
Blessing Ojomah Abbah
Master of Public Administration and Conflict Resolution, December 2013

Abstract

A qualitative research design served to explore the effects of human resource policies in the workplace with narratives developed from 15 women comprising of African immigrants and their U.S born counterparts in Oregon through analysis and interpretation of data from one-on-one interviews. The findings suggest that human resource policies in the workplace have great impacts on women’s work experiences in many ways, and the work environment is not easy for female African immigrants.

This study explored major factors related to human resource policies that affect the African immigrant women’s work experiences such as pay difference, language and communication proficiency, cultural/religious differences, skill transferability and employment skill (qualifications/promotion), prejudice and discrimination and working conditions. Despite these women’s qualification, competence and belief that equal skill mean equal opportunity, the strictures of human resource work policies makes it harder for them to adapt and excel in the work environment.

Work experience and policies in Africa and America differ. Because the life circumstances and experiences of African women are distinctively different from those of their native-born counterparts, the analysis concludes with recommendations for employers, managers, and human resource personnel. Recommendations include improving diversity in human resource professionals/managers, employers partnering with ethnic-based networks to better improve work policies to address the needs of African female immigrants and the incorporation of culturally appropriate conflict resolution styles in work policies.

Success and Failure Among Agricultural Cooperatives in Turkey

Grant Aman
Bachelor of Arts, PPPM, June 2014
Honors Thesis

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of democratic control on Turkey’s cooperatives. Turkey has had agricultural cooperatives in one form or another since before the rise of the Ottoman
Empire. Yet, the movement has consistently underperformed financially since the founding of the republic. This study seeks to understand the degree to which Turkey’s agricultural cooperatives are controlled democratically by their members and whether that has an effect on their financial performance.

Democratic control is an indicator of collective action. My research took two forms. Interviews were conducted via Skype, telephone, and email with government officials, cooperative employees, and academics in both Turkey and the United States. I also analyzed technical reports and other policy documents published by the Turkish government, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the World Bank. I found that there are three main inhibitors of collective action among Turkey’s agricultural cooperatives: poor relations between cooperative executives and members, state intervention, and lack of member participation. I concluded by offering some recommendations for overcoming those inhibitors.

**Dollars and Sense**: An Evaluation of Ecosystem Services Provided by Spencer’s Butte Park

*Erik George Forsell—NABCEP*

*Mast er of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014*

**Abstract**

Ecosystem services are often described as the biophysical environment that provide humans and the surrounding habitat with natural, ecological and environmental resources and benefits. Ecosystem services include a wide variety of benefits such as pollination, carbon sequestration, storm water retention, and nutrient cycling; however, they can also refer to a management approach or decision-making process for managing these types of resources.

Ecosystem services provide an intrinsic value that has been detailed in recent reports to exceed the value of the entire world’s annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) revenue. In one of the most widely cited ecosystem service valuation studies, researchers in 1997 estimated that the value of services provided by Earth’s ecosystems was at least 33 trillion U.S. dollars, compared to the global (GDP) of approximately 17 trillion dollars at the time. Capital valuation builds an easier understanding about the economic and ecological benefits that are accrued through ecological functions in the environment. Much of the benefits that are realized by humans as a result of ecosystem services are manifested in the form of cost avoidance to storm water infrastructure, provisioning materials such as lumber and foodstuffs, and health benefits such as cleaner drinking water, and reduced air pollution.

