



CASE

MANDEL SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

Residents' Perceptions of Neighborhood and the Implications for Community Change

Claudia Coulton, Kristen Mikelbank, & Tsui Chan
Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development,
Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences,
Case Western Reserve University

Ned English
National Opinion Research Center (NORC)

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Overview

- Background
- Research Questions
- Data and Methods
- Findings
- Next Steps

Background

What is Making Connections?

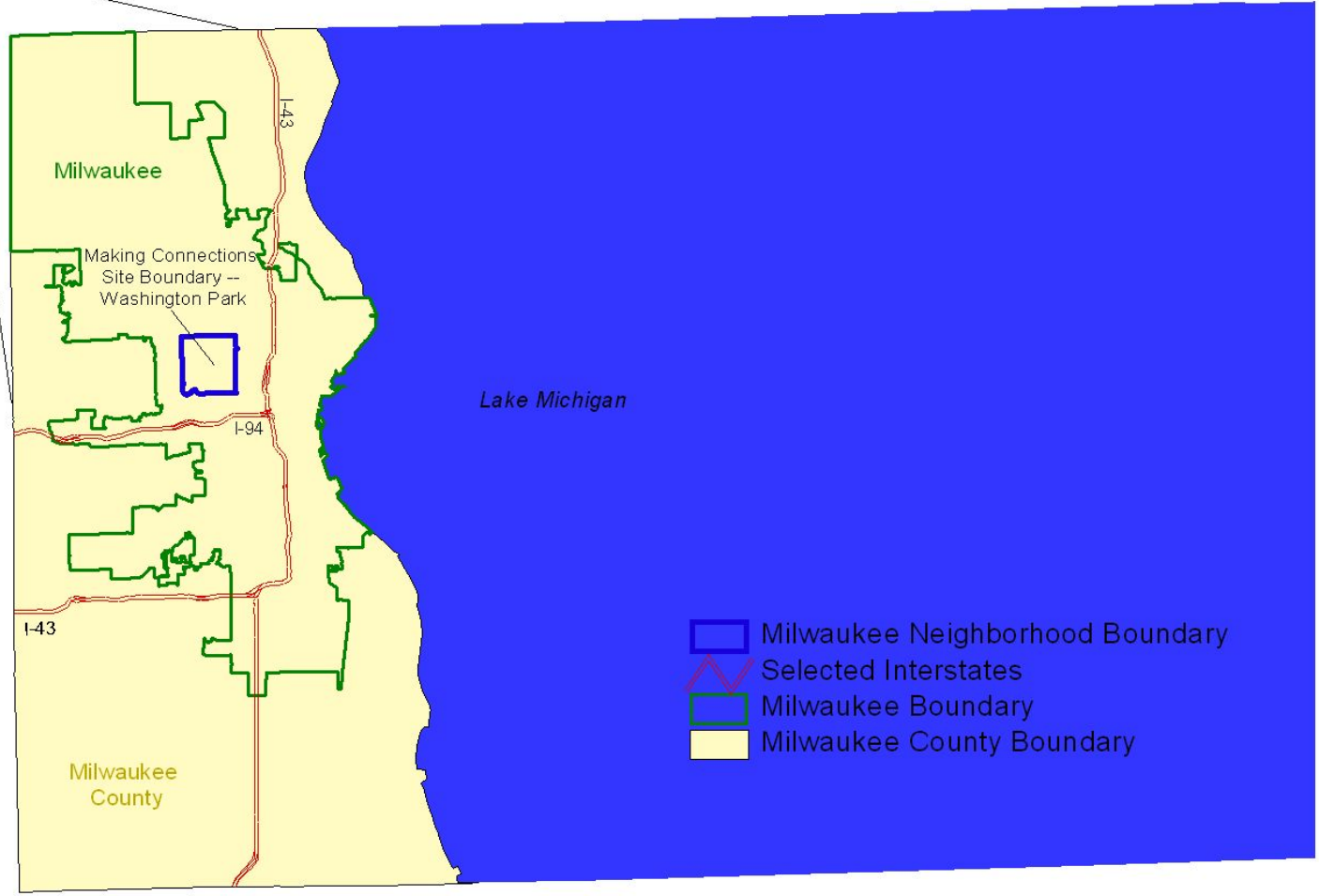
- An initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Goal – to “help improve outcomes for vulnerable children living in tough neighborhoods”
- Emphasis on strengthening communities

Background

Making Connections Sites – in 10 Cities

- Denver, CO
- Des Moines, IA
- Hartford, CT
- Indianapolis, IN
- Louisville, KY
- Milwaukee, WI
- Oakland, CA
- Providence, RI
- San Antonio, TX
- Seattle, WA

Location of Making Connections -- Milwaukee Neighborhood within Milwaukee County, Wisconsin



-  Milwaukee Neighborhood Boundary
-  Selected Interstates
-  Milwaukee Boundary
-  Milwaukee County Boundary



Background

Selected Literature

- Chaskin (1997) – Perspectives on neighborhood and community: A review of the literature. Social Service Review, 71, 521-547.
- Coulton, Korbin, Chan & Su (2001) – Mapping residents' perceptions of neighborhood boundaries: A methodological note. American Journal of Community psychology, 29 (2), 371-383.
- Ellen & Turner (1997) – Does Neighborhood Matter? Assessing recent evidence. Housing Policy Debate, 8(4), 833-866.
- Sampson, Morenoff & Gannon-Rowley (2002) – Assessing “neighborhood effects”: Social processes and new direction in research. Annual Review of Sociology, 28: 443-478.

Research Questions

- How do residents view their neighborhoods spatially and symbolically?
- How do the residents' views compare with pre-defined boundaries?
- Can information about resident perceived neighborhoods prove useful in addressing neighborhood action or as a basis for work to strengthen neighborhood involvement and social networks?

Data and Methods

- Survey of residents in the Making Connections sites
- Residents Asked
 - To draw a map of their neighborhood
 - To provide the name of their neighborhood
 - To answer a variety of other questions
- Resident-drawn maps were digitized by NORC

