

## NEA Arts Data Profile #8: Issue Brief #1

### Illustration of Arts & Livability Indicators: Owner-Occupied Housing Units; Household Income; and Violent Crime

The NEA Arts & Livability Indicators can help users attain a better understanding of their community on a number of important dimensions. Below are examples of three key indicators (owner-occupied housing units, household income, and violent crime), as well as a hypothetical scenario of how these indicators might be applied to arts place-making activities.

#### Hypothetical Scenario: The Downtown ArtsLofts Project

*“Like many other mid-sized American cities, during much of the 20th century our city was a flourishing industrial hub, rich with manufacturing jobs, lively civic activities and intact urban neighborhoods. Unfortunately, the deindustrialization of the past few decades hit us hard: factories closed, jobs fled, government revenues dried up, and people moved away. Those still living here have seen a steady erosion of their quality of life. Many once-desirable parts of the city have fallen on hard times.”*

*“One such struggling neighborhood is the site of an innovative effort at revitalization through investment in the arts. The Downtown ArtsLofts Project is the outcome of a unique partnership of local nonprofit organizations, public agencies, foundations, and private businesses.”*

The partnership has identified three specific buildings for conversion into apartment and studio space for artists, and acquired public and private financing for the project. Anticipated outcomes from the provision of this artist live/work space include: (1) Historic preservation of abandoned but historical industrial buildings; (2) Increased affordable housing; (3) Growth of the local artist community; (4) Improved safety of the neighborhood, without displacement; (5) Migration of non-arts businesses to the area; (6) Return of vacant spaces to the tax rolls; and (7) Expanded public access to the arts.

Although any changes are not necessarily traceable to the Downtown ArtsLofts, the partnership can examine specific indicators to learn whether within the ArtsLofts area, over time, **the share of owner-occupied housing units will increase, household income will rise, and violent crime will decrease.**<sup>1</sup>

The sections below draw on various data sources to illustrate these three indicators for a sample community: **Lucas County, Ohio** (which includes the city of Toledo), and its respective Census tracts (i.e., neighborhoods).<sup>2</sup>

Indicator C3: Owner-Occupied Housing (see map, p.3)

Captured by the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), the percentage of housing units owner occupied is constructed by dividing the number of housing units in an area that are owner occupied by the total number of occupied housing units in the area (owned and rented).

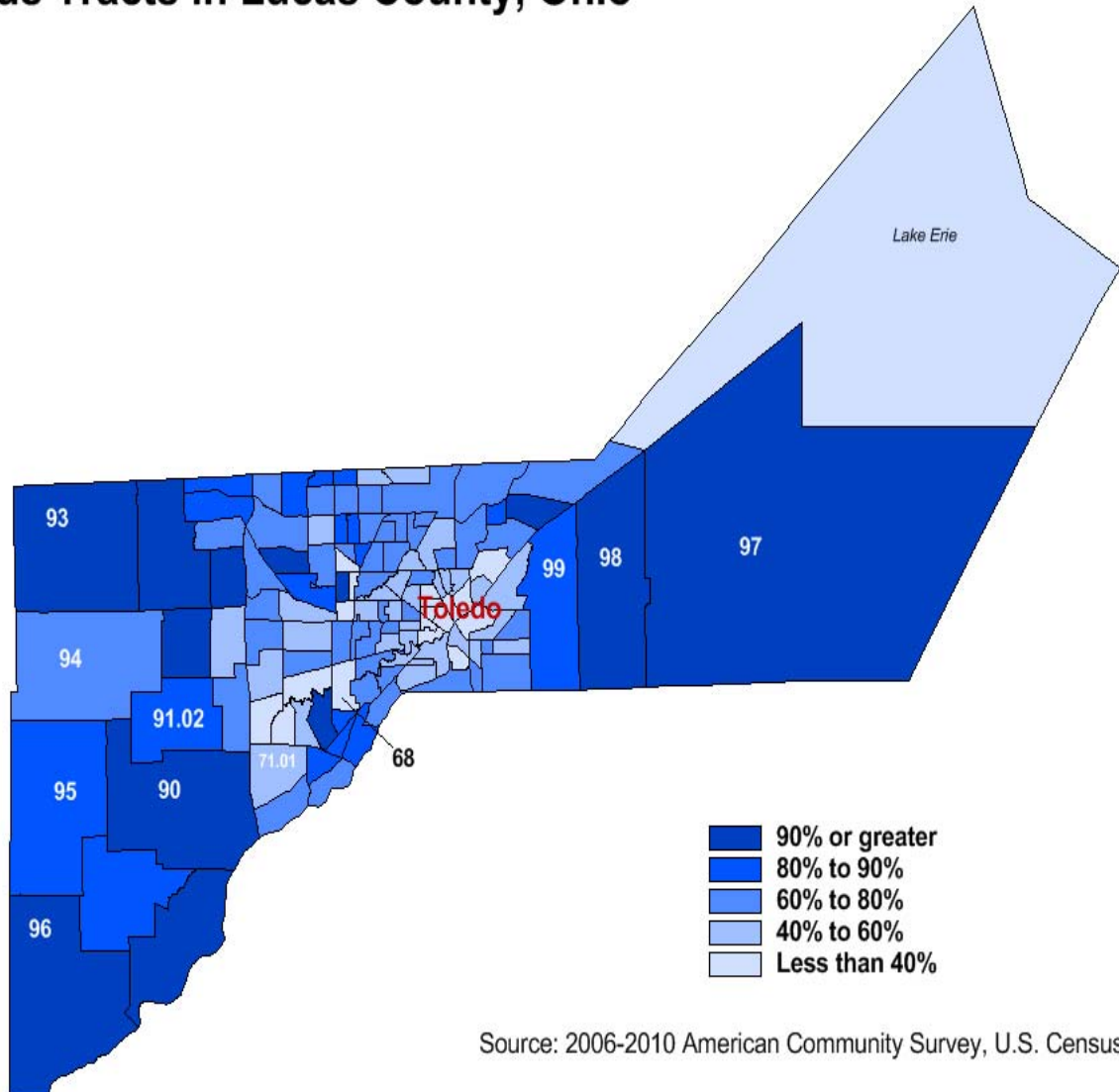
In the period captured by the 2006-2010 ACS, 66.6 percent of U.S. housing units were owner occupied. Among Lucas County's 128 tracts, the rate was somewhat lower—62 percent.

