3

OVERVIEW

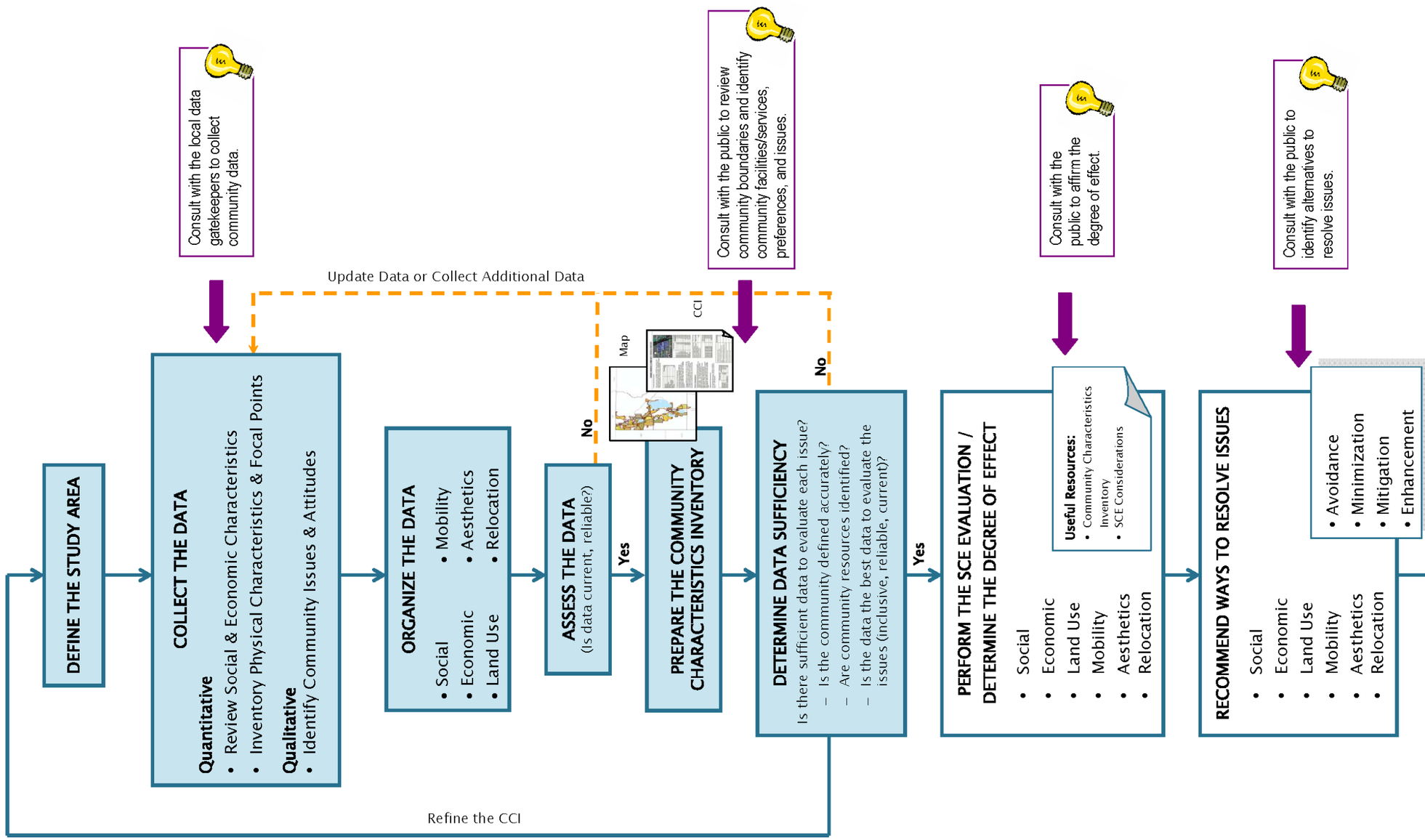
The SCE Evaluation process focuses on communities and the potential effects that a transportation action may have on affected communities. Prior to conducting an SCE evaluation, the community analyst should complete the preparatory steps to ensure that the issues identified and the assigned degree of effect are supported by the best available data. This data should be summarized in a Community Characteristics Inventory (CCI) for each defined community within the study area. The CCI is a comprehensive summary of the quantitative and qualitative data used to support the decisions made during the SCE Evaluation process.

The CCI assists the community analyst in acquiring a better understanding of the affected community and potential issues considered in an effort to evaluate the effects of a transportation action on the community. Elements of the CCI continue to be more specific as the study area is refined. A comprehensive CCI is valuable to the identification and resolution of issues.

As identified in Figure 3-1, the community analyst should complete the following steps prior to performing the SCE evaluation and determining the degree of effect:

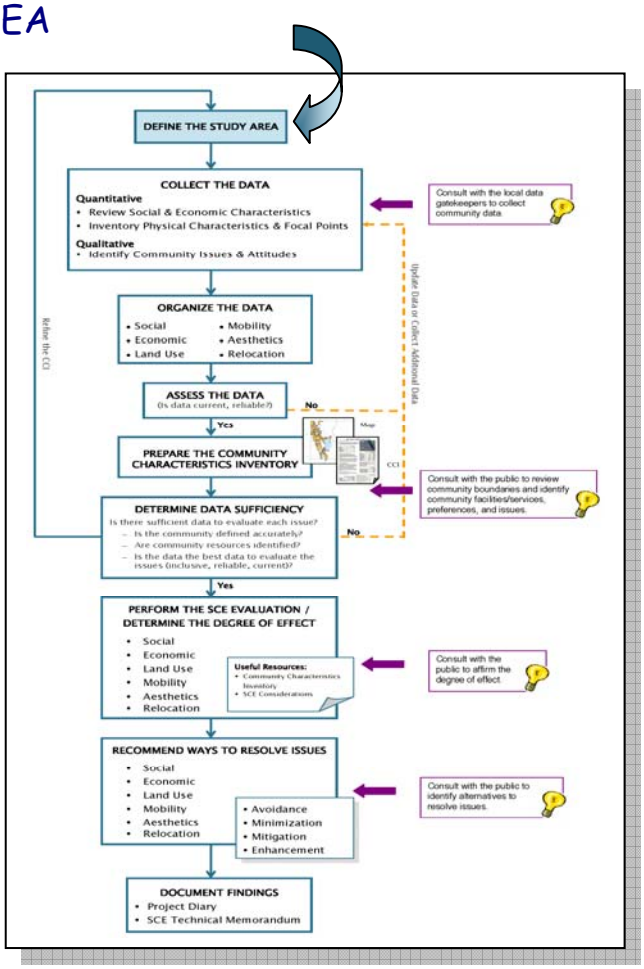
- Define the Study Area;
- Collect/Organize/Assess the Data;
- Prepare the Community Characteristics Inventory; and
- Determine Data Sufficiency.

Figure 3-1 SCE Evaluation Process



3.1 DEFINE THE STUDY AREA

The first step is to define the study area. The study area can initially be defined as the geographic area that includes all communities with the potential to be affected by a transportation action. During the evaluation process, it may become evident that the sociocultural effects of a transportation action extend beyond the initially defined study area. The size of the study area should be tailored to the nature and scope of the project and its potential effects.



The community analyst selects a geographic area that encompasses all of the potentially affected communities. The study area typically includes communities immediately surrounding the project but may also extend beyond the typical project corridor. This is particularly so when the potential exists for sociocultural effects on communities in these areas.

A logical place to begin defining communities and hence defining the study area is by recognizing the following:

- Neighborhood identity;
- Resident perceptions and values;

Community is defined as geographic, manmade, or natural boundaries with respect to both people and places. The people who comprise a community may share similar social, cultural, ethnic, economic, political, or religious characteristics. The people may share common histories, economic profiles, or political interests. They may attend the same schools, churches, or social clubs. These people may intersect in social settings and share similar values.

- Demographic characteristics;
- School districts/legislative boundaries;
- Community facilities/focal points;
- Cultural resources;
- Land use characteristics;
- Physical barriers (e.g., watersheds, waterways, forested areas); and
- Major employment centers.

Supplemental information sources to help define the study area can include project plans, commercially produced maps, local planning agencies, and local government comprehensive plans. In addition, information obtained from public involvement strategies should be considered.

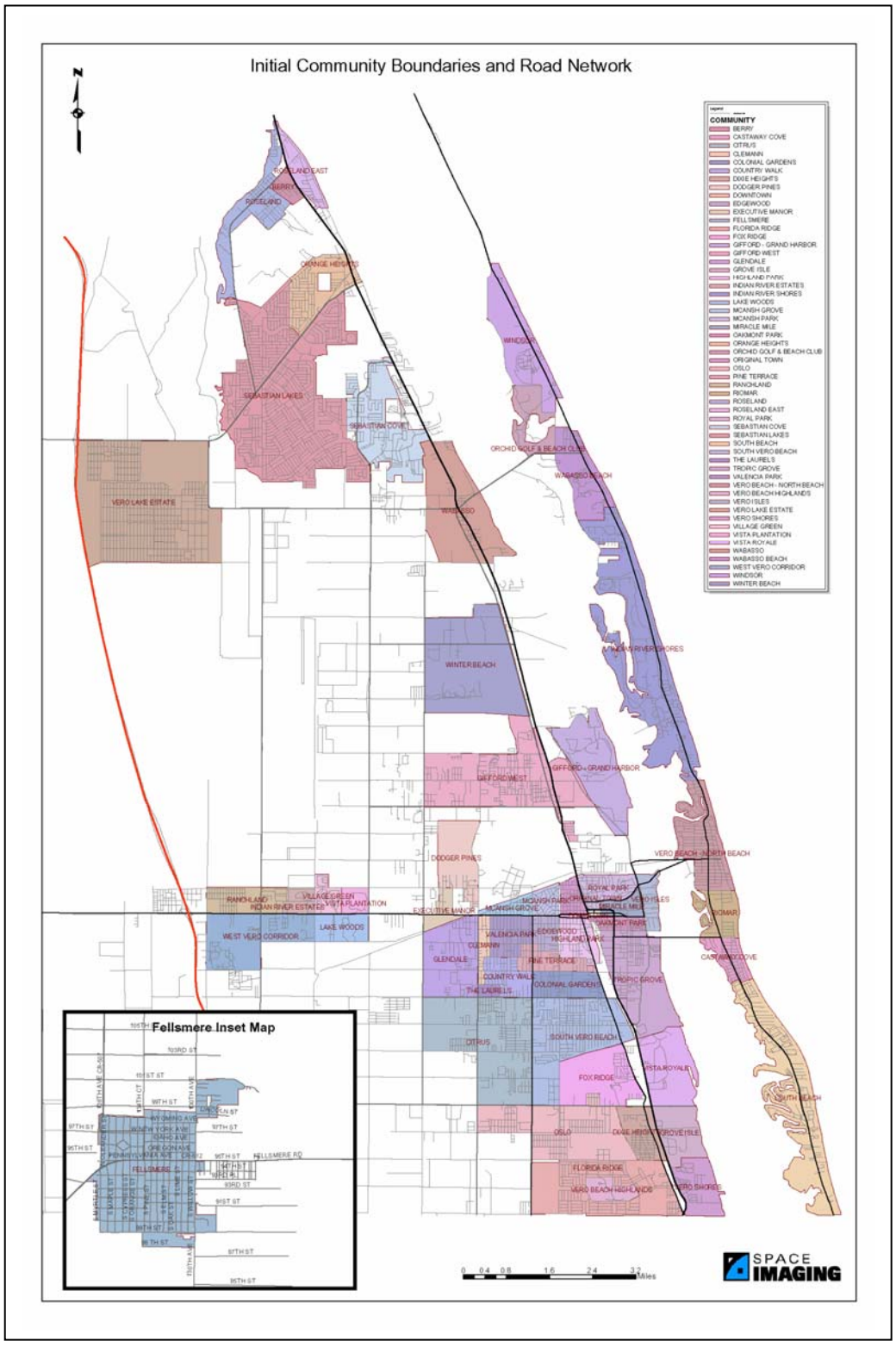
Cultural Resource Management (CRM) professionals can provide important background data to assist with defining community boundaries, particularly for communities developed prior to the 1960s. An archival investigation and analysis of historic maps, field surveys, and interviews can provide a comprehensive understanding of the development of a community that may not be readily available in any existing database.