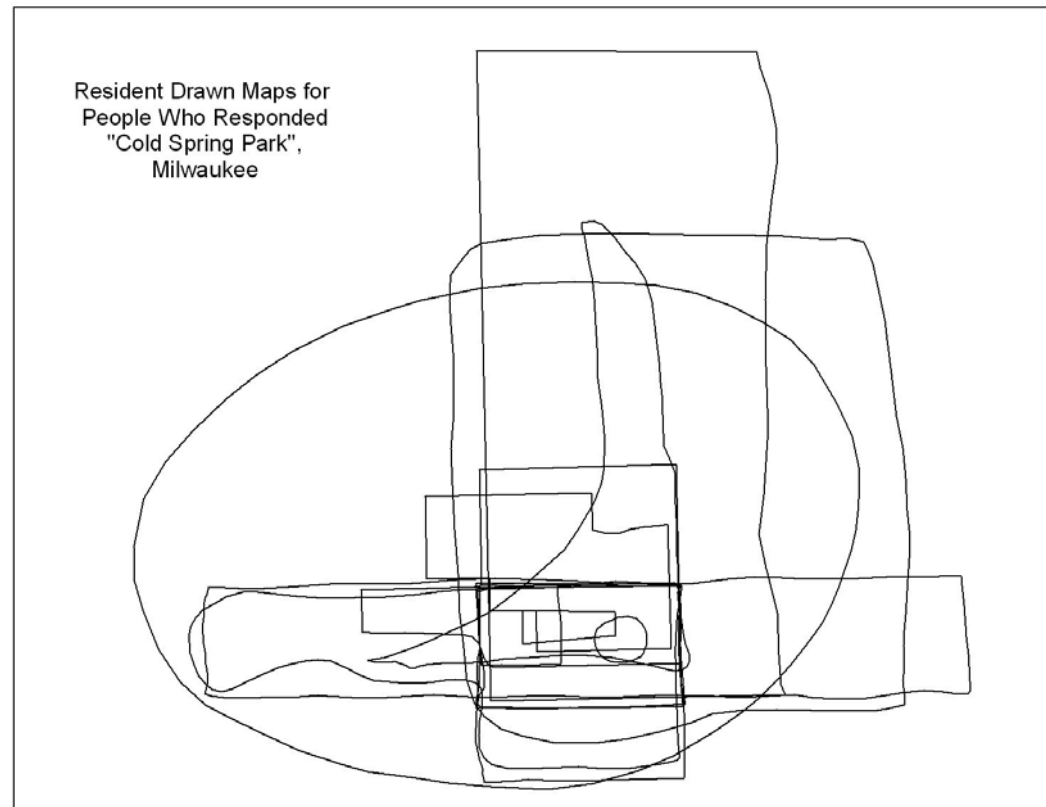
Data and Methods

History

- Began with Denver
 - Grouped residents based on their “official” neighborhoods and conducted consensus calculations
 - Consensus found and method replicated for other sites
- “Denver Method” failed with every other site except Louisville
- Explored Other Methods
 - Nearest Neighbor Hierarchical Clustering
 - Consensus Based on the Neighborhood Names
 - Neighborhoods Based on Other’s Maps
- Complexity of the other methods led to questions about practical application, which led to our current method

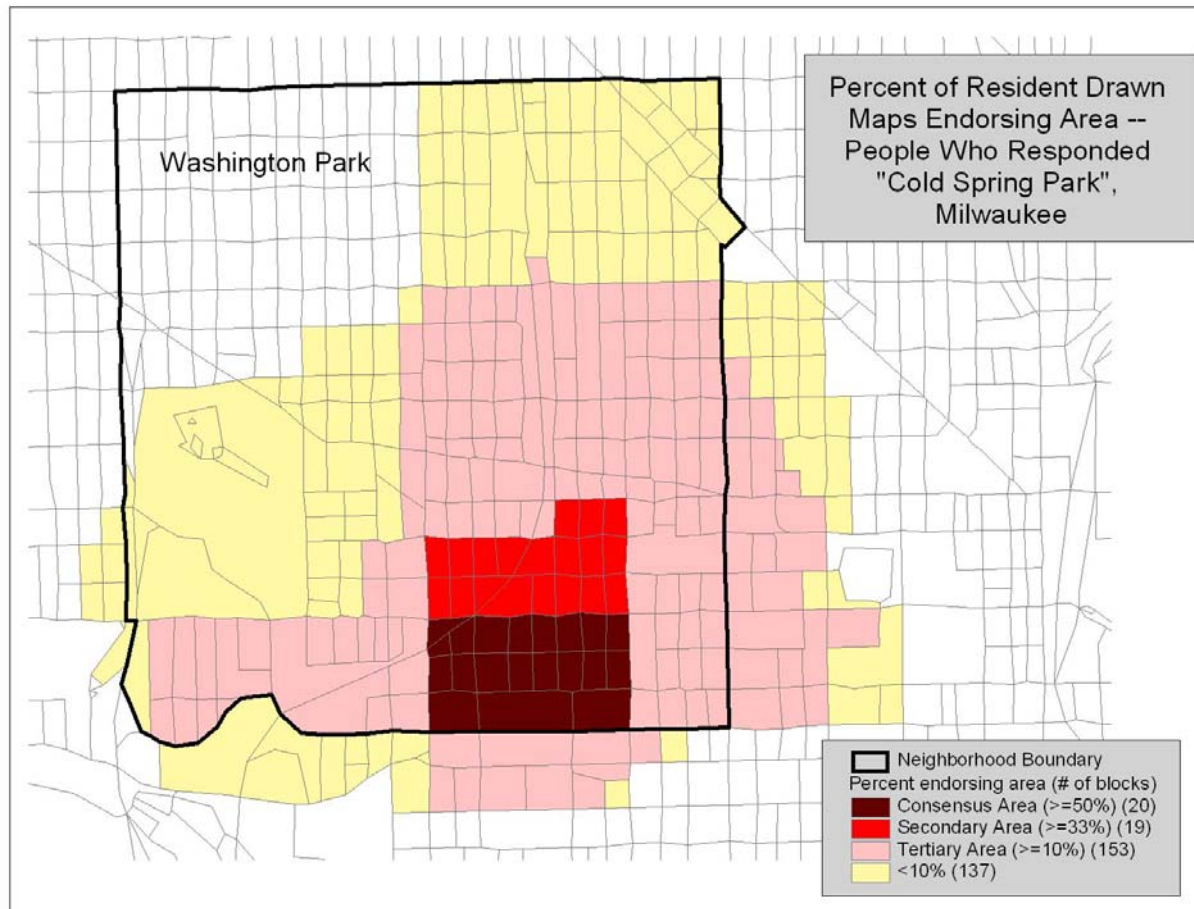
Data and Methods

Step 1: Identify neighborhood names given by 10 or more respondents & overlay the resident drawn maps



