Golden Circle + 1

**Who**: Brief Look at New Bern.

**Why**: Issues and Concerns.

**What**: Motivation for the Site.

**How**: Can we make it better using GIS.
Who: City of New Bern, NC
Everything Comes Together Here.

Located at the confluence of the Trent and Neuse Rivers - 30 min. west of the Atlantic Ocean and about 100 miles from the current NC Capital - Raleigh
City of New Bern
Everything Comes Together Here.

-Founded by Baron Degraffenreid of Bern Switzerland our Sister City and John Lawson an English explorer, naturalist and writer
-Settled in 1710 by Swiss and Palatine German immigrants.
City of New Bern
Everything Comes Together Here.

- The Birthplace of Pepsi Cola.
- The 2nd oldest European-American colonial town and the 1st Capital of NC (Tryon Palace).
- Population of roughly 30,000 and 29.8 sq. miles in area
Why: Vacant and/or Abandoned Properties
What’s a Community to Do?

Every community has them!
Those vacant or unused properties that were obtained through a variety of means.
➢ Foreclosures, Abandonment, Death in the family
➢ Out of state owners that no longer want or able to maintain them.
➢ Some may have even been donate for one reason or another.
Vacant and/or Abandoned Properties
What’s a Community to Do?

No longer a tax revenue for that community – more often than not they are a cost - sometimes a significant one.

Costs:
- cutting the grass
- clearing the lot or
- razing uninhabitable buildings

Also a liability and an eyesore in many cases.
A detriment to poorer neighborhoods who desire to see growth and home ownership not vacant lots or abandoned buildings.
What: Choice Neighborhood Plan

- HUD launched the Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) in 2010:
- Its goals were to help local leaders transform struggling neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into sustainable, mixed income communities with:
  - quality affordable housing,
  - safer streets,
  - good schools and
  - improved access to jobs.
In 2014, HUD selected the City of New Bern and the Housing Authority as one of only 9 cities in the country to receive the CNI Grant of $400,000.

Access to the CNI Plan: http://choicenewbern.com
Choice Neighborhood Plan

Committees and a plan of action were formed, including an assessment of vacant, abandoned and run down properties in Phase 1.
Survey Says..........

From The Plan: “The study area detailed land use survey details one of its biggest challenges over abundant vacant properties esp. in the residential areas. Unoccupied houses and empty lots fragment the community and project an image of general neglect. Vacant lots along commercial corridors splinter a formerly healthy commercial district into a sparse assortment of shops separated by blank spaces.”

Using the GIS showed a significant amount of vacant properties or abandoned structures were publicly owned.
Commercial Corridor: Five Points 1930’s

Vibrant area of New Bern.

Nice homes and commercial businesses attracted many to live and work in the area.
Today only a very few homes and business exist in the area.

No longer a place to live and work – but neglected and avoided if possible.
Community Owned Properties

Cities and Counties are not in the Real Estate Business, nor are they developers but tasked with guiding sustainable development – both short and especially long term.

City-wide, New Bern had over 200 such properties (90 in CNI area alone). A further look found Public Works was spending over $120,000/year to maintain these properties including: mowing, demolition of buildings, debris and pest removal.

1230 Cedar St. One of over 90 vacant lots owned by the City through various processes like foreclosure, tax liens, etc. Eyesores, unwanted gathering spots, and a cost to cut grass and maintain.
Community Owned Properties - Others

702 Second Ave. - Abandoned store – eyesore and dangerous

1006 Williams St. Lot being used by others

619 Second Ave – being used by undesirables and fire hazard

400 Cypress St. – Abandoned Neighborhood Commercial Bldg.
How: Got a Story to Tell

Since GIS data and tools were used in shedding light on the problem, GIS staff were tasked with using GIS to help fix it. Not only in the Choice Neighborhood – but citywide. Staff met with each department to exclude property for future city-uses such as parks/green space, utilities, or storage.

That left over 150 properties with a tax value of over $2.4 Million.

How about we tell a story........
I don’t know nothing about coding no app. or how did I survive before Google?

- Story Map tutorials: (https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/app-list/map-tour/tutorial/)
- Used Flickr to hold my photos, ArcGIS Online now.
- Just to be different... tried some HTML code to change font color, size, italics and to add hyperlinks with no real coding experience.
- Lots of great online tools – help, how to videos, examples.
Site

Goals - Hopes - Dreams

- Leading CNI - goals with economic development and infill.
- Source of Tax Revenue vs Cost.
- Allows for smaller developers and 1st time home ownership. As well as jobs and growth.
- Sites are ready for development and a way to re-coop costs.
- Allows for the city to work on larger areas and goals vs piece meal.
Lessons Learned

Something for nothing
Get help from the Media
Have a plan for everything
  ➢ Some offers declined.
  ➢ Buyers Beware.
Set guidelines first not after the fact.
  ➢ Acceptable minimum.
  ➢ Desired Uses/Guidelines
  ➢ Building Condition Issues.
Look for Partnerships

Habitat for Humanity – 8 lots donated.
Successes: 201 Norwood Street

From an abandoned and neglected apartment under construction for affordable housing.
From an overgrown weeded lot to a single family home and landscaped yard.
854 Howard Street

From a vacant lot the city had to cut to a new home for a 1st time home owner.
923 Green St.

From a vacant lot to a new neighborhood park.
No End to this Story.....

“If you want a happy ending, that depends, of course, on where you stop your story.”

– ORSON WELLES

New Story Maps:
➢ Development Projects
  http://arcg.is/1WcYtUO
➢ Building Permits
  http://arcg.is/2q9Cxio
Questions?

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