ST. LOUIS PRESENTATION:
NEIGHBORHOOD-LEVEL STRATEGIES; REGIONAL STRENGTH

Wednesday afternoon, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Rise is a leading community development nonprofit intermediary organization in the St. Louis region. We engage in five major activities: (1) developing affordable and mixed-income housing and mixed-use communities that revitalize urban neighborhoods; (2) providing capacity-building technical assistance and training to local governments, institutions, and nonprofits engaged in community development in the St. Louis area; (3) making predevelopment loans to nonprofit community development organizations; (4) collecting, maintaining, analyzing, and mapping neighborhood indicators and other data to measure the outcome of community development efforts and making data widely available to inform community-based decisionmaking; and (5) engaging in housing and community development public policy education and advocacy. We make the connections between nonprofit community organizations, financial institutions, and government that make successful neighborhood revitalization possible.

Rise has chosen to highlight the work of several of our local partners from the academic and nonprofit sectors who are focused on understanding and strengthening neighborhoods, and who share our belief that strong neighborhoods are the building blocks of a successful, vibrant region.

Stephen Acree, President and Executive Director of Rise, will both introduce and moderate the session. Acree will give a brief update of how Rise has supported data democratization and data-informed decisionmaking in the St. Louis region in the past year, and will then introduce the two topics for this session and the speakers. For each of the topics below we will have 20 minutes of presentations followed by 20 minutes for questions and discussion.

Neighborhood Change in the St. Louis Region Since 1970: What Explains Neighborhood Success?

Hank Webber, Executive Vice Chancellor, Washington University in St. Louis
Todd Swanstrom, E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor in Community Collaboration and Public Policy, University of Missouri - St. Louis

St. Louis has a rich history of neighborhoods, but these neighborhoods have faced serious challenges in the past 40 years. While there are many strong neighborhoods, there are many areas of deep and concentrated poverty. In an effort to evaluate the relative health of individual neighborhoods over time, Webber and Swanstrom utilized an index of vitality, including economic (per capita income), social (poverty rates), and physical (vacancy rates) factors. Through their research, Webber and Swanstrom identified "rebound neighborhoods" and examined the different success factors that contributed to neighborhood resilience.

Community Organizing, Information Sharing, and Neighborhood Livability

Jennifer Allen, Active Transportation Manager, Trailnet
Tonya Dean, Executive Director, Dutchtown South Community Corporation

Strengthening neighborhoods is often a block by block (and bike lane by bike lane) effort, and the data needed to catalyze meaningful change is not always available from existing administrative sources. Furthermore, when local-level data is available, it is sometimes challenging to determine how a single dataset fits into larger systems of information sharing between government departments, nonprofits, and residents. These two presenters are taking a community organizing approach to collecting and disseminating information at the neighborhood level, while tying their work back to regional sustainability and livability priorities.