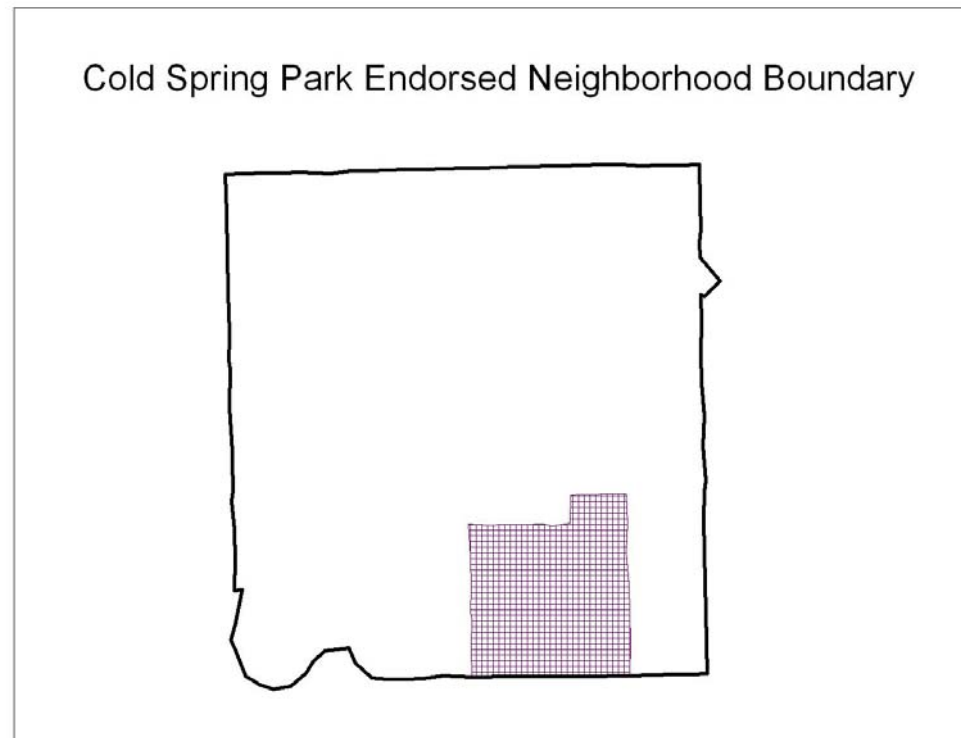
Data and Methods

Step 2: Determine if there are consensus areas



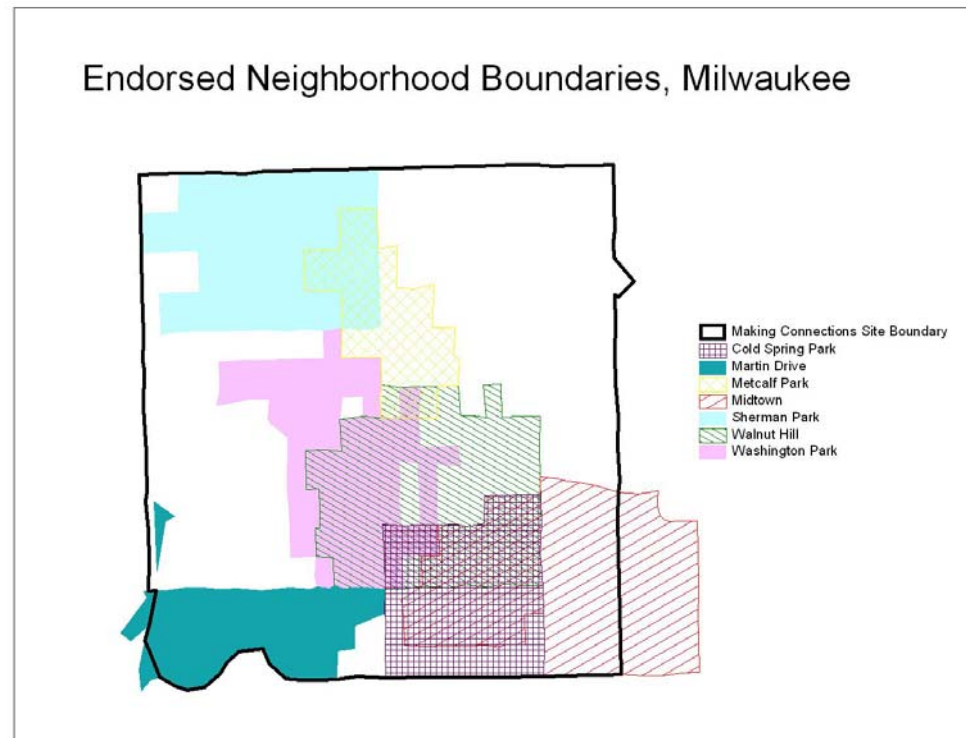
Data and Methods

Step 3: Select those census blocks endorsed by 33% or more of the residents & compare to nearest neighbor hierarchical clustering results for commonalities



