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UP 494 – Neighborhood Analysis

Week 4 Reflection

Prompt

- What types of questions do you have about the structure and function of neighborhoods?
- What forms of analysis do you see as being useful to your own work?
- What types of analytic approaches do you see as being useful to your own work?

Reflection

I think one question that I have about the structure and function of neighborhoods is why use them as a unit of analysis? From my perspective, I've almost always lived in places where neighborhoods are something that people don't necessarily associate themselves with unless they're wealthy or live in a historic neighborhood. Chicago seems to be a city that values its neighborhoods, so I wonder if the structure and function of neighborhoods varies by city, and if so, how?

I see various forms of analysis as being useful to my own work. As someone interested in preservation planning, I do think there is greater emphasis on qualitative analysis – examining the physical quality of places and understanding people's attachment to them. However, quantitative analysis is just as valuable. Collecting numerically measurable data and documenting places are both valuable skills for preservation planners. It could be useful to document how many historic properties are in a given neighborhood and try to identify any relationships associated with other factors. Several quantitative studies have been done to analyze whether there is a correlation between preservation and gentrification. Also, identifying gaps in data to tell a story about how certain historic places have been left out of other analyzes could be useful.

There are several analytic approaches that are useful to my own work. Descriptive and predictive data analyses seem to be the most pertinent. In my work, I am most interested in documenting places and telling stories by utilizing existing information. On the other hand, I think I am interested in projections and forecasting since those are closely tied to long-range planning, and I think that understanding past trends is something that should be included in such analyses.