When defining a study area, consider the proximity of the project to historic places, communities, locales, or landmarks. Although some historic places or areas may be obvious on the landscape, their identification can require the specialized skills of a CRM analyst experienced in defining the historic boundaries of communities. Additionally, cultural resource management studies can trace the demographic and social changes that influence the development of a community over time but that are not easily discernible through traditional demographic studies. If the study area includes or is adjacent to tribal lands, please contact the Native American Coordinator at the FDOT Central Environmental Management Office. Tribal contacts and consultation must be conducted according to appropriate communication protocols respectful of tribal sovereignty and culture to avoid potential negative impacts to project development.

The size and level of detail of the study area depend on the project phase and the types of communities affected. During long range planning activities, the study area may include the entire county or MPO jurisdiction. It may also consist of regional planning subareas. The study area/community boundaries should be affirmed through public involvement.

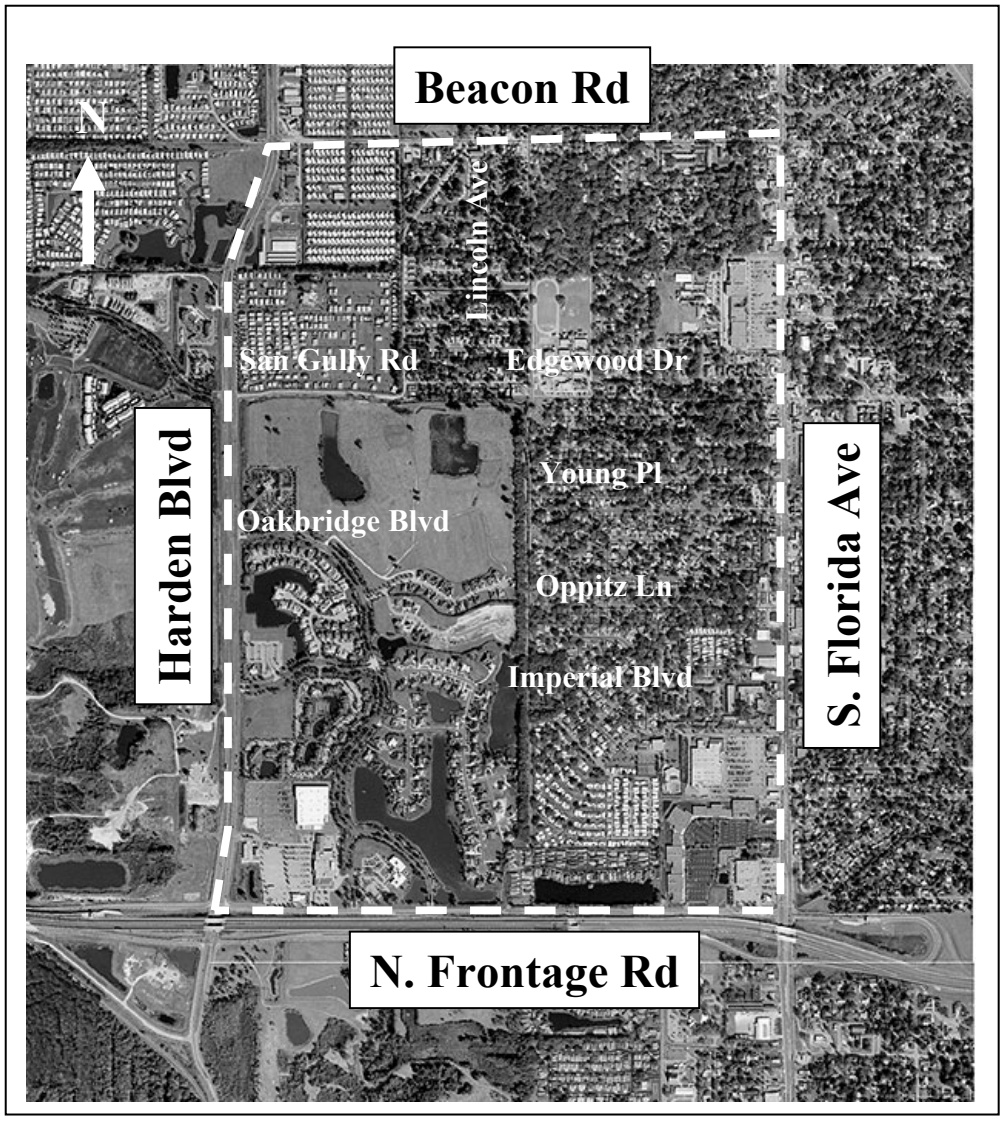
For example, the SCE evaluation study area for Indian River County's MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) included the MPO's jurisdiction area east of Interstate 95 (Figure 3-2). The public was given the opportunity to review the community boundaries and provide additional input regarding community features via key community leader interviews and surveys available at the public library and mall kiosks.