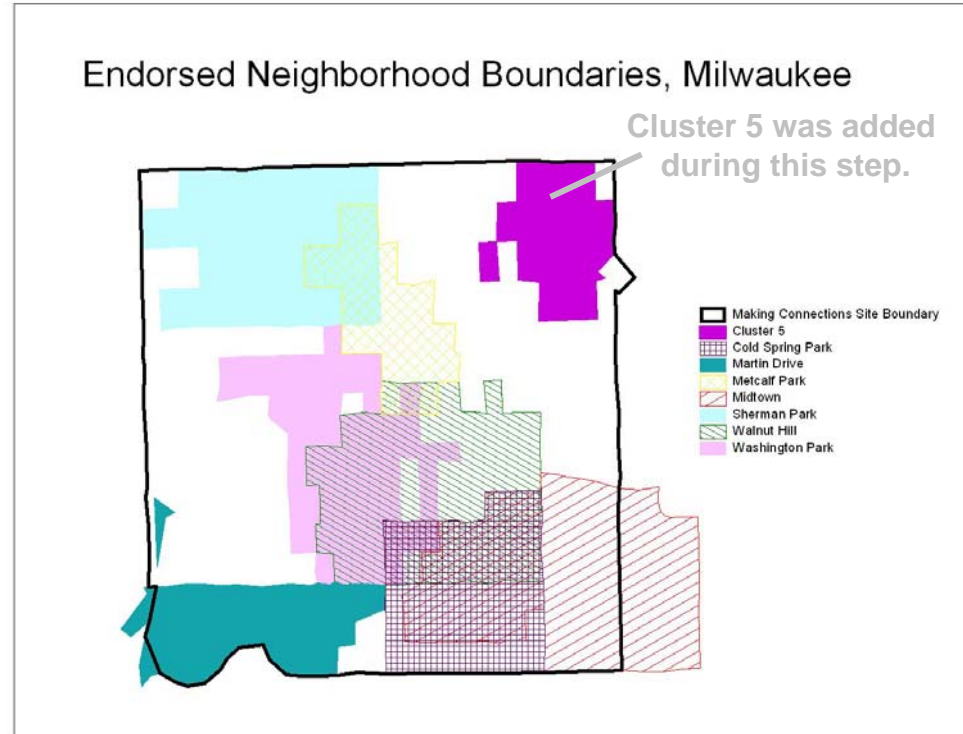
Data and Methods

Step 4: Repeat method for other neighborhoods named by 10 or more respondents

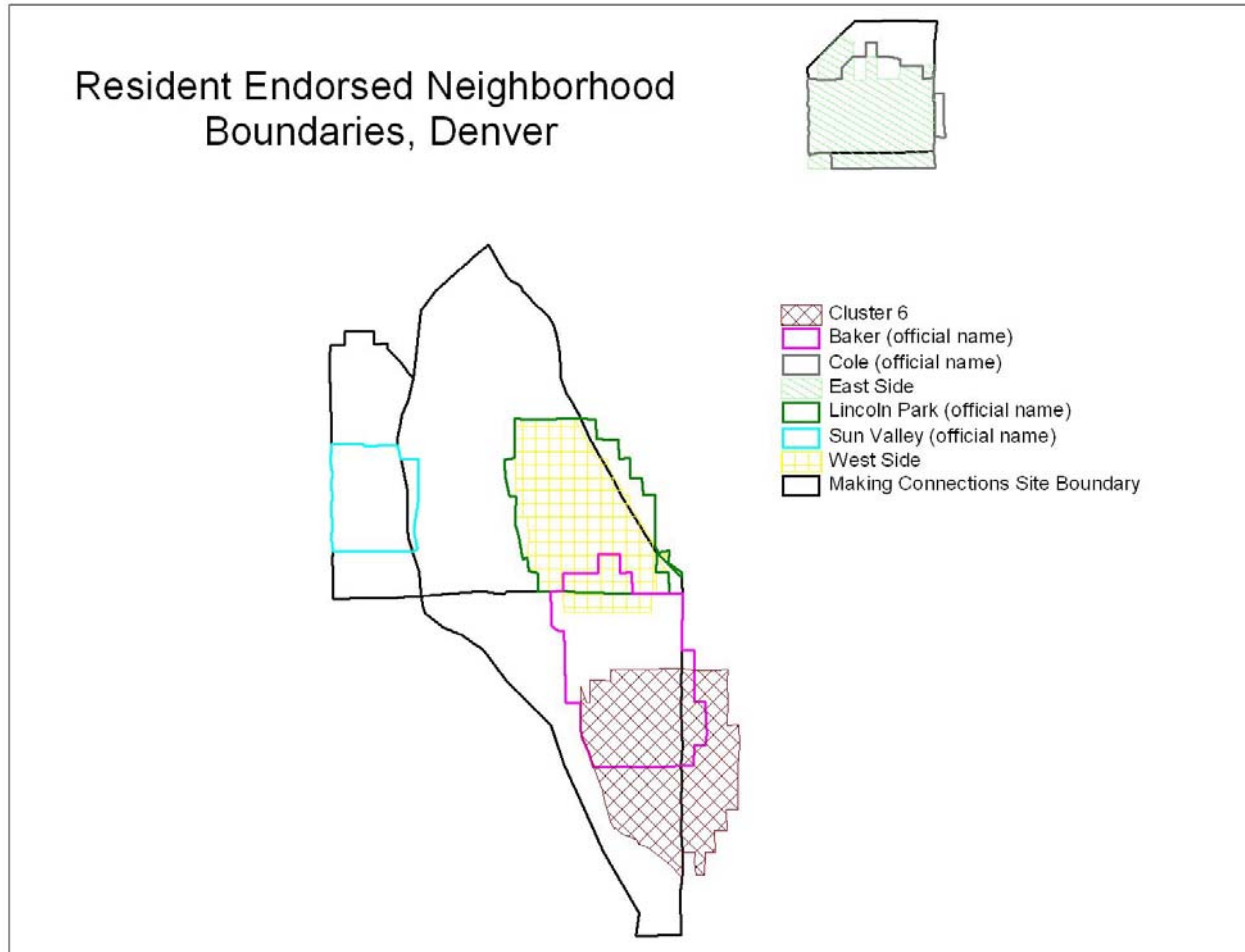


Data and Methods

Step 5: Analyze nearest neighbor hierarchical clustering results to see if additional endorsed neighborhoods can be included



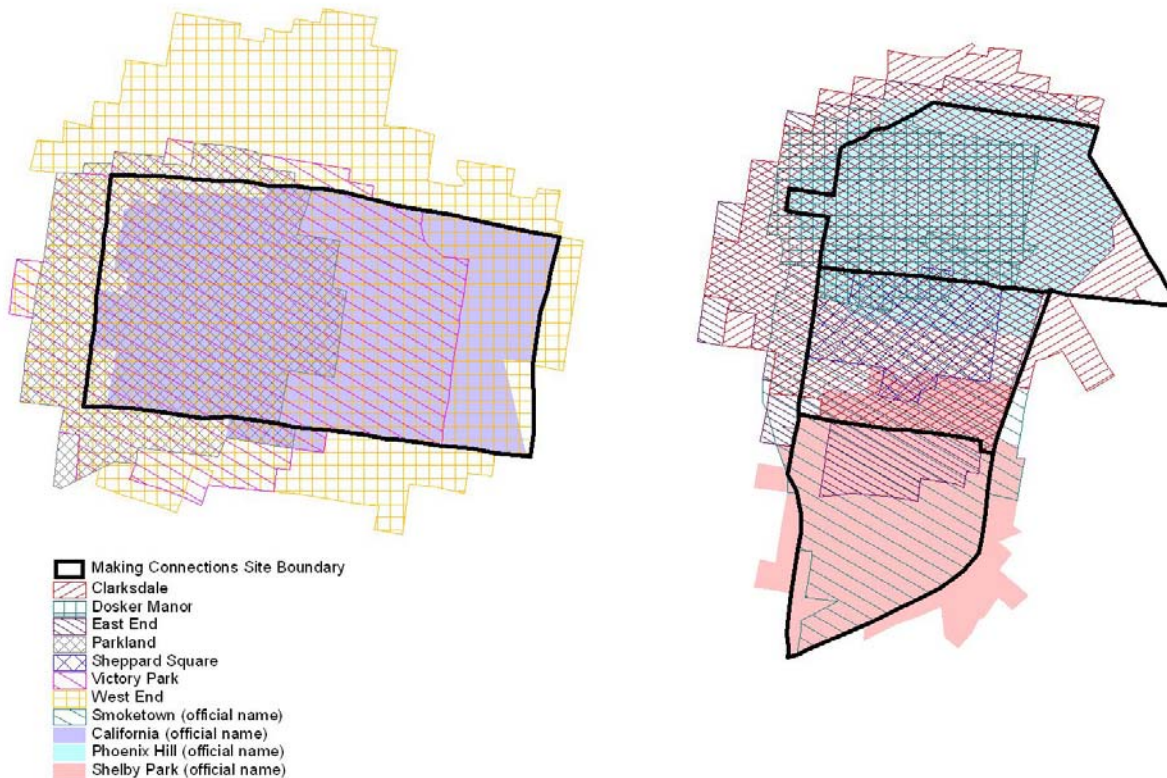
Findings: The Denver “Standard”



