s population and 25% of the state’s political entities. The authors describe the Index’s multi-factor analysis using a combination of research tools. For example, the indicators show wide gaps between richer and poorer school districts in relation to education. The data are also compared to a similar suburban region in Northern Virginia. Further, survey data are used to add to the overall research picture. The authors also discuss means to promote the Index to a variety of stakeholder groups such as elected officials, schools, other non-profits, libraries and civic organizations, as well as the general public.

Chapter 3 (Lessons from a Community-Based Process in Regional Sustainability Indicator Selection: The Case of Regional Vancouver Urban Observatory) is co-authored by Meg Holden, Cameron Owens, and Clare Mochrie. The authors describe how the Regional Vancouver Urban Observatory conducted a comprehensive public engagement process to derive key indicators of sustainable development. This process is described in great detail. The case demonstrates how citizen volunteers can be engaged to help in the development of a community indicators project.

Chapter 4 (Mental Health Indicator Parity: Integrating National, State, and Local Data) is co-authored by Deepak Prabhakar, Raquel Y. Qualls Hampton, and Kathryn M. Cardarelli. The focus of this chapter is on mental health indicators in Dallas County. The authors describe how they compiled available mental health data to describe the prevalence of mental illness in Dallas County and in Texas, with comparisons to national rates. Mental health indicators are further broken down by age, race/ethnicity, education, and poverty level.

Chapter 5 (The Importance of Local Information: Quality of Life Indicators in Bristol) is co-authored by Samantha Shepherd and Sarah McMahon. The chapter describes one of the longest standing community indicator projects in the UK. The authors describe how the Bristol City Council has used QOL indicators to become highly effective tools for improving local quality of life.

Chapter 6 (Understanding the Political Significance of Community Sustainable Development Indicators in Post-Apartheid South Africa: A Case Study from Sobantu Township, Pietmaritzburg) is authored by Alan Terry. This chapter describes an indicators project funded by the Department of International Development in India and South Africa. The goal of the project was test the notion whether the process of developing community-led indicators would enhance effective participatory development. The results show some positive outcomes.

Chapter 7 (Jacksonville’s Race Relations Progress Report: Creating Change through Community Indicators) is authored by J. Benjamin Warner. The author describes how the Jacksonville Community Council Inc. created an annual “report card” capturing the community’s progress in eliminating racial disparities in the quality of life in Jacksonville, Florida. The report provides lessons into how community indicators projects can add meaning through disaggregating key populations.

Chapter 8 (Gender Equality and the Quality of Life: Examples of Best Practices from Nine European Cities – The EQUALABEL Project) is authored by Almudena Moreno Minguez. The chapter addresses gender equality indicators captured
at the community level. The author describes the European framework project, EQUALABEL that was conducted in nine cities across the European Union.

The final chapter (Quality of Life through Innovation Indicators: The Case of Peripheral Suburbs of Sydney) was co-authored by Cristina Martinez-Fernandez and Tavis Potts. This chapter discusses the concept of innovation ecosystems for assessing innovation intensity in peripheral areas of metropolitan regions. This concept is important because it is considered to be a significant driver of economic prosperity and sustainability of suburbs.

The chapters in this volume illustrate the complex, integrated, and multifaceted issues that QOL indicators represent. It is our desire that this information will spur leaders, citizens and policy makers to explore and apply indicators to strengthen QOL in their communities and regions.
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Author Biographies

**John Burk**, Ph.D. (Southern Illinois University, 1996) is Associate Director for the Partnership for Community Development (PCD) at Arizona State University. He leads the planning, research, facilitation, and documentation of community development projects that focus on improving the quality of life of residents in the communities in which they live, work, and play. Such projects focus on adding capacity to community assets through the cultivation of partnerships among public, private, nonprofit and government organizations that use their collective resources to make strategic and tactical investments in neighborhoods and communities. Through the PCD, Dr. Burk also facilitates and delivers workshops and regional summits on key issues that affect the delivery of human services to Arizona residents. Previously, John served as a lecturer in the Department of Communication Studies at ASU and he continues to serve as an officer in the Arizona National Guard.