However, owner-occupied housing rates in Lucas County tracts vary greatly. In 2006-2010, rates ranged from highs of more than 90 percent to lows of less than 25 percent.

For example, in Census Tract 96, which is in the southwestern part of Lucas County, and includes Providence Township, the owner-occupied housing rate was nearly 95 percent; the rate was similarly high (93 percent) in Tract 93, in the northwestern part of the county (including Richfield Township).

Alternatively, in Tract 68 (just southwest of Toledo), the owner-occupied housing rate was just 26 percent.

## Percentage of Housing Units Owner Occupied: 2006-2010 Census Tracts in Lucas County, Ohio



Note: For a map of Lucas County tracts showing more geographic detail, see the [U.S. Census Bureau's reference maps](#).

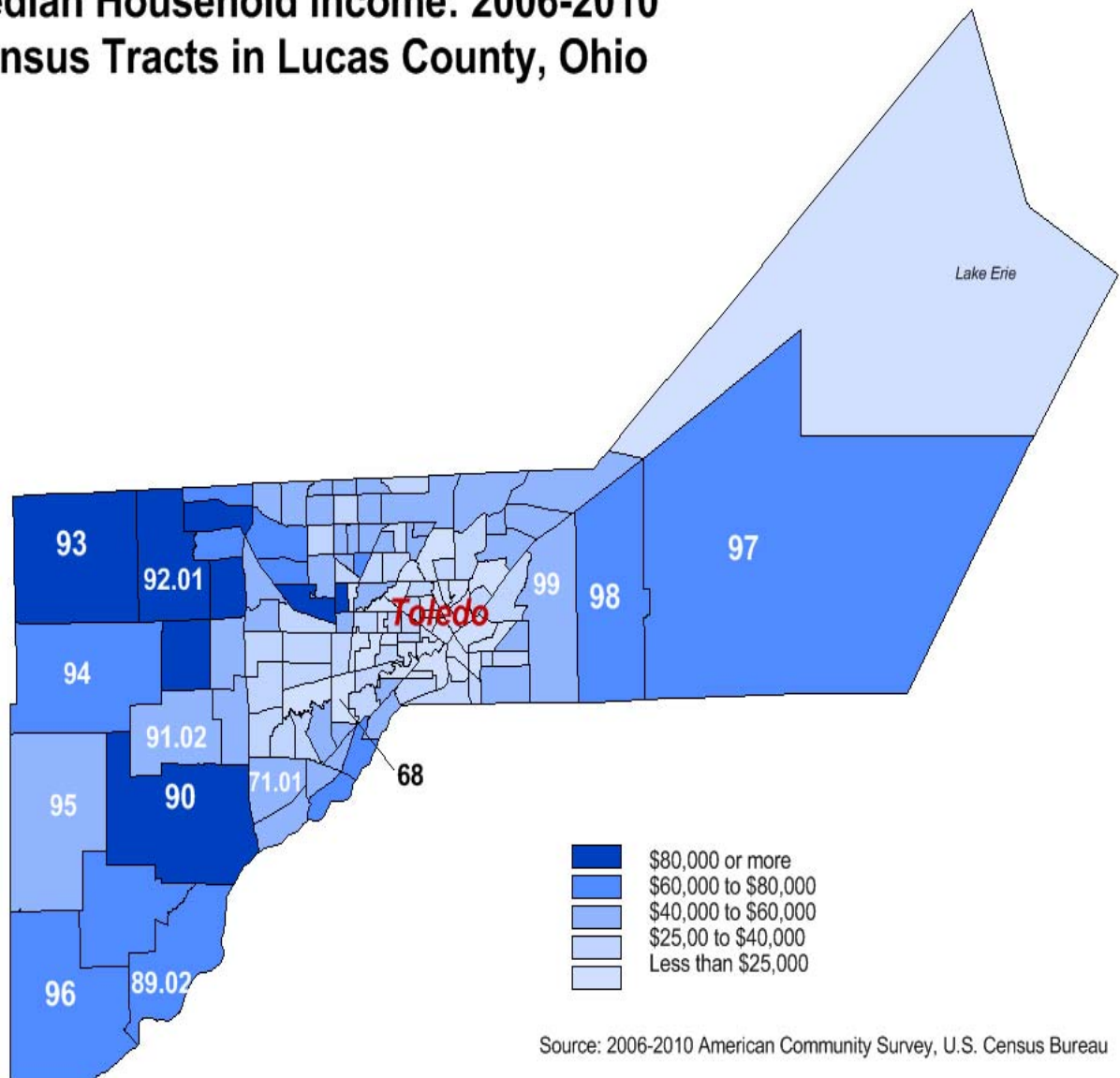
Indicator E4: Household Income (see map, p.5)