Denver is a unique situation -- Official names; Not a lot of overlap

Findings: Many Overlapping Names

Resident Endorsed Neighborhood Boundaries, Louisville

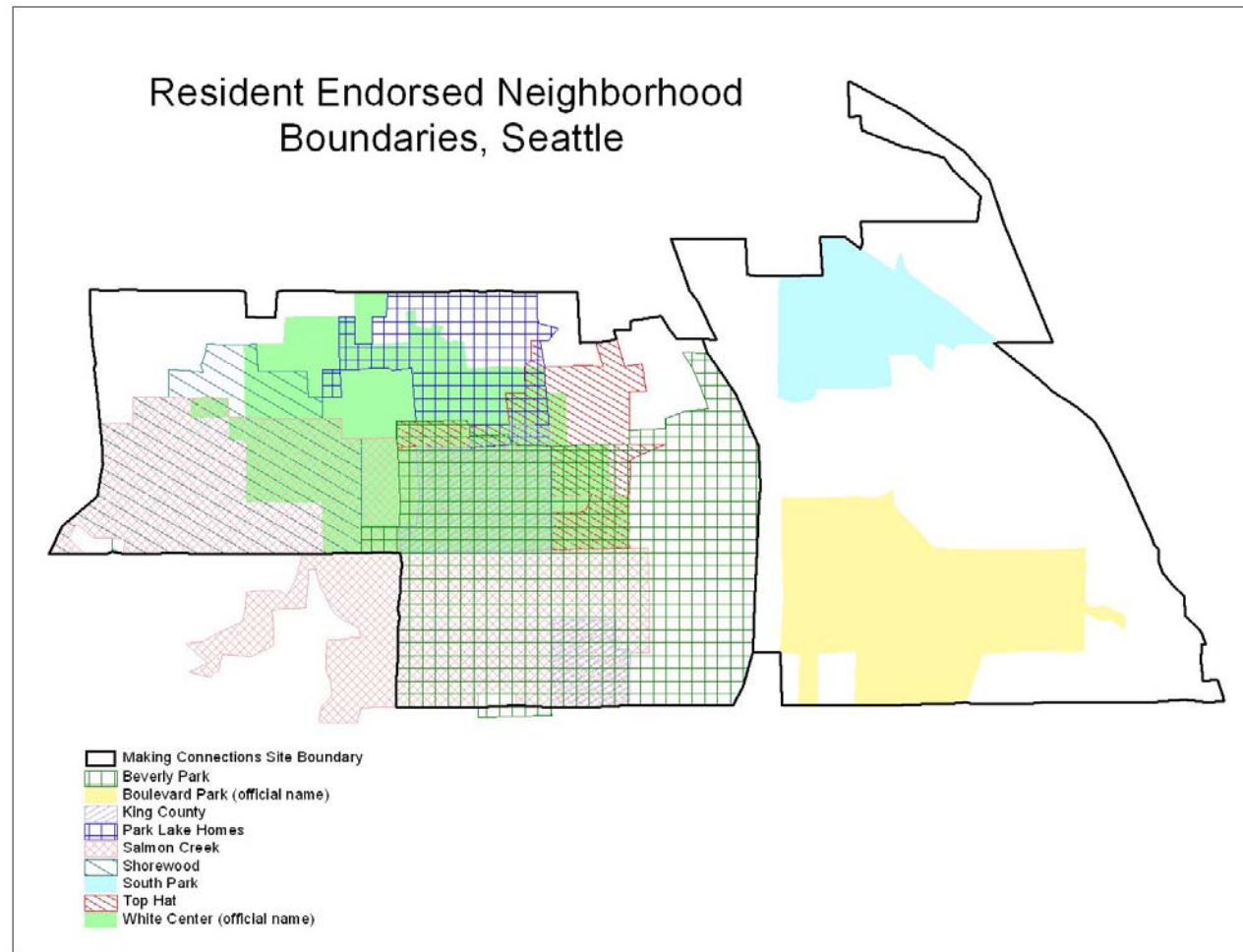


Louisville – Official and unofficial names; Lots of overlap

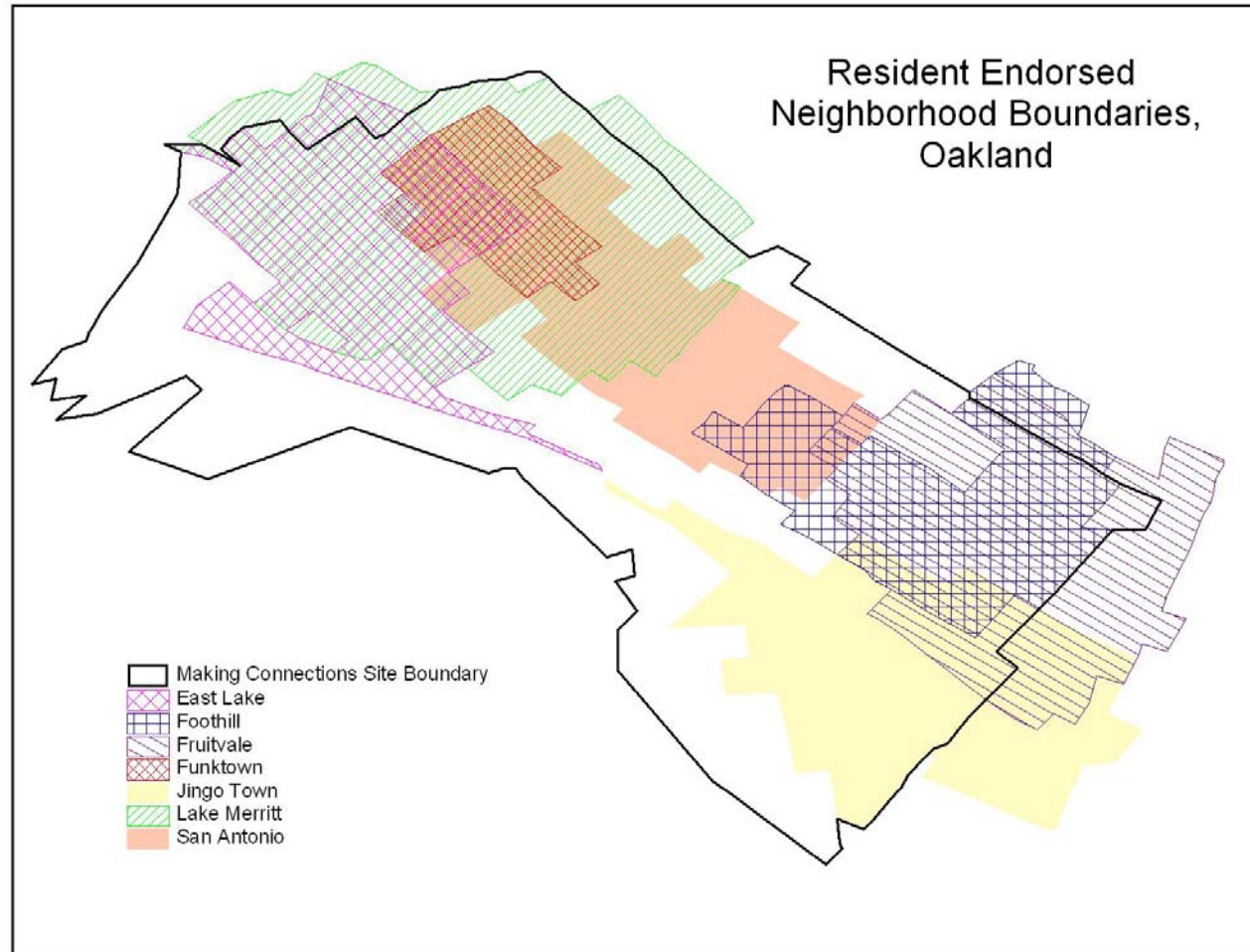
Similar Cities:
Seattle – Official and unofficial names