The research in this report evaluates ecosystem services at Spencer’s Butte in Eugene, Oregon. Discussed within is a description of typical ecological services and a portrayal of the unique ridgeline habitats found just south of Eugene, Oregon. The analysis included within this research utilizes a popular and commonly used ecosystem service modeling tool—*iTree Vue*. The modeling software utilizes land use data, canopy and herbaceous layer composition, and impervious surface descriptions to evaluate ecosystem services on a landscape scale. The findings from the model describe a quantification in dollar values of the ecological air quality benefits provided by vegetated habitats on Spencer’s Butte.
So What? The Impact of Social Capital Created by the Ford Institute Leadership Program

Aimee Fritsch
BA in Planning, Public Policy and Management, June 2014

Abstract
This study investigates the impact of social capital, defined in this context as the personal or community benefits that come from social networks, that participants formed by being a part of the Ford Institute Leadership Program (FILP) a community leadership class sponsored by the Ford Family Foundation. FILP is a class designed to train emerging, existing and experienced leaders, and draws class members from individuals who live and/or work in the sponsored communities. The study asks the question, “What are people doing with the new or deepened relationships they formed because of these classes?” Research was done via in-person interviews with participants in three case study communities: Ontario, Hermiston, and Forest Grove, OR. The results of this research suggest that new connections are creating personal, professional, and community benefits, especially in increased access to resources. Findings from this study will be of primary use to the Ford Family Foundation, but would also be interesting and applicable to anyone interested in community development, rural studies, some sectors of sociology, and/or program evaluation.

The role of housing-focused nonprofits in disaster response and recovery: Habitat for Humanity Oregon case study

Casey Hagerman
Master of Community & Regional Planning, June 2014

Abstract
The Issue
As disasters grow more frequent and destructive, affecting wider areas both rural and urban, federal agencies will increasingly call upon local jurisdictions and organizations to help with response and recovery activities. Most small, housing-focused nonprofits do not consider their missions or operations as serving any role in disaster response or recovery. This project sought to uncover what possible roles housing nonprofits may serve before and after disasters, and what steps need to be taken to prepare for those roles.

Habitat for Humanity Case Study
Local Habitat affiliates focus mainly on volunteer management to build affordable housing for low-income residents. Habitat International and the Habitat State Support Organizations are encouraging local affiliates to complete disaster preparedness and response plans, and to consider adding response and recovery to their missions. I partnered with Habitat for Humanity Oregon, and local Habitat affiliates in Portland and Newport, to serve as case studies to determine present expectations and capacities, and to identify needs and opportunities for the two locations.

Findings
This research and case study produced three major findings that can be applied to housing nonprofits nationwide. These findings outline the necessary steps and planning activities for increasing a nonprofit’s role in local disaster response and recovery. In tandem with this research, I worked with Habitat Oregon to update their Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan Template. This template was distributed statewide to assist local affiliates with disaster planning efforts.
Institutional Barriers for Co-Digestion: Case Studies of the East Bay Municipal Utility District and Des Moines Wastewater Reclamation Authority’s co-digestion efforts

Casey Hanson
Master of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014

Abstract

The water sector has made substantial progress in new methods and technologies, yet institutional barriers limit implementation of these innovations. Research has started to identify types of institutional barriers, but tactics to overcome them are lacking. Co-digestion is an emerging trend wastewater facilities are using that has received little attention. Through co-digestion, multiple organic wastes (e.g., wastewater solids, food scraps, oil, and grease) simultaneously undergo anaerobic digestion and produce biogas which is typically used for heat and power. This research examines two cases: the East Bay Municipal Utility District in San Francisco, California and the Des Moines Wastewater Reclamation Authority in Iowa. Through interviews and document review, institutional barriers were analyzed under a regulatory/political, economic, cultural, and social framework to get a better understanding of the types of existing barriers and how organizations are overcoming them. Findings reveal that economic and regulatory/political barriers cause the most prevalent issues to co-digestion efforts. Additionally, these barriers indicate that cities have a valuable role in this process that has not yet reached its full potential due to fragmentation and lack of awareness. By identifying these barriers and steps of action, this research provides general strategies and recommendations to help overcome these challenges.

Latino Small Town Revitalization as “Blight”: Woodburn, Oregon

Roanel Herrera
Master of Community and Regional Planning, December 2013

Abstract

The recent population growth in emerging Latino destinations has revitalized many small and dying towns across the United States. In fact, from 2000 to 2005, 221 counties would have experienced overall population decline if not for Latino population growth. As Latinos continue to migrate from traditional immigrant gateways to newly emerging destinations (a trend fueled by the restructuring of the agricultural industry, mass immigration, natural increase, and increased employment opportunities) community development professionals will be challenged to create new models of democratic practice that address the conflicts of these transitioning towns. Emerging theories of democracy that challenge traditional power dynamics, such as cultural citizenship, can help further these efforts.