Figure 3- 2 Indian River County MPO LRTP Study Area

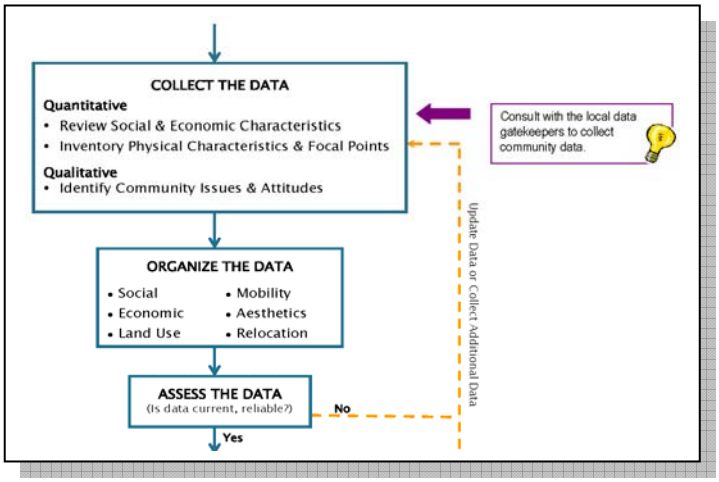


As another example, the City of Lakeland conducted an SCE evaluation during the Project Development & Environment (PD&E) phase to determine the best alternative for an east-west connector between two major north/south arterial highways. This resulted in a smaller, highly detailed study area of all neighborhoods adjacent to each proposed alternative. Figure 3-3 identifies the project study area. In the first of three public workshops, the City of Lakeland asked community members to review existing data and provide additional community data.

Figure 3-3 Lakeland Study Area



3.2 COLLECT/ORGANIZE/ASSESS THE DATA



Once the study area has been defined, the community analyst begins collecting and organizing the data. After the data has been collected and organized, it should be evaluated and tested. Pending the outcome of the data assessment, the community analyst may have to collect additional data that is more current. SCE evaluations are based on six sociocultural issues: social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetic, and relocation (Table 3-1). The quality of the sociocultural effects evaluation depends upon the consistency, currency, sufficiency, and quality of the data collected.

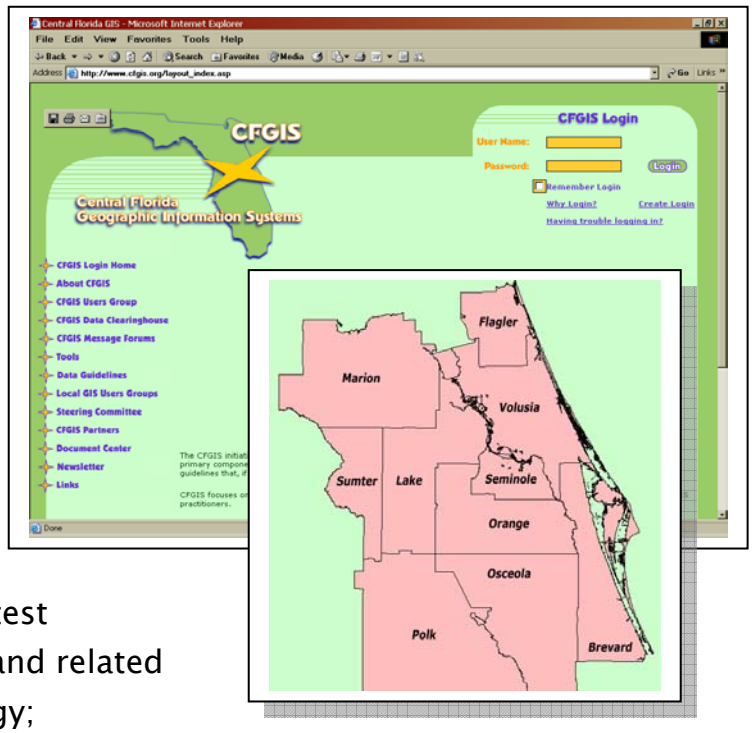
Table 3-1 Sociocultural Effects Issues

SOCIAL	ECONOMIC	LAND USE	MOBILITY	AESTHETICS	RELOCATION
▪ Demographics ▪ Community Cohesion ▪ Safety/ Emergency Response ▪ Community Goals ▪ Quality of Life	▪ Business & Employment ▪ Tax Base ▪ Traffic Patterns ▪ Business Access ▪ Special Needs Patrons	▪ Land Use – Urban Form ▪ Local Plan Consistency ▪ Open Space ▪ Sprawl ▪ Focal Points	▪ Modal Choices ▪ Pedestrian ▪ Bicyclists ▪ Transit ▪ Transportation Disadvantaged ▪ Connectivity ▪ Traffic Circulation ▪ Public Parking	▪ Noise/ Vibration ▪ Viewshed ▪ Compatibility	▪ Residential ▪ Non-Residential ▪ Public Facilities

There are two types of data utilized in the SCE Evaluation process, quantitative data and qualitative data and two sources for collecting them, primary and secondary. The experienced community analyst understands that recognition of the types of data and utility of the evaluation suggest some basic structure to an efficient data collection process. Likewise, understanding where the data resides and accessing it will greatly facilitate this step.