Oakland – Unofficial names

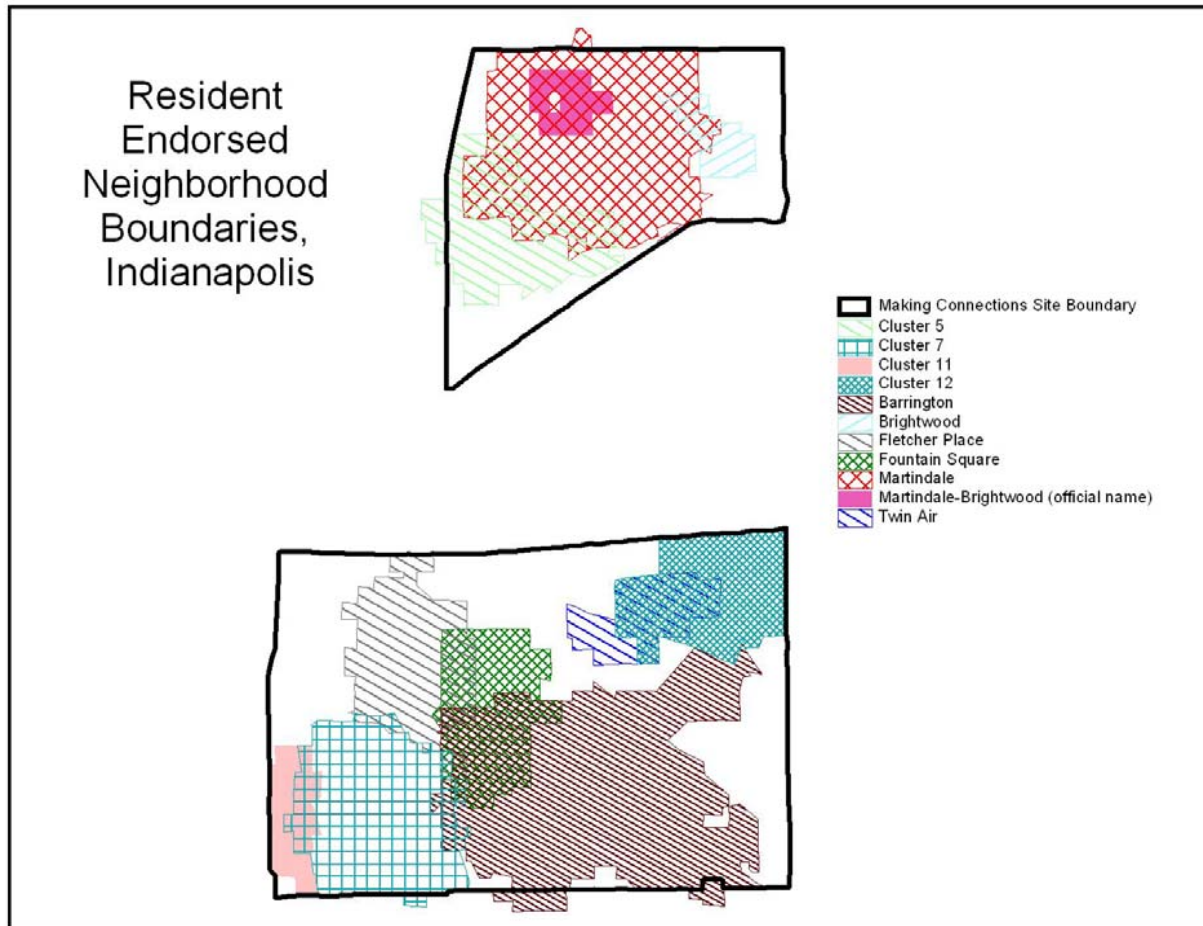
Findings: Many Overlapping Names



Findings: Many Overlapping Names



Findings: Overlapping Name and Cluster Mix



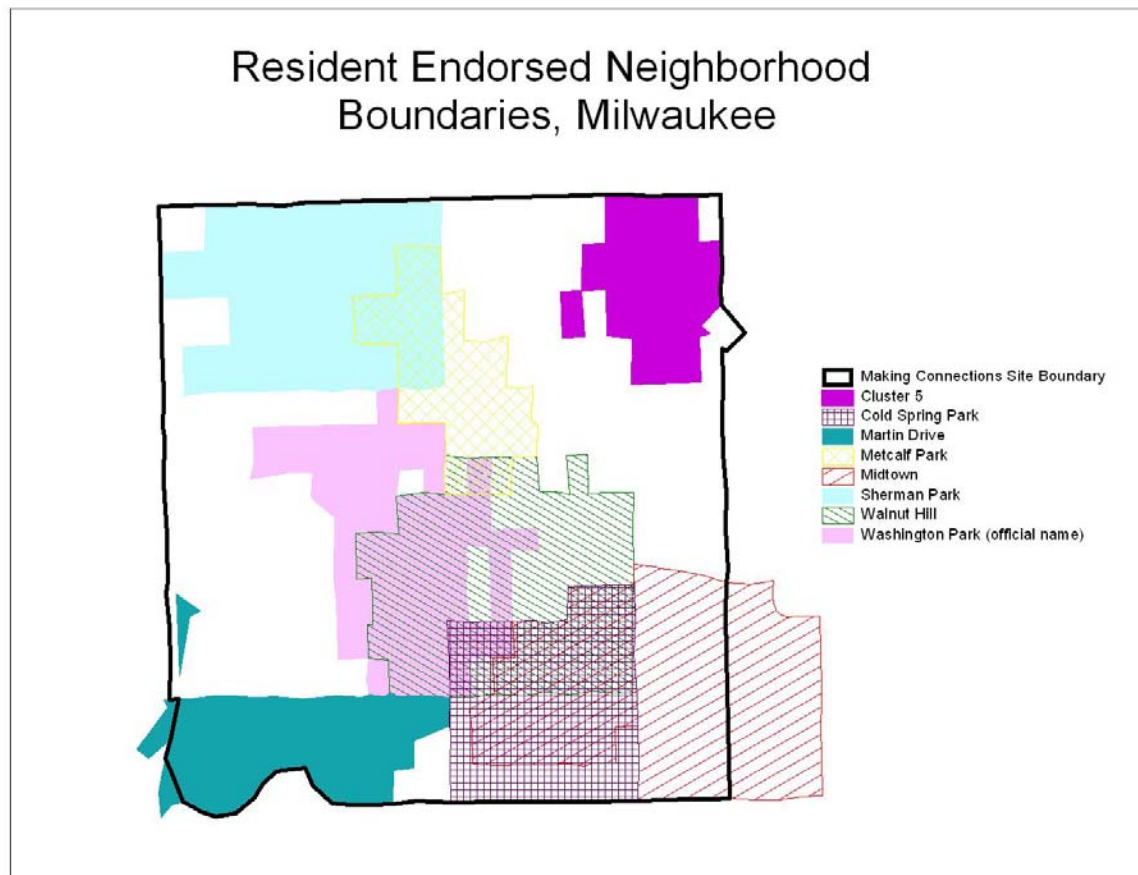
Indianapolis –
Official and
unofficial names;
Clusters; More
names than
clusters;
Overlapping areas