Through the case study of Woodburn, a rural town in Oregon’s Willamette Valley, a town that has experienced rapid Latino population growth over the last several decades, I detail why even though Latinos are investing and revitalizing economically depressed spaces, the historic downtown is still characterized as “blighted.” I draw from the communities’ capitals’ framework to contextualize how generative redevelopment practices are built upon various forms of capital. I analyze the cultural differences in the definition of “blight” between Latinos and whites in the town and uncover the racial conflicts around (1) small business investment and development and (2) historic preservation policy. Drawing on 40 in-depth qualitative interviews, an analysis of U.S. Census data, and a spatial analysis of Latino small businesses, I examine the way in which the lack of Latino political representation in formal planning and governance institutions plays a significant role in how local institutions define Latino generative community revitalization as “blight.” This case illustrates how formal community planning and development institutions create a discourse of disempowerment by contesting informal generative revitalization efforts within a racialized context.
Identification and Analysis of Activity Centers in Medford, Oregon

Garrett A. Jensen
Master of Community and Regional Planning, July 2014

Abstract

Activity centers are typically focal points of a community and contain a concentration of diverse urban functions and housing. These areas accommodate a range of activities that reduce the need to travel by concentrating housing, employment and services into consolidated centers.

Rogue Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) adopted “Alternative Measures” in response to Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) to increase transportation options and reduce reliance on motor vehicle travel. The regional and local transportation plan both introduce mixed-use activity centers as an alternative land use scenario that would bring the MPO into compliance with the TPR’s vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction requirement. While each plan defines a means to measure progress towards meeting the “Alternative Measures,” they both fail to identify a systematical approach to identify locations to monitor from the beginning.

The research introduces and applies a technical approach using GIS to identify activity centers and is a first attempt to establish more robust criteria for future analysis. The research then develops typology to classify activity centers based on certain land use, demographic and housing characteristics. Finally, the research collects primary data to assess walkability within the defined mixed-use activity centers. The results from the analysis provide recommendations aimed to aid activity center planning and policies in the Rogue Valley.

Getting to School:
An Examination of the Walking School Bus and Parental Transportation Concerns

Jeffrey Charles Kernen
Master of Community and Regional Planning, September 2014

Abstract

Children do not walk to school as often now as they did in past decades. There are consequences from the change in mode of transportation: it has been suggested that the decline in walking as a regular practice could be a major contributing factor to the rise in childhood obesity, a decline in opportunities for socialization, harmful vehicle emissions, and less-safe walking conditions due to an increase in the amount of vehicles on the road. The Walking School Bus (WSB) is an organized method of chaperoned trips to school and a way to encourage children and parents to be aware of the implications of their transportation choices. This research seeks to understand the factors that affect parents’ decision-making on how their children get to school and the ways in which concerns can be ameliorated through organized safety programs. Using interview and survey data collected at elementary schools in Eugene and Springfield, Oregon, this project explores the ways that parents navigate their children’s school transportation and specifically examines the impact of the WSB on transportation decisions. Findings indicate that parents were aware of the environmental impacts of driving and the safety concerns regarding neighborhood walkability, as well as the social and health advantages of having their children walk to school. Time and scheduling proved to be the most important factors in transportation decisions for most respondents. Parents suggested the WSB operate more frequently with a more flexible schedule, and generally felt that the WSB could alleviate some of their transportation concerns.
Harnessing the Power of Volunteer Labor
Rebecca C. Langham
BA in Planning, Public Policy and Management, June 2014