3.2.1 Quantitative Data

This type of data is measurable, often referred to as statistical, and can be displayed in charts and tables. Information such as that collected by the United States Census Bureau (www.census.gov) is quantitative data. This type of data may be formatted for use in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to display census data on a map.



The Central Florida Geographic Information Systems (CFGIS) Users Group and Data Clearinghouse (www.cfgis.org) focuses on regional coordination in a 10-county area to:

- Facilitate regional data sharing needs;
- Serve as a forum to provide educational information on the latest developments in GIS and related information technology;
- Coordinate GIS information that crosses jurisdictional boundaries; and
- Provide an efficient, cost effective, and centralized location for storing and linking to regional GIS data.

Another source of quantitative data is the Florida Geographic Data Library (FGDL). FGDL is housed at the University of Florida and serves as the GIS data clearinghouse for state agencies. FGDL data is available to download from the website (www.fgdl.org) or for a nominal charge on CD to anyone requesting it. FGDL databases include community focal points (i.e., churches, cultural centers), existing land use, and other information.

Similarly, data collected by the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) is quantitative. BEBR's (www.bebr.ufl.edu) statistical files include everything from population to land area of places, agricultural crop statistics, employment and wage statistics, prison populations, and registered motor vehicles.

The following guidance describes types of quantitative data to be considered and documented for the SCE Evaluation process.

1. Community Identification/Statistics;
2. Economics and History;
3. Community Facilities and Services;
4. Major Infrastructure;
5. General Land Use; and
6. Consistency with Local Government Comprehensive Plans (LGCPs).

These databases are excellent starting points for an SCE evaluation, but the community analyst is cautioned that relying solely on these databases may not be prudent and that public involvement and field verification are necessary.

3.2.2 Qualitative Data

Qualitative data consists of information related to community dynamics, organizational relationships and networks, cultural contexts, patterns of social activity,

Community Cohesion is defined as the feeling of belonging to a community.

Social Values are defined as what the residents of a community seek in their relationships with other members of the community.

and issues of community satisfaction, connection, and priorities. Qualitative data includes community goals, perceptions, and quality of life. It can be collected through government comprehensive plans, vision statements, and public involvement.

Public involvement is an important component of successfully collecting qualitative data, such as community history, vision, values, and preferences. There are many different public involvement techniques to enable the community analyst to gather relevant data. Public involvement techniques to collect qualitative data include:

- Personal interviews;
- Visual Preference Surveys;
- Electronic Polling;
- Cultural Resource Committees;
- Community Workshops; and
- Focus Groups.

For example, CRM investigations focus on the historical record as well as resident interviews, often yielding two distinct views of a community: the one revealed in the official records and the one held by the members of the community.

This perspective can also yield information on traditional cultural properties that express a community's shared values, reflect its identity and help maintain self respect. Examples include an urban neighborhood that is the traditional home of a particular culture; the location where Native Americans historically conducted ceremonial activities, or a location where a community has traditionally carried out cultural practices important in maintaining its historical identity.

For specific discussion on these tools and techniques to collect qualitative community data, refer to the FDOT *Public Involvement Handbook* located at www.dot.state.fl.us/emo.

3.2.3 Data Sources

The community analyst should be aware of the quality and quantity of data collected. Without some measure of quality and an idea of the quantity needed, data collection can be an endless task. Likewise, the community analyst must be aware that the reliability and quality of data sources will vary from community to community and should use professional judgment to determine which sources will provide the best available data for use in an SCE evaluation. For example, data regarding the potential for cultural resources within a study area may be obtained from a variety of sources, such as:

- Florida Master Site File;
- Cities and counties with locally listed historic resources and archaeological sites;
- Local historic preservation organizations, historical societies, and archaeological societies;
- General Land Office Township survey maps and surveyor's field notes;
- Historic aerial photography;
- Historic maps showing the locations of Seminole War period forts, battlefields, trials, and encampments;
- Archaeological site probability maps maintained by local governments; and
- Local informants with knowledge of the area.

Table E-1 identifies data attributes and classifications representing the range of data that may be collected and analyzed for the data entities (Appendix E). A data attribute is a value or property that is a characteristic of an entity (i.e., name is an attribute of a school). A data classification is the grouping of features into a set of classes according to certain common attribute values. For example, schools could be classified by Type such as elementary, middle, or high school. Table E-2 identifies additional potential data sources for the data entities and attributes listed in Table E-1 (Appendix E). The community analyst should seek data pertinent to each transportation action and the level of analysis to be performed.

One way to identify and collect pertinent community data is to establish a Data Management Committee. The participants on this committee are decision makers and data *gatekeepers* who can authorize the interagency sharing of data and information pertinent to an SCE evaluation. More importantly, they can ensure the data is included in the evaluation process.

Typically, people who serve on the Data Management Committee include:

- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff;
- Chamber of Commerce Executive Officers;
- County or City Historic Preservation Officers;
- Directors of Historic Preservation Boards or Societies;
- Law Enforcement Representatives;
- Others with extensive knowledge of the affected community:
  - City or County Department Heads (i.e., planning, community development, engineering, social services, administration);
  - Elected officials or the Chief Administrator of a Local Government;
  - Property Appraisers;
  - Supervisors of Elections; and
  - Regional Planning Council Executive Directors.