Just as high rates of owner-occupied housing are observed in tracts outside the city of Toledo, so too are high levels of household income evident in these areas.

In 2006-2010, for example, Lucas County's Tract 90 (southwest of Toledo), where the rate of owner-occupied housing was nearly 95 percent, was also a high-income neighborhood—median household income in that neighborhood was almost \$96,000, a figure well above the national value of \$51,914. A similar pattern was evident in Tract 93—92 percent of housing units were owner occupied, and median household income was \$81,000.

Neighborhoods closer to Toledo, on the other hand, exhibit lower rates of owner-occupied housing and lower income. In Tract 68, where the owner-occupied housing rate was 26 percent, median household income was \$21,843.

## Median Household Income: 2006-2010 Census Tracts in Lucas County, Ohio



Note: For a map of Lucas County tracts showing more geographic detail, see the [U.S. Census Bureau's reference maps](#).

### Indicator Q3: Violent Crime (see chart, p.8)

The FBI defines violent crimes as: murder and non-negligent manslaughter; forcible rape; robbery; and aggravated assault, which is the most common violent crime. In the U.S., aggravated assaults accounted for roughly six out of 10 violent crimes in 2010.

Through its Uniform Crime Reports program, the Bureau releases violent crime statistics for the nation, for states, and for those counties with populations of at least 25,000 and reporting crime statistics in all 12 months of a given year.

To illustrate how violent crime may serve as an Arts & Livability indicator, we point to reported violent crime (per 100,000 population) over time in Ohio's Lucas County, population 441,815 in 2010.<sup>3</sup>

As shown in the graph below, the three-year moving average of the violent crime rate in Lucas County exhibited a volatile pattern over the 2000-2010 period. Violent crime generally rose in 2000-2003, then fell precipitously in 2004 through 2006, when the moving average reached a 10-year low of 8 per 100,000 population.

In 2007, however, the moving average of violent crime rates in Lucas County began to climb, reaching 18.3 in 2010, roughly the same rate calculated for 2001.

### What Do These Findings Mean for Our Hypothetical?

Now that the organization has baseline data concerning Owner-Occupied Housing Units and Household Income, it can monitor changes in these variables over the next several years. The organization and its partners then can modify their future business practices and communication plans as needed. For the particular Census tract/s in which the Downtown ArtsLoft Project is located, the organization can make useful comparisons with data from the surrounding tracts. If significant changes occur, the group can commission research to determine the extent (if any) to which these might have been attributed to the project itself.

In the case of Violent Crime, access to indicator data solely at the county level may prevent the organization from detecting changes in the immediate area surrounding the Downtown ArtsLoft Project sites. Still, the trend data can be used to communicate about the backdrop in which the redevelopment project is taking place. In subsequent years, moreover, the organization can validate the relevance of the county-level rates, by asking—after the redevelopment has occurred—whether residents and neighbors report greater or lower levels of feeling safe from crime.