Abstract

In 2012, about one in every four adults in the United States volunteered at least once, totaling 7.9 billion hours of volunteer service. This abundance of unpaid labor is an incredibly valuable resource that many nonprofit organizations utilize in order to operate programming and provide services, but it also dictates a need for a volunteer management program within organizations to coordinate all of the volunteer functions. The amount of people who choose to volunteer and the number of organizations who utilize this volunteer labor has made volunteerism and volunteer management a compelling research topic. Thousands of articles have been published in academic journals in a variety of disciplines. This thesis examines volunteer management by researching the findings of academia and discovering the practices nonprofit organizations use through interviews and case studies. I hypothesize that there is a disconnect between the academic and professional sphere, and found that all of the volunteer management professionals who were interviewed do not use academic research as a resource when seeking to improve their volunteer programs. I call for a better integration of the extensive knowledge to bridge the gap between the academic and professional spheres.

Supports and Barriers to the Integration of Hazard Mitigation Plans Into Local Comprehensive Plans
Stacy G. Ludington
Master of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014

Abstract

In 2000, the U.S. federal government passed the Disaster Mitigation Act, which required local governments to adopt hazard mitigation plans (HMPs) to address natural and manmade hazards. Most HMPs are developed as unenforceable, stand-alone documents that have little or no connections with other local plans. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) encourages localities with a HMP to link and integrate it with other local plans that do have legal standing, such as local comprehensive plans. Lewis (2011) asked to what extent county HMPs were being integrated into county comprehensive plans and found that little was being done. This study assesses why this might be the case through identifying and analyzing the supporting and barrier factors counties are facing during integration of these two plans. Six county planners were interviewed about the supporting and barrier factors their county faced regarding integration of these two documents, three from counties Lewis identified as having a higher integration score and three from counties Lewis identified as having a lower integration score. The results reveal little to no difference between higher and lower scoring counties in their perception of supports and barriers, but strong staff and political leadership, strong community awareness of hazards, and a history of hazard events affecting the community were consistent supporting factors, while a poor understanding of what integration looks like, pushback against over-regulation, and a question of responsibility for integration were consistent barrier factors. These results lead to suggestions for improving the integration between HMPs and county-level comprehensive plans for government agencies, counties and cities, and assistance programs.
Institutional Barriers to College Bicycle Program Development

Matthew S. McCluney
Master of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014

Abstract

College communities are increasingly finding bicycles to be the answer to greater mobility for their active lifestyles, while on a budget, and with the future of the environment in mind. The cost of parking, growth of bicycle commuting (over 50% mode split at some universities), and its acceptance as a sustainable practice has led to the establishment of campus programs. As of fall 2013, the League of American Bicyclists has recognized 75 schools as Bicycle Friendly Universities.

Several previous studies have examined the physical attributes that determine college bicycling behaviors, including infrastructure and weather preferences. However, there has been little research into the organizational structures that support bicycle services. If bicycling is growing, and it is generally accepted as a clean and cost-efficient alternative, then why haven’t more colleges made the modal shift away from single occupancy vehicles through the establishment of comprehensive bicycle programs? What are the institutional barriers to college campus bicycle program development?

This research involved interviewing bicycle program coordinators at universities across the country recognized for their bicycle services, to give voice to their triumphs and challenges. The findings from these interviews help explain the institutional culture that may inhibit further programmatic growth, as well as the strategies that have met with success. Together, these insights from current bicycle program coordinators could contribute to the dialogue surrounding organizational credibility for alternative and sustainable practices, such as campus bicycling.

Adapting To The New Economy:
The Impacts of Mountain Bike Tourism in Oakridge, Oregon

Nicholas S. Meltzer
Master of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014

Abstract

The city of Oakridge, Oregon has seen a measurable increase in the number of mountain bike visitors over the last five years. These visitors are providing a needed boost in their economy, which was historically based in natural resource extraction. While some literature exists on the economic impact of mountain bikers at larger geographic scales (county, state, or national levels), very little exists at a community level. This research uses existing data to determine the economic impact of mountain bikers in Oakridge. Furthermore, as economic development is inexplicably linked with community development, the study also examines the social impacts of mountain bike tourism in Oakridge. Through key informant interviews, the attitudes and perceptions of local residents and business owners were obtained. By identifying barriers and opportunities to future development, this research presents strategies to increase local spending while maintaining community values.
**Community Readiness for Economic Development:**
*Assessing Readiness for Ocean Renewable Energy along the Oregon Coast*