The Data Management Committee may be consulted prior to data collection efforts. Often pertinent data is immediately available to help expedite the data collection process. The Data Management Committee has access to primary and secondary data sources (Table 3-2).

Table 3-2 Primary and Secondary Data Sources

ISSUE	PRIMARY DATA SOURCE										SECONDARY DATA SOURCE				
	Site Visits	Public Outreach	FDOT EST	Florida Geographic Data Library	Census	Water Management District	Regional Planning Council	Metropolitan Planning Organization	Local Government	Public Service Agencies	FDOT	Universities	FDOT Districts	Utilities	Associations
SOCIAL															
• Demographics			●	●	●		●	●	●			●		●	
• Community Cohesion	●	●					●	●	●		●		●		●
• Safety/Emergency Response		●					●	●	●	●					●
• Community Goals		●					●	●	●			●			●
• Quality of Life	●	●							●			●			●
ECONOMIC															
• Business/Employment		●	●		●			●	●			●			
• Tax Base			●	●	●		●		●			●	●		●
• Traffic Patterns	●	●						●	●		●		●		
• Business Access	●	●							●		●				
• Special Needs Patrons		●					●	●	●		●				
LAND USE															
• Land Use / Urban Form	●		●	●			●		●			●	●	●	
• Plan Consistency		●	●	●			●		●				●		
• Open Space			●	●					●			●	●		●
• Sprawl					●		●	●	●			●			
MOBILITY															
• Modal Choice															
– Pedestrian	●	●							●	●	●				●
– Cycle	●	●						●	●	●			●		
– Transit								●	●	●	●		●		
– Transportation Disadvantaged							●	●	●	●	●				
• Connectivity	●	●					●		●	●		●			●
• Traffic Circulation	●		●	●				●	●		●		●		
• Public Parking	●								●		●		●		
AESTHETICS															
• Noise / Vibration	●	●							●		●	●			
• Viewsheds	●	●				●	●		●		●	●			
• Focal Points	●	●	●	●					●						
• Compatibility	●	●					●		●		●	●	●		
RELOCATION															
• Residential	●	●	●	●	●			●	●			●			
• Non-Residential	●	●	●	●	●			●	●			●			
• Public Facilities	●		●	●	●		●		●		●				●

3.2.4 Data Assessment

Assessing the data is the first step in determining its utility for the overall SCE evaluation. The following questions are answered by the community analyst to assess the utility of the data:

- Does the community analyst have adequate information to refine and adjust community boundaries?
- Can community characteristics be determined by this data?
- Does the community analyst and the public have a high degree of confidence in the selected data to be used in the evaluation?

If the answer to any of the questions listed above is *No*, the community analyst should continue to collect additional relevant data.

Once the data has been collected and organized, it should be evaluated and tested to determine its:

- Inclusiveness (are all stakeholders in the affected community represented in the data);
- Comprehensiveness (does it reflect all six SCE issues);
- Variety (e.g., oral accounts, maps, photos, and the like);
- Timeliness and Reliability;
- Accessibility (has the right information from the right people been obtained or is more public involvement necessary); and
- Currency (updating and openness to include new sources of data).

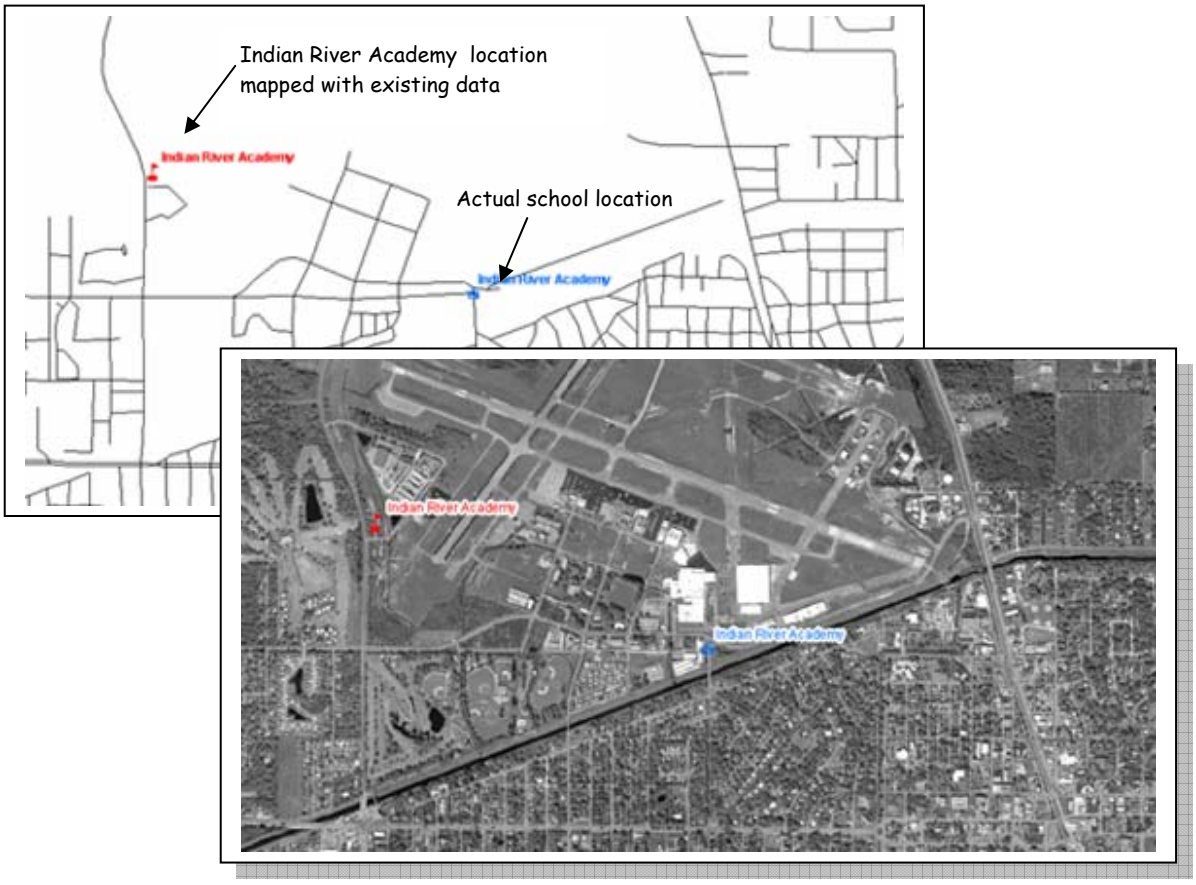
Remember…
The SCE evaluation is only as accurate as the data used to conduct the evaluation.