**Kathryn Cardarelli**, Ph.D. is Director of the Center for Community Health, an assistant professor in the Department of Epidemiology, and a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at UNT Health Science Center. She completed her Ph.D. in epidemiology from the University of Texas-Houston School of Public Health, with an emphasis in social epidemiology and health disparities research, and completed a 2-year health policy fellowship with the US Department of Health and Human Services, focusing on access to health care issues for vulnerable populations with both the Health Resources and Services Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Her research focuses on community-based approaches to
reducing health disparities and translating epidemiologic evidence into health policy. Current projects include improving perinatal outcomes in African American women, enhancing HIV and STD risk awareness among youth, and reducing cancer disparities in South Dallas.

Dr. **Ann Golob**, Director of the *Long Island Index*, holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology from City University of New York Graduate Center and has 20 years of management experience at several Fortune 200 companies including Chase Manhattan Bank, AXA Client Solutions (formerly Equitable Insurance), and Guardian Life Insurance Company. Drawing on her research and analytical background, Dr. Golob developed business expertise in strategic planning, knowledge management, relationship management, and process-improvement initiatives. For 6 years, she oversaw an indicators project that monitored and measured overall service delivery at Chase’s 1,000-employee customer service center located in Jericho, New York. She currently resides with her husband and their son in Port Washington.

Dr. **Meg Holden** ([http://www.sfu.ca/∼mholden](http://www.sfu.ca/~mholden)) has been Assistant Professor of Urban Studies and Geography at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada since 2003. Her research examines and promotes the hope of cities around the world for sustainable development and has taken her to studies of policy and action, civic engagement and social learning, urban philosophy and ethics, and community-based information systems approaches. One of Meg’s major projects, established in 2004, the Regional Vancouver Urban Observatory, is the first member of the UN-Habitat Global Urban Observatory network to be located in the developed world. RVu (pronounced “Our View”) brings together citizens, community leaders, experts and the best available systems and assessment tools to develop a value-rich indicator set for the future-sustainable Vancouver region. Her writing appears in *Progress in Planning*, *Social Indicators Research*, *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, *Cities Journal*, the *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *Environmental Ethics*, the *Journal of Urban Technology*, *Ecological Economics*, *Habitat International*, *Urbanistica*, *Terrain*, the *International Journal of Sustainability, Technology and Humanism*, and the edited volume *Community Quality-of-Life Indicators: Best Cases II* (Springer-Verlag).
Rachael Jackson, MPH is the Associate Director of the Center for Community Health at the University of North Texas Health Science Center-Fort Worth. She completed her MPH from the University of North Texas Health Science Center, School of Public Health.

Richard Knopf serves as Director, Partnership for Community Development and Professor, Recreation and Tourism Management at Arizona State University. Recently, he has worked closely with the Arizona Department of Economic Security, Maricopa Association of Governments, Valley of the Sun United Way, and many Arizona communities (Anthem, Buckeye, El Mirage, Glendale, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Phoenix, Surprise, and Wickenburg) to create results-oriented solutions to community challenges. Dr. Knopf has been acclaimed by community leaders for his capacity to synergize relationships among government agencies, non-profit organizations, faith communities, schools, and businesses to better serve the health and human service needs of Arizona residents. Much of Dr. Knopf’s teaching and research has focused on the role of human services in community development, life quality enhancement and economic growth. He has Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Michigan and has served on the faculty of Colorado State University, Pennsylvania State University, and the University of Minnesota.

Dr Cristina Martinez-Fernandez is an associate professor at the University of Western Sydney, where she leads the research program on Urban and Regional Dynamics of the Urban Research Centre, which include the study of processes of growth and shrinkage, and policies and strategies that influence these processes and outcomes. The analysis of industry change, urban performance and socio-economic development in urban areas is strongly anchored within the innovation imperative and the impact of global factors in cities and regions.