**Leigh Anne Michael**
*Master of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014*

**Abstract**

All communities implement a project or program at some point in time. However, if the community is not ready for the new project or program, or ready for change, then the new idea will fail. Many well-intended and well-designed community projects fail because the design did not take into account the community’s preparedness to carry out the needed work.

Community readiness is a theoretical model created by the Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research, at Colorado State University, to understand a community’s level of readiness for implementing a community alcohol and drug abuse prevention program. Other disciplines now use the community readiness model to evaluate specific projects or programs. The Community Readiness Model provides a step-by-step process for assessing a community’s readiness. The theory explains a set of nine developmental stages a community may go through. Each of the nine stages moves the community toward implementing and sustaining a program or project.

This study applies the theory of community readiness, customized to the ocean energy industry, to understand if the Coos County region in Oregon is ready to develop ocean renewable energy along its coast. The study uses a scorecard assessment tool customized for ocean energy development to assess Coos County’s readiness.

The readiness assessment shows the Coos County region is in the preparation stage of readiness for ocean renewable energy. This means the region is not ready for ocean energy development currently but has capacity in place to begin preparing for development in the future.

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**Assessment of Bicycle Ridership through the implementation of Bicycle-friendly Infrastructure**

**Robert Randall Morris**
*Master of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014*

**Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to provide the relevant campus agencies at the University of Oregon (Eugene) with the information, tools and ideas for increasing bicycle ridership by:

- Examining the existing bicycle friendly infrastructure (or enhancements) and analyzing findings.
- Determining if the findings suggest that the existing enhancements are adequate, and if not, provide recommendations.
- Providing next step approaches for bike-friendly infrastructure planning to campus administrators and outside planning professionals.
- Serving as a best practices model that other institutions that are pro-bicycling can emulate.

Additionally, the contribution of this research could equip the university decision makers and planners with approaches to reduce the negative on and off-campus transportation impacts, promote bicycling awareness, create incentives to encourage and facilitate bicycling, create a ‘greener’ campus through sustainable environmental benefits, conduct maintenance and revision exercises to the cycling environment to make bicycling a more welcomed healthy and environmentally friendly alternative mode of transportation for students, faculty, staff and community members.
Advancing Innovation-Based Strategies for Economic Development in Oregon: A Comparative Analysis of State-Funded Innovation Organizations

Bill Eggert, Yeojin Niehaus, Mary Beattie, Richard Kitumba, Masouma Zargar

Abstract
The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations to aid the Oregon Innovation Council (Oregon InC) in improving its innovation-based economic development programs. Established as a public-private partnership between the Oregon Business Development Department, private sector leaders, and universities in 2005, Oregon InC strives to create jobs, create companies, and leverage federal and private research dollars with its public investments. Building on its many successes, Oregon InC seeks to improve its programs and overall impact on economic development in the state. As such, Oregon InC reached out to graduate students in the University of Oregon's Master of Public Administration program to conduct an evaluation of its current programs and a comparative analysis of innovation-based programs implemented in competing states.

To conduct the analysis, the research team performed an in-depth comparison of innovation-based programs in five states: Utah, Texas, Kansas, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Additionally, the research team assessed Oregon InC according to industry best practices and performed a brief literature review to identify the current trends in state-funded, innovation programs. Using the data gathered from these methods, the research team provides an overall evaluation of Oregon InC and offers recommendations for improving its innovation-based strategies for economic development.