For example, the community analyst should verify community features to ensure that locations on the map match the physical locations in the real world. This data can be verified by comparing locations on the map to local data sources (including Property Appraiser Parcel Data), by conducting windshield surveys to drive the area of interest and update inaccurate information, or by collection with field surveying utilizing Global Positioning System (GPS) to update

physical locations of community features. Table E-2 identifies potential data sources for community facilities and focal points (Appendix E).

When updating community features with existing data, the user must consider the data source. The data may be available, but it may be out of date or inaccurate. Ask the source for the metadata file to acquire information about the data. If metadata is not available, check for horizontal accuracy (x,y location), ask for the date of the last update, and gather information regarding who created the data and how the data was created. Street addresses can be verified using a local street centerline map in GIS. Verifying community features can be challenging if teamwork and an efficient field plan are not implemented. Figure 3-4 illustrates a community feature update utilizing existing local data sets including a street centerline map or aerial photography.

Figure 3-4 Data Verification



In addition, the community analyst should engage the public in assessing the inclusiveness, comprehensiveness, and currency of the data to be employed for the SCE evaluation through the following techniques:

- Focus Groups;
- Community Leader Interviews;
- Community Workshops; and
- Surveys.

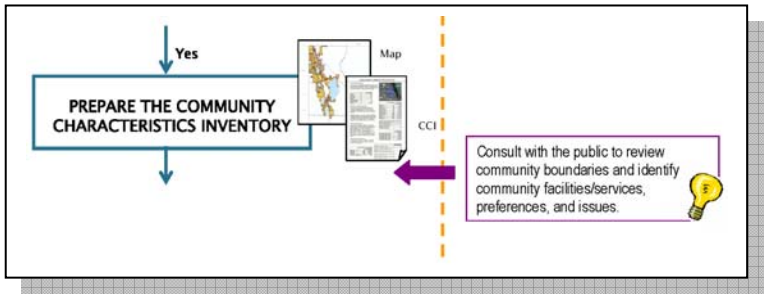
Public Involvement activities will identify community features not previously noted; the importance of community facilities and resources; community preferences and priorities; and community issues. For example, personal interviews with community leaders may reveal certain easily identifiable places as community focal points (e.g., churches, shopping districts) while residents participating in focus groups may identify more discrete areas, such as a corner lot with a shade tree, a backyard, or a local restaurant, as important gathering spots.

Citizen Advisory Committee members add community focal points to the preliminary community boundary map.

Local residents identify community values.

Specific tools and techniques to involve the community in assessing the data are included in the FDOT *Public Involvement Handbook* available at www.dot.state.fl.us/emo.

3.3 PREPARE THE COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY (CCI)



All of these preliminary steps have been employed by the community analyst in order to prepare the Community Characteristics Inventory (CCI). The CCI is the summary of the history, present conditions, and foreseeable future configuration of the community.

The purpose of the CCI is to provide the community analyst with an accurate snapshot of the community. As projects progress through the SCE Evaluation process, the CCI originally developed at the macro level during planning and programming, is refined to the neighborhood, or micro level. The data is synthesized as it relates to the SCE issues: social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetics, and relocation. The CCI consists of a community boundaries map and a community narrative composed of text, tables, charts, and graphs.