Cristina is an invited professor at the Institute of Geography, University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne (Paris), the
Sarah McMahon is currently Project Manager for the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for health and well-being in Bristol. Sarah has previously been Programme Co-ordinator for Indicators of Quality of Life at Bristol City Council, Environment and Sustainability Unit and also worked for the national Audit Commission as Quality of Life Indicators Project Co-ordinator. She has been responsible for ten annual publications on Quality of Life Indicators in Bristol and has presented and published a number of articles on the use of quality of life indicators in community development, in the UK and Europe.

Clare Mochrie is planning and research consultant, based out of Vancouver, Canada. Clare specializes is strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, project management and performance assessment. Her focus is on helping organization, individuals and communities to define their priorities and identify opportunities to maximize their reach and positive impact. Towards this end, she facilitates strategic planning processes, analyzes and develops policy, undertakes risk and impact assessments and conducts research and consultations. She has also been involved with numerous community and sustainability indicator initiatives and has extensive experience developing and implementing processes aimed at eliciting measures and metrics that match with people’s values and track progress on citizen priorities. Since 2005, Clare has been Project Manager of the Regional Vancouver Urban Observatory (RVu), based out of Simon Fraser University. In this role, she helped to design and carry out RVu’s six month study group process to derive locally specific indicators for sustainability. She has also helped to lead RVu’s work in the area of social sustainability indicators.
Almudena Moreno took a Ph.D. in Sociology and is a professor in Sociology at the University of Valladolid. She is specialised in family issues, welfare state, public policies, youth and comparative research on gender.

She has published many articles and some books on a wide range of subjects, from the sociology of education to the sociology of family and gender. Her most recent book is “Familia y Empleo de la mujer en los regímenes de bienestar del sur de Europa”, published by the CIS (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas) in 2007. Shortly it will be published her article titled “Family and gender roles in Spain from a compared perspective” in the journal European Societies.

She has been a visiting researcher at the universities of Oxford (United Kingdom), McGill (Canada), Gothenburg (Sweden), Stirling (United Kingdom), Turin (Italy) and Chicago (USA). She is currently taking part in two European projects on equality policies on gender and youth. Her research work has been officially recognized with the International Award for Young Sociologists, presented by the ISA (International Sociological Association) in 1998; a research award presented by the Fundación Acción Familiar in 2004 and the Extraordinary Award for her Doctoral Thesis.

Cameron Owens is currently a Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Geography at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, BC. Cam's research explores the political and cultural context of sustainability efforts in North America and Europe. Major projects include evaluating British Columbia’s environmental assessment process through the case of the Jumbo Glacier Resort controversy; exploring the challenges of evaluating livability in Metro Vancouver and revealing the barriers to sustainable consumption and waste reduction of concerned families in Calgary, Alberta. Cam has taught as a sessional instructor since 2002 at four institutions and develops and leads geography overseas field schools to Europe.
Dr Tavis Potts is a social scientist with an interest in environmental public policy, political science and environmental management. His research interests fall into categories of marine and coastal governance, application of environmental policy instruments, and 'green' innovation and urban environmental geography. He is currently researching the governance of the high seas resources particularly the Arctic region and the application of market-based instruments such as ecolabelling and certification in fisheries and aquaculture. He has a strong research interest in developing green industries and ecological modernisation in society and exploring the links between innovation and sustainable development.

He is also interested in developing and applying social science and qualitative methods to policy problems and the improving the links between the natural and social sciences and science-policy integration in government.

Deepak Prabhakar, MD, MPH is pursuing residency in Psychiatry in the prestigious Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences at the Wayne State University Detroit. He completed his medical schooling from India and went on to complete his MPH from the University of North Texas Health Science Center-Fort Worth with an emphasis on epidemiology. He was awarded with the Bob J. Crow outstanding MPH graduate award for his efforts at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. Before joining the Wayne State University, Dr. Prabhakar headed the needs assessment efforts for the PROJECT TRANSFORM (A North Texas Mental Health Transformation Initiative). His research interest includes mental health indicators, disparities in the mental health coverage, mental health needs of the undocumented population and mental health co-morbidity in people suffering from chronic disorders.
Raquel Qualls-Hampton, MS, Ph.D. is an assistant professor of Epidemiology at the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth. She received her Bachelors degree in Mathematics from Oral Roberts University, her Masters degree in Statistics from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and her Ph.D. in Epidemiology from University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Qualls-Hampton is originally from Chicago and participated in several community based research projects on the south side of Chicago. Her current research interests include analytical epidemiology, specifically structural equation modeling and survey methodology, the effect of religiosity and spirituality on adolescent health behaviors, mental health epidemiology and the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS and the health disparities that exist within each area.

