

South Phoenix Assessment of Community and Environment (SPACE)

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Abstract

South Phoenix hosts a disproportionate number of hazardous industries, waste handling facilities, and toxic waste sites. It is also home to some of Phoenix's oldest African American and Latino neighborhoods, and residents worry about health, safety, equity, and quality of life. Our research has two major elements. The first is to conduct, in collaboration with community-based organizations, a survey of risk perceptions, neighborhood quality of life factors, and household health measures. The second component will focus on specific neighborhoods affected by recent commercial fires and the resulting toxic chemical releases. We will survey the risk perceptions, health consequences, and changes in neighborhood characteristics that resulted from these incidents. Thus we will compare neighborhood perceptions and responses to both chronic hazardous environmental conditions and acute hazard events. In addition to assessing current conditions in South Phoenix, we will also examine the historical and contextual factors that have produced this ecology of risk.

Research Approach

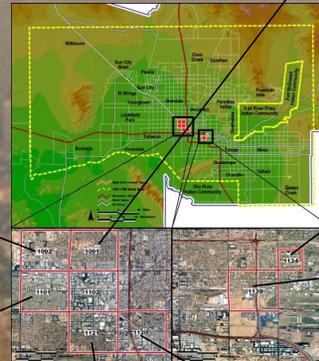
1. Census of Population and Housing
2. Environmental Hazards (Environmental Protection Agency, Right-to-Know Network)
3. Land Use (CAP LTER)
4. Survey of area residents
5. Ethnographic observation

Tract 1091
 Land Use:
 Small Lot Residential 76%
 Educational 9%
 Sociodemographic Characteristics:
 Population 3887
 Hispanic 44%
 Black 3%
 Median Family Income \$22,551

Tract 1134
 Land Use:
 Institutional 92%
 Small Lot Residential 4%
 Sociodemographic Characteristics:
 Population 6799
 Hispanic 27%
 Black 10%
 Median Family Income missing

Tract 1092
 Land Use: Industrial 37%
 Small Lot Residential 26%
 Sociodemographic Characteristics:
 Population 8922
 Hispanic 42%
 Black 6%
 Median Family Income \$21,554

Tract 1139
 Land Use:
 Vacant 36%
 Business Park 25%
 Sociodemographic Characteristics:
 Population 4991
 Hispanic 71%
 Black 17%
 Median Family Income \$6,827



Tract 1101
 Land Use: Small Lot Residential 42%
 Business Park 23%
 Sociodemographic Characteristics:
 Population 2797
 Hispanic 60%
 Black 5%
 Median Family Income \$21,111

Tract 1120
 Land Use:
 Vacant 36%
 Business Park 25%
 Sociodemographic Characteristics:
 Population 3662
 Hispanic 30%
 Black 3%
 Median Family Income \$27,353

Tract 1121
 Land Use:
 Vacant 36%
 Business Park 25%
 Sociodemographic Characteristics:
 Population 9081
 Hispanic 76%
 Black 2%
 Median Family Income \$15,000

Research Questions

1. How do environmental perceptions of residents compare with expert assessments of environmental quality?
2. What environmental, historical, and political economic factors explain the concentration of hazards and the succession of land use?
3. How do residents respond to environmental hazards in their neighborhood? What information sources do they use and what mitigation strategies do they follow?

South Phoenix Home



Photo by Diane Sicotte

Local Industry



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