Similar Cities:
Milwaukee -- More
unofficial names

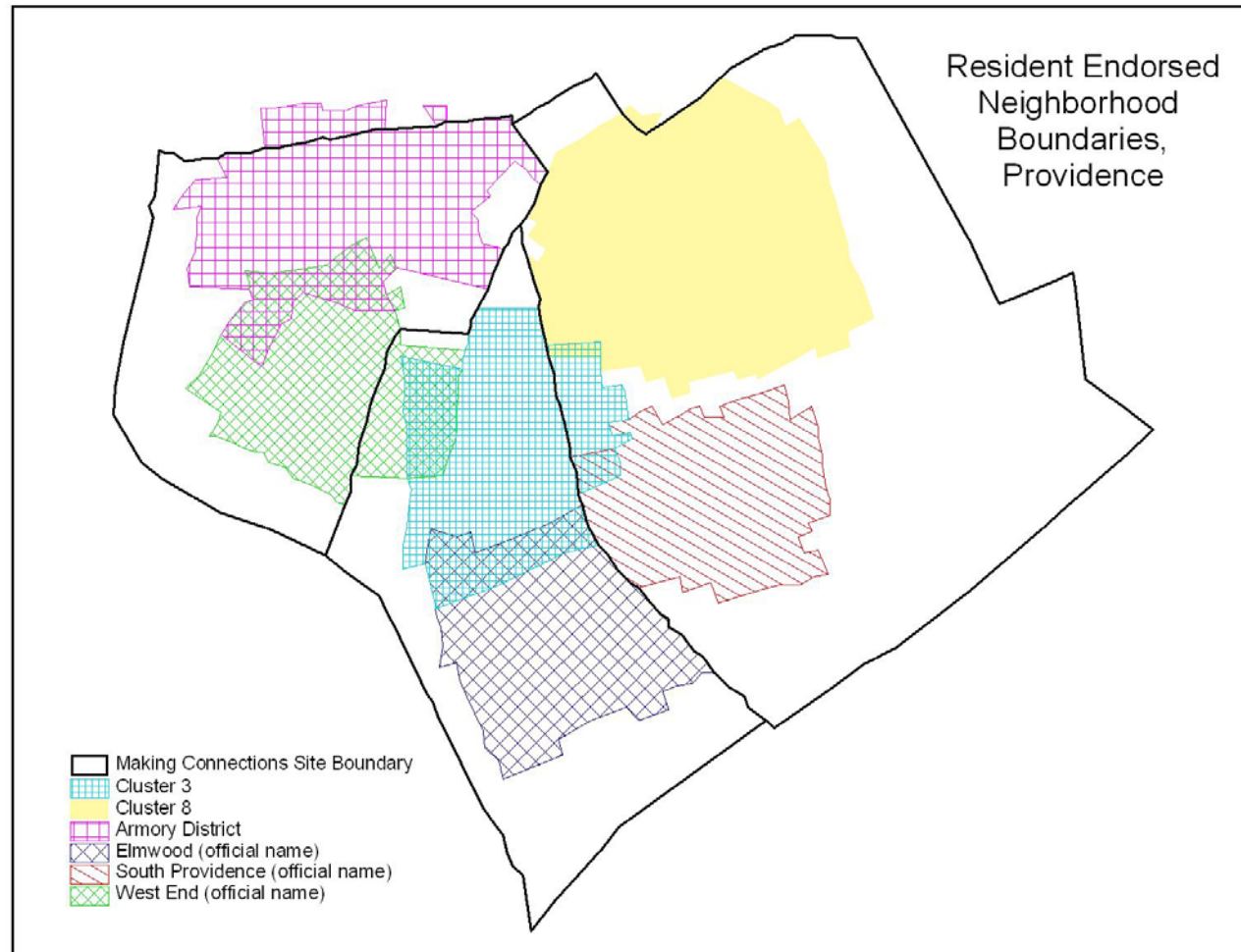
Providence – More
official names

Des Moines – No
official names

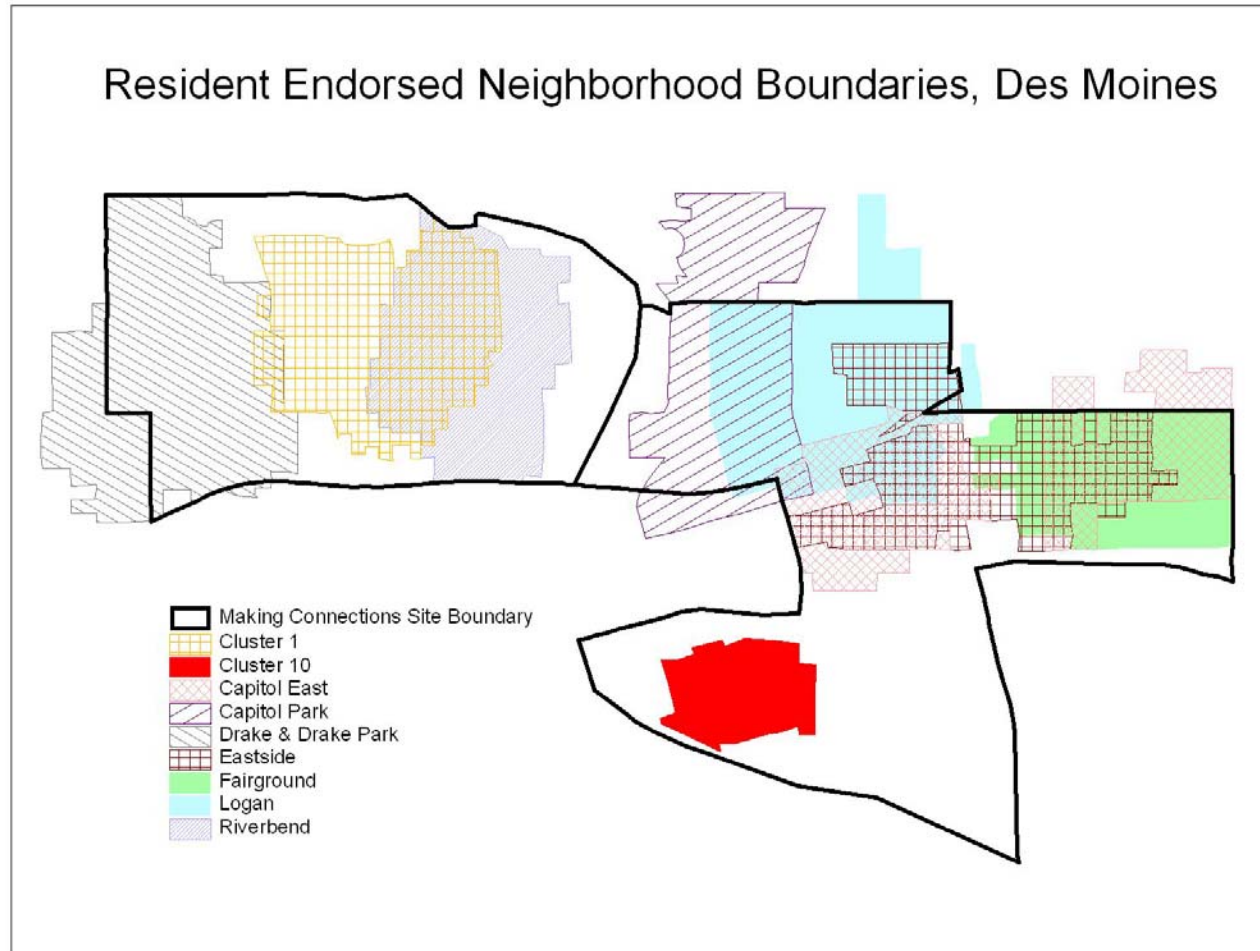
Findings: Overlapping Name and Cluster Mix