Samantha Shepherd After completing my first degree in Geography and Environmental Management and then an International Relations Masters, I graduated from the University of the West of England in 2006 with a PhD in ‘Quality of Life Indicators: Factors that Affect their Utility to Decision Makers in the Public Sector’. I have been working in local government ever since, currently working as a Local Strategic Partnership Manager in Berkshire.
Alan Terry is a senior lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environmental Management at the University of the West of England, Bristol. His research interests include rural development, community led development and the use of sustainability indicators. He has undertaken most of his research in southern Africa, with funders including the UK Government’s Department for International Development (DFID), The Commonwealth Development Corporation, The Dutch Government and the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives in Swaziland. He has also undertaken research in the UK where his work has been funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and the UK Government. For the past 5 years he has worked closely with the Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise, a parastatal charged with the development of Swaziland’s water resources. He has published numerous articles in journals such as The Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography, The South African Geographical Journal, Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie, Geography and Development in Practice. In addition he has co-edited a collection of essays with his colleagues, Dr. Jenny Hill and Dr. Wendy Woodland, entitled Sustainable Development: National Aspirations, Local Implementation, Ashgate (2006). He has also organised sessions at the Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference and presented numerous papers in the UK, Europe and southern Africa.

He is keen to transfer knowledge and experience from his work in “The South” to the ‘North’ and was able to do so after working on a large DFID funded project in South Africa and India which evaluated the use of Community Sustainable Development Indicators. In collaboration with colleagues from the New Economics Foundation, the lessons learned from this project were incorporated into a Toolkit for users of Quality of Life Indicators in the UK. This project, funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister enabled local authority officers to develop their skills and knowledge of these new tools through using the toolkit.

Alan was one of the earliest of the Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geographers professional geographers, qualifying as a Chartered Geographer in 2006. He is a member of a number of RGS/IBG research groups, including the Development Areas Research Group, of which he has edited the newsletter, The Rural Studies Research Group and the Participatory Studies Research Group. Alan has a long interest in Geographical and Environmental Education and has held the post of Director of the Welsh Centre for Environmental Education, Secretary of the Prince of Wales Environmental Education Trust and has been a member of the UK’s Environmental Education Committee.
Ben Warner is Deputy Director for Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI), a citizen-based public policy think tank in Jacksonville, Florida. The core work of JCCI is to engage citizens to improve the quality of life in Northeast Florida, and the organization accomplishes this through a community change model involving community-selected quality-of-life indicators, open discussions and community studies around issues identified by the indicators, citizen-led advocacy efforts to create positive change based on study recommendations, and continued progress monitoring through the indicators efforts.

Before joining JCCI in 1998, Warner worked in the mental health field, where he directed day treatment programs for dually-diagnosed (mental illness/developmentally disabled) individuals in Northeast and Central Florida. He also worked with homelessness issues, developing a highly successful pilot transitional housing program. For his work with homelessness, Warner was awarded the Michael R. Wilson Social Justice Award in 1997.

At JCCI, Warner has staffed community-based public policy studies and implementation efforts on topics ranging from arts and culture to growth management and regional cooperation. In addition, Warner works to pioneer, develop, maintain and enhance JCCI’s Quality of Life Progress Report (now preparing for its 23rd annual edition) and its annual Race Relations Progress Report (entering its fourth year of publication).

He serves as president of the National Association of Planning Councils and was inaugural president of the international Community Indicators Consortium, a network of individuals and institutions which seeks to advance the art and science of community indicators and encourage development and facilitate effective use of community indicators across the globe.

He also serves as a consultant and conference presenter, assisting multiple communities in the creation of community-based public policy organizations and the development of community indicator projects.

Ben completed his undergraduate studies in Sociology at Brigham Young University. He received his Masters in Social Work from Florida State University.