Potential Implications of Recreational Marijuana Legalization

Stephane Durand, Dayle Gregory, Marcus Mueller, Nyssa Rivera, Trevor Stephens

Abstract
The recent legalization of recreational marijuana use and distribution in Colorado and Washington is spurring discussion of possible policy replication throughout the country. Oregon is one of several states currently considering also legalizing recreational marijuana. In this report, a group of Master of Public Administration students in the Capstone Applied Research Project assess some of the potential implications for county governments of marijuana legalization, on behalf of the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC). The analysis draws from both secondary research and primary source interviews about effects experienced in Colorado and Washington, which are each in different phases of implementation.

In Colorado, initial findings show that it is still early for drawing any major conclusions about the effects on counties, but areas of concern include public health, public safety, fiscal effects, and land use. In Oregon, there is concern that legalized recreational marijuana may deplete limited resources and have negative implications for localities. Legalized recreational marijuana is still in its infancy and more time is needed to definitively determine the implications it will have on Oregon counties.

Planned Parenthood of Southwestern Oregon Healthcare Services Expansion Feasibility Assessment

Austin Cummings, Daemin Park, Danjie “Cindy” Fu, Ron Milton, Emma Stocker

Abstract
This MPA Capstone report examines how Planned Parenthood of Southwestern Oregon can expand reproductive/family health services into rural areas of Southwestern Oregon in a cost-effective and feasible manner, in order to meet family planning/reproductive need in the area and respond to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. This report uses several methods to identify cost-
effective and feasible expansion strategies, primarily comparing mobile health clinic program and telemedicine. The following methods were used: 1) a needs assessment to identify family planning need; 2) a service census to identify service gaps; 3) case studies and interviews to identify best practices for using either service delivery mode; and 4) a cost effectiveness comparison to show the relative opportunities, challenges, risks, and best practices associated with utilizing various health service delivery modes. This report concludes with recommendations for how PPSO can expand services throughout Southwestern Oregon and important considerations for utilizing different service delivery modes. This report may also help other healthcare providers consider how to expand services in light of the ACA and meet healthcare needs in underserved and rural areas.

- End of Capstone Abstracts -

**What Makes a Neighborhood? A Critical Analysis of Successful Urban Neighborhoods.**

*Case Studies: Plan New York City 2030 and The Seattle Comprehensive Plan*

**Cassandra Anne O’Hearn**  
*Bachelor of Arts in PPPM, June 2014*  
*Honors Thesis*

**Abstract**

What are the methods used to design healthy, vibrant neighborhoods? Does neighborhood planning appreciate the uniqueness of place and culture? How do mixed-use development, open space and walkability impact a neighborhood? This thesis uses the neighborhood chapter of the comprehensive plans for New York City and Seattle, Washington to highlight three key features of neighborhood planning: mixed-use development, open space and walkability.

This thesis identifies how ideas around sustainability and urban design are implemented in the comprehensive plans of New York City and Seattle, Washington. It also identifies the main theme of New York City’s plan to be strong neighborhood identity, while the Comprehensive Plan for Seattle, WA has a central theme of sustainability. A methodical approach is taken to analyze how the decisions for neighborhood planning are or are not in keeping with the central themes and goals of each city. These conclusions are finally applied to neighborhood planning more broadly, in order to allow other cities to identify and implement central goals for neighborhood planning.

**The Role of Cargo Bicycles in Disaster Planning and Emergency Management**

*An Evaluation of the Disaster Relief Trials*

**James Alexander Page**  
*Master of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014*

**Abstract**

Bicycles are not typically emphasized as a disaster response tool. However, recent events have highlighted the effectiveness of bicycles in disasters. Their attributes make them more nimble than automobiles, effective in gas shortages, and can even be adapted to become human-powered generators. Cargo bicycles also retain these functions, while adding a heavy payload capacity.

Recently, some community events have demonstrated the use of cargo bicycles for disaster response and preparedness through competitive races. These events emerged in the Pacific Northwest in response to the imminent Cascadia subduction zone earthquake. This project examined the planning framework and
evaluated the effectiveness of Disaster Relief Trials (DRTs) through direct observation and semi-structured interviews.