### Other Indicators that Could Prove Useful

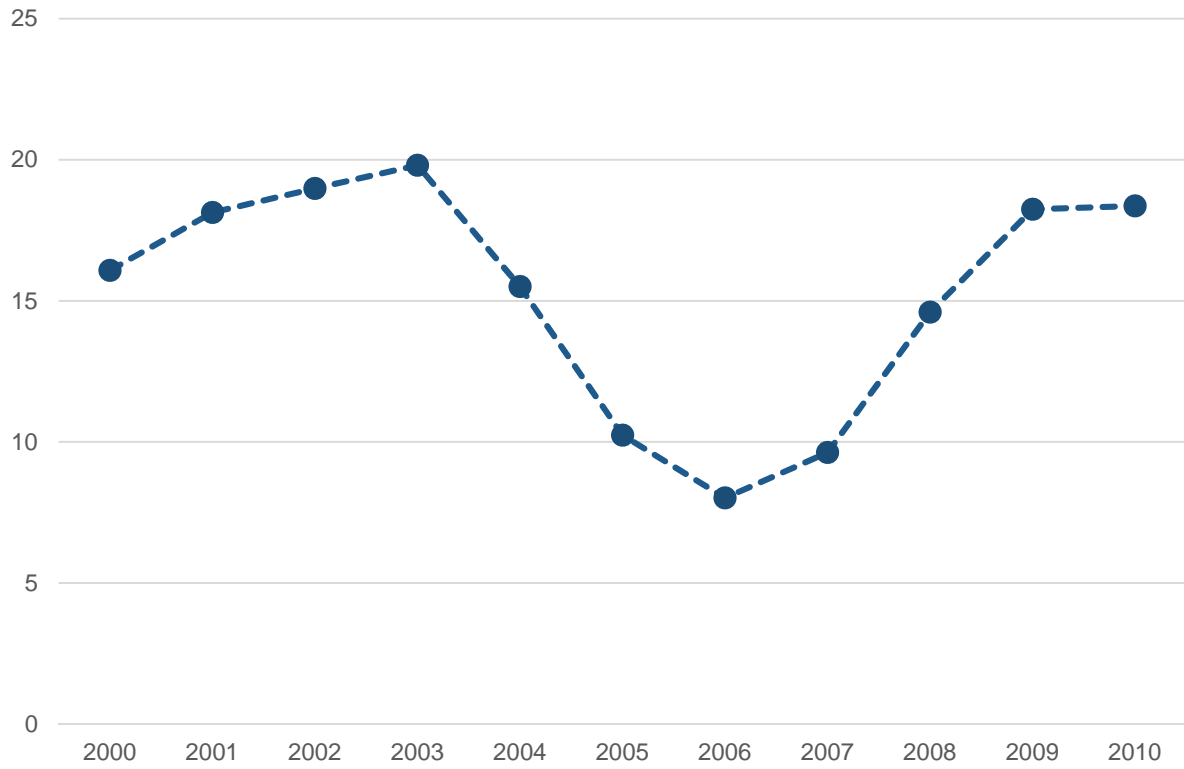
Given the goals articulated by the hypothetical project's planners, other NEA Arts & Livability Indicators that might be worth tracking include:

- C6: Household outflow (tax returns leaving) – as a negative indicator
- Q2: Retail and service establishments per 1,000 population
- Q4: Property crime rates
- Q5: Percent of residential addresses not collecting mail – as a negative indicator
- AC1: Median earnings of residents employed in arts-and-entertainment-related establishments
- AC2: Proportion of employees working in arts-and-entertainment-related establishments
- AC3: Relative payroll of arts-and-entertainment-related establishments
- AC4: Arts, culture, and humanities nonprofits per 1,000 population
- AC5: Arts-and-entertainment-related establishments per 1,000 population
- E3: Active business addresses

In addition, the **Local Arts & Livability Indicators Catalogue** (source: Urban Institute), also within the NEA's Arts Data Profile #8, contains several indicators that might be used, depending on the location of the project. The data for these indicators are collected locally. Examples include:

- Indicator #1691, Number of Building Inspections by the Fire Marshal (Human Services Council, Norwalk Community)
- Indicator #808, Do People Feel Safe in Their Neighborhoods (Jacksonville Quality of Life Indicators)

## Violent Crime Rates in Lucas County, Ohio: 2000-2010 Three-Year Moving Average



Note: Calculated by the NEA Office of Research & Analysis. Number of reported violent crimes per 100,000 population.



## Endnotes

---

<sup>1</sup> These expectations assume that other factors—those unrelated to the Downtown ArtsLofts, but which may affect the local economy and crime—are held constant.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census tracts, which number more than 70,000, are small statistical subdivisions of counties. Census tracts are relatively homogeneous in population size—they range from 1,200 to 8,000 people, with 4,000 as the optimal size. Census tracts are typically defined in partnership between the Census Bureau and local participants.

<sup>3</sup> By convention, crimes per 100,000 population are reported in this brief. However, the FBI reports crime *rates* for the U.S. and for states—not for counties. County-level crime data from the FBI exclude city tallies, which are reported separately by the FBI. Population data, alternatively, commonly includes the populations of cities located within counties, such as Toledo in Lucas County, Ohio.