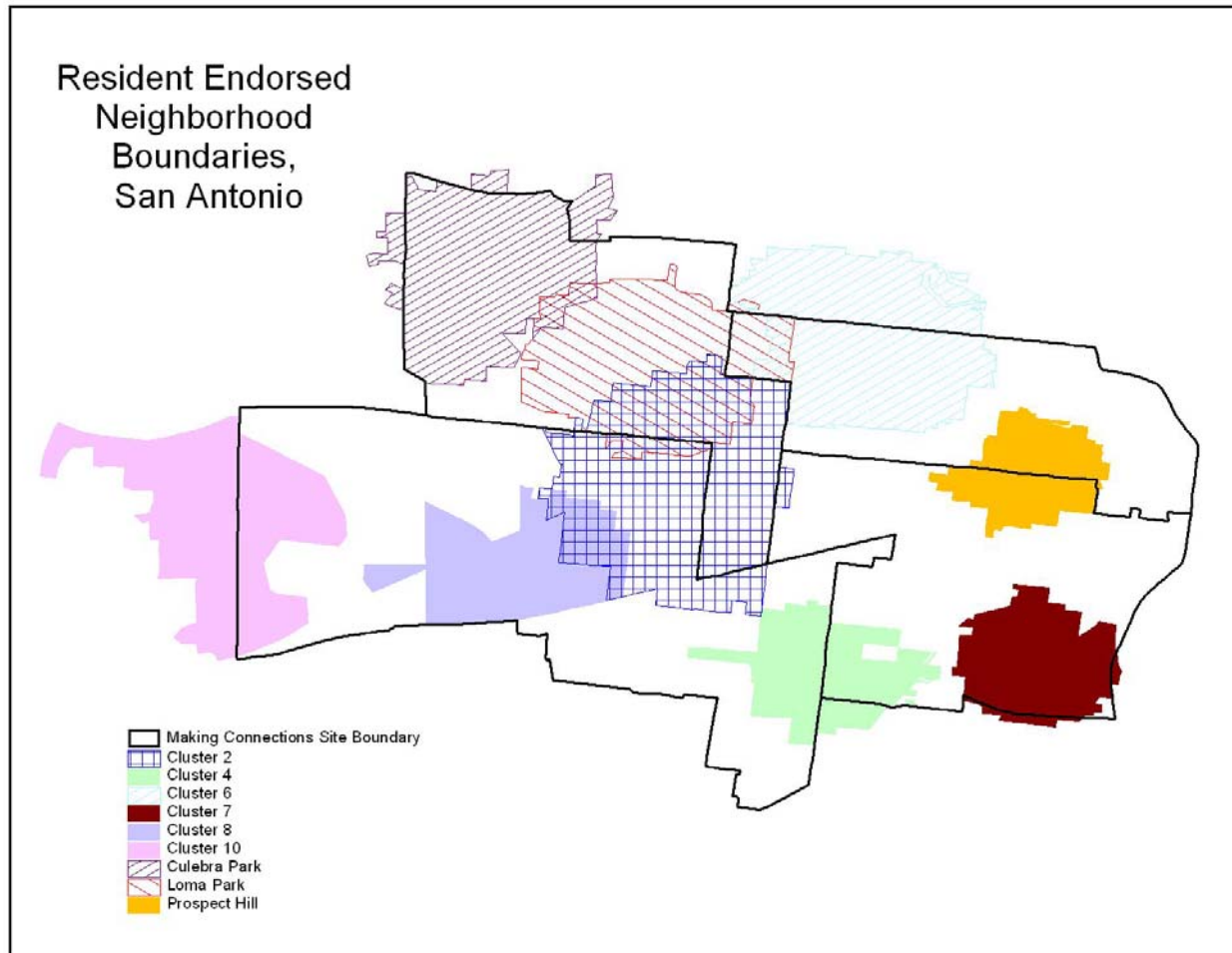
Findings: Overlapping Name and Cluster Mix



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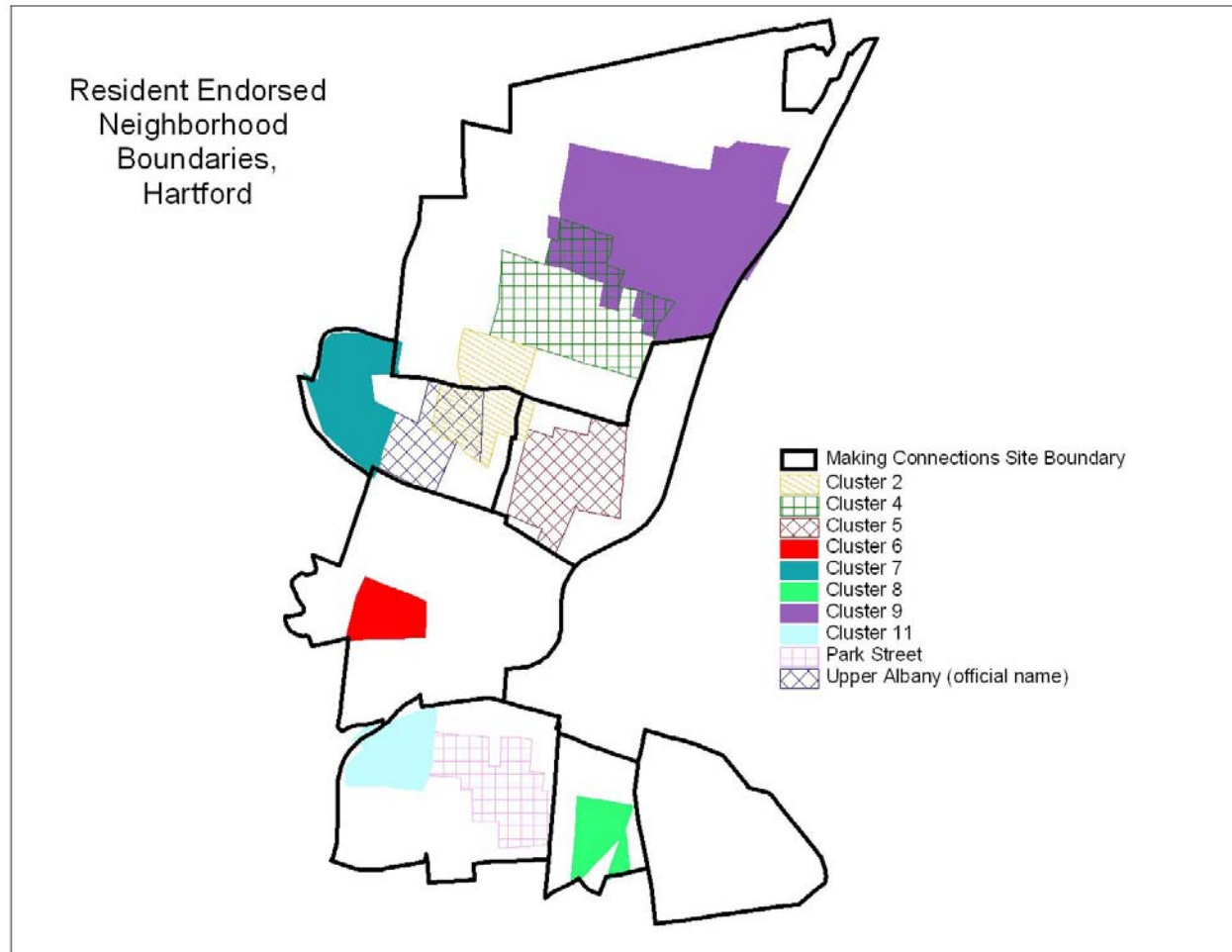
Findings: Mostly Clusters



San Antonio – Mix of names and clusters; More clusters than names; Some overlap

Similar City:
Hartford -- Official name in the mix

Findings: Mostly Clusters



Research Findings

- How do residents view their neighborhoods spatially and symbolically?
 - **Vast differences across sites and to some extent within sites**
- How do the residents' views compare with pre-defined boundaries?
 - **It depends on the site**
- Can information about resident perceived neighborhoods prove useful in addressing neighborhood action or as a basis for work to strengthen neighborhood involvement and social networks?
 - **Yes, within each site; but difficult across sites**

Next Steps

Evaluate Our Methodology

- More Research
 - Reliability Measures between and within resident endorsed neighborhood boundaries
 - Compare results from the survey
- From the Field
 - Experience from Local Learning Partners in each site
 - Field results only from Milwaukee so far

Contact Information

Kristen Mikelbank

Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development,
Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences,
Case Western Reserve University

kmm30@case.edu

(216) 368-3188