DRTs are innovative, empowering, accessible, grassroots organized events that build community. These events highlight the specific uses of bicycles during a disaster situation for citizens and agencies alike. Additionally, DRTs reframe preparedness education and introduce new concepts and tools for emergency managers. The basic model of these community preparedness education events support informal response networks and community resilience goals.

Fecal Bacteria Management in Pacific Northwest Watersheds

A comparison methodology to determine significant sources and best management practices for fecal bacteria, using the Amazon Creek Basin in Eugene, Oregon as a case study.

Scarlett S. Philibosian
Master of Community and Regional Planning, March 2013

Abstract

Fecal bacteria are one of the most common pollutants of urban waterways, and cause illness in humans and animals. Laboratory tests such as microbial source tracking (MST) are increasingly used to determine the sources of fecal bacteria. However, MST can be prohibitively expensive, which slows communities’ efforts to develop best management practices and reduce bacterial loads. In 2006, the EPA listed Amazon Creek in Eugene, Oregon as impaired by E. coli bacteria.

This project examined whether the MST results from 25 previously studied basins in the region can inform Eugene’s environmental planners about the likely sources of fecal bacteria in the Creek. To compare already studied basins to the Amazon Creek Basin, this project used analyses of land use and impervious surfaces, estimates of domestic and wild animal densities, and expert information on sewage systems and unsheltered homeless people. The results from these interviews and comparisons are used to recommend specific management practices for water planners in the Eugene area and general practices for all environmental managers tasked with reducing fecal bacteria loads in urban waterways.

Injecting Reason: Reframing the Needle-Exchange Debate To Align Empirical Research and Moral Sticking Points

Thomas John Schally Jr.
Master of Public Administration and Nonprofit Management, June 2014

Abstract

Needle-exchange programs (NEPs) are a controversial centerpiece of public health policy in the United States. Advocates of NEPs view the issue as an empirical question and point to mounting evidence that NEPs produce public health benefits. Opponents, meanwhile, define the question from a normative perspective and are apt to discount programs that legitimize illegal drug use. Unfortunately, minimal work has sought to bridge the gap between these two camps. Because public health research is performed and framed for an audience that views the issue from the empirical perspective, such work habitually neglects to emphasize a range of variables and results that might satisfy the concerns of normatively-driven opponents.
The lack of engagement between the two diverging analytic and ethical orientations has stalled political progress on NEPs, despite the fact that agreement on the issue may be possible if both sides were well-informed. Empirical research should have a primary role of progressing debate, answering questions, and posing new ones. This paper analyzes the arguments of proponents and opponents of NEPs and then recommends an alternative framework for research that would better align the goals of NEP advocates with the concerns of political opponents. It is my hope that these insights will inspire new thinking and new techniques among NEP advocates that will help to resolve political and ideological barriers to NEP implementation.

Collaborative Partnerships in Rural Preservation Planning: An evaluation of effectiveness and impact of RARE-Main Street community partnership in Oregon

Jennifer Self
Master of Community and Regional Planning, June 2014
Master of Science in Historic Preservation, June 2014

Abstract

The National Main Street Approach® is a highly regarded community revitalization tool. It provides a starting point and method for economic development and preserving a sense of place within distressed downtown commercial centers. While many rural Oregon communities have the interest to carry out the Approach®, most struggle to attract the appropriate skilled professional to spearhead the initiative, secure sustainable funding sources, or maintain initiative momentum.

Beginning in 2009, a unique partnership formed between the organization Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) and Oregon Main Street programs to assist with local downtown revitalization efforts. For the last 20 years, RARE has helped communities boost their capacity to improve local conditions and overall quality of life. They do this by placing an AmeriCorps participant within the community for 11 months to provide technical assistance on community-defined social and economic issues or challenges.

From the exterior, the RARE-Main Street partnership may appear to be a win-win; however, the creation of the partnership only began five years ago and could still be considered to be in a new, or trial, stage. Additionally, there is no evaluation mechanism in place to assess if the RARE-Main Street partnerships are meeting program goals and capacity needs.

This study assessed the effectiveness and impact of the RARE-Main Street partnership in rural Oregon communities by combining academic research with a practical program evaluation. The researcher gathered feedback and insights from former RARE-AmeriCorps participants, their supervisors, and community members in four case study communities – Astoria, Coos Bay, La Grande, and Milton-Freewater. Additional feedback and insights were also gathered from the state Main Street Coordinator, Sheri Stuart.

Findings reveal the partnership makes a positive and significant impact within communities for the duration the RARE-AmeriCorps participant is within the community. However, the lasting long-term impact of the partnership is far more uncertain and heavily dependent on local circumstances. This study reveals partnership strengths and limitations, as well as considerations for improving the partnership in the future.
The relationship between US crop insurance subsidies and planting decisions: a study of the 2000 Agriculture Risk Protection Act

Mika Lian Weinstein
Bachelor of Arts, Planning, Public Policy, and Management, June 2014

Abstract

The 2014 farm bill increased the cost of crop insurance programs to $9 billion per year. As the government diverts a larger share of farm bill financing to insurance programs, there is an accompanying need to explore the relationship between crop insurance and planting patterns. Popular authors claim that distorted subsidies have contributed to a shift in which crops are planted in the US. This study brings an empirical approach to that claim; it looks at whether or not subsidizing insurance for a select group of commodity crops has a detrimental impact on the planting rates for crops excluded from the program. Specifically, it evaluates the impact that the Agricultural Risk Protection Act (ARPA) of 2000 had on the acreage for crops that did not benefit from the introduction and subsidization of revenue-based insurance subsidies. Until now, the literature on the relationship between crop insurance and planting decisions has focused exclusively on a potential increase in a small number of crops, rather than estimate the potential negative impacts on non-program crops. This study finds that the introduction of ARPA does not correspond with a significant change in acreage for these non-program crops.

Reconciling Oregon’s Smart Growth Goals with Local Policy Choice: An Empirical Study of Growth Management, Urban Form & Development Outcomes in Eugene, Keizer, Salem & Springfield

Monica C. Witzig
Master of Community & Regional Planning/Master of Public Administration, March 2014

Abstract

Oregon’s Statewide Planning Goals embody Smart Growth in their effort to revitalize urban areas, finance environmentally and socially responsible transportation systems, provide housing options, and protect natural resources; yet the State defers to its municipalities to implement this planning framework. This research focuses on one outcome of Goal 14 (Urbanization), linking most directly to Smart Growth Principle 7 (Strengthen and Direct Development toward Existing Communities). It assesses Eugene’s, Keizer’s, Salem’s, and Springfield’s growth management policies that specifically target infill opportunities for developers of single family homes against this Goal and this Principle. Though these municipalities must demonstrate consistency with the same Statewide Goals, this research questions whether sufficiently different policy approaches to curtailing sprawl yield significantly different results. The primary method of analysis is a logistic regression that uses parcel-level data to understand how administration (i.e., the “supply-side”) affects development by isolating these policies’ direct effects on desired development outcomes.

Sowing Seeds of Resistance: Agrarian Reform, Public Policy, and Popular Mobilization in the Aguán Valley of Honduras

Heather Wolford
Master of Public Administration, June 2014

Abstract

The agrarian conflict in the Aguán Valley of Honduras is among the most violent and distressing in contemporary Latin America. It has roots in both local and global political economic processes, including
structural adjustment and the proliferation of neoliberal economic policies in the region. In particular, the
Ley de Modernizazación y Desarrollo del Sector Agrícola, or Law of Modernization and Development of
the Agricultural Sector, drastically altered the landscape in rural Honduras both literally and
figuratively. An analysis of this policy reveals much about the nature of the current conflict, as well as
that of the campesino movements that have organized to regain their land. This thesis seeks to shed light
on the interconnectedness of economic policy, political violence, and popular resistance in the Aguán
Valley, and to examine the ways in which campesino movements frame their struggles and assert
themselves as legitimate actors in the policy realm.