3.3.1 Defining Community Boundaries

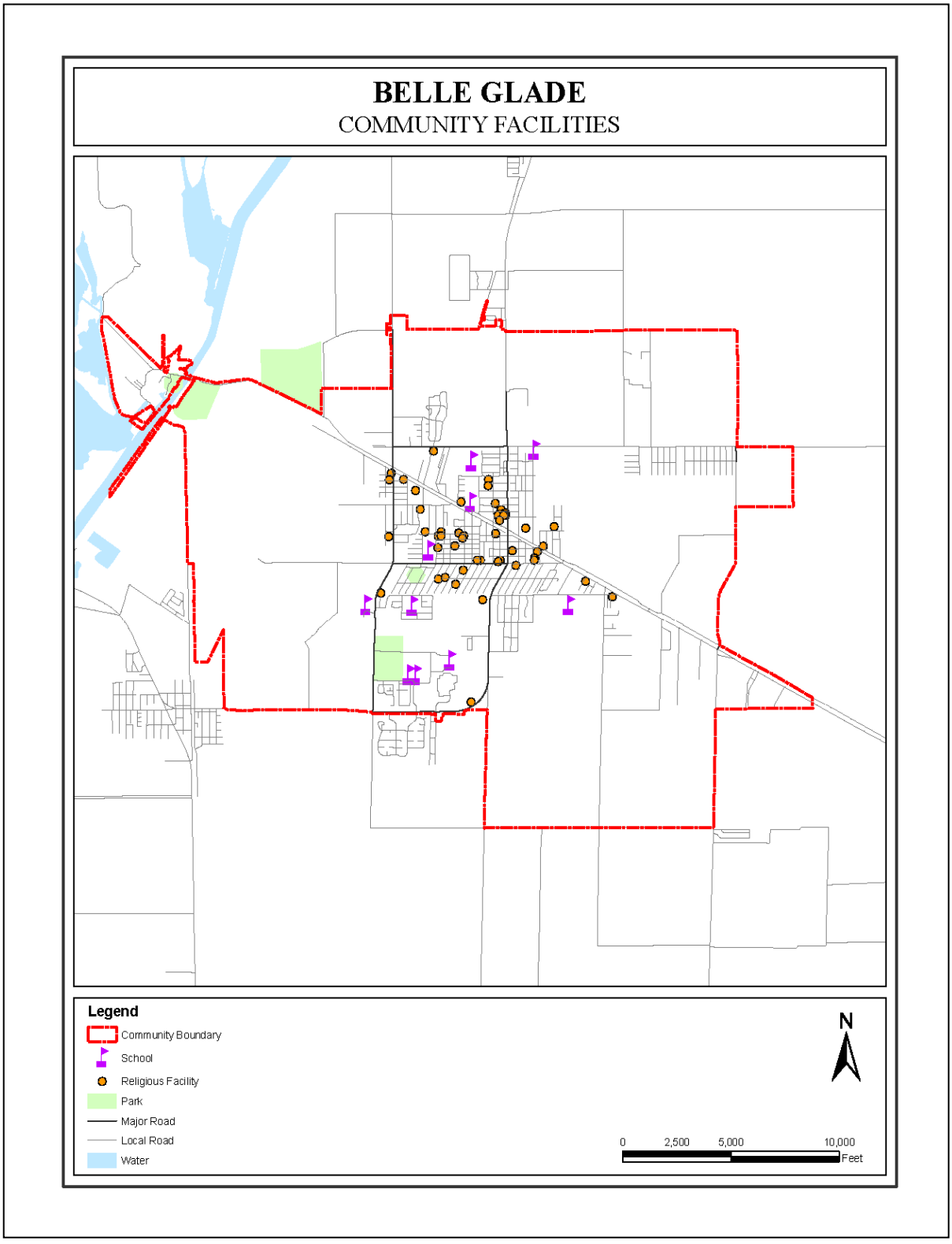
Statistical data analysis, physical barriers, and political boundaries should yield a preliminary view of the community boundaries. Community boundaries are initially drawn by summarizing the results of GIS spatial analysis to cluster or group areas where similar population characteristics occur. These boundaries often start at the municipal or city jurisdiction level and are further refined by divisions using physical barriers (including major roads or water bodies) and by Census demographic information.

The methods for defining community boundaries varies based on the density of population in the project study area. For more heavily populated areas, generalized data such as Census Place or Census Block Group boundaries may be used. For more rural or emerging urban areas, refined data such as local property appraiser parcel data or Census Block data can be utilized in developing community boundaries.

After initial boundaries are established, the community boundary can be displayed on a map. The community boundary map(s) should reflect readily available data. In addition to identifying spatial boundaries, the maps should include physical features and graphic or pictorial socioeconomic data, such as community facilities and focal points, generalized land use, transportation facilities, and cultural resources. Neighborhood boundaries, business locations, open spaces, recreation areas, commercial centers, and major employment centers should be displayed as well.

These maps will serve as the basis for testing the data currency and completeness before entering the final stages of the SCE Evaluation process. It should be noted that developing community data for graphic display on a county-wide basis is a large task best performed by social scientists, planners, and GIS specialists. Figure 3-5 provides a sample community boundary map.

Figure 3-5 Belle Glade Community Boundary Map with Community Facilities and Services



3.3.2 Community Narrative

The narrative portion of the CCI describes those aspects that set this particular community apart from all the others. It includes a synthesis of the quantitative data; the demographics, the social and economic history of the community; and the importance of its facilities and services. It includes qualitative data such as community goals and objectives. The CCI should also include aesthetic preferences which may be found in local comprehensive plans, as well as any ancillary issues or concerns uncovered during the collection and analysis of data.

The CCI summarizes the more salient social community characteristics, including:

- Education and skill level of the community's workforce;
- Geographic locations where different work forces reside and work;
- Population characteristics;
- Distribution of types of households;
- Geographic distribution and statistical percentage of two parent homes and single parent homes;
- Geographic distribution and concentration of significant ethnic and minority populations;
- Age distribution;
- Age of housing stock; and
- Immigration and migration trends in the community;

This exercise by the community analyst identifies the social fabric of the community. The community analyst identifies where the elderly reside, where the young people reside, where single family neighborhoods are located, and how these groups interact. The community analyst uses this information to identify potential areas where safety, mobility, or public transit needs may be an issue. The community analyst identifies established communities and if these communities are in a state of flux or deterioration. The community analyst is aware of areas where people have been affected by major improvements or facilities in the past and the

segments of the population who may be disproportionately affected.

Economic characteristics of the study area are summarized in the CCI, including:

- Per capita income;
- Median income;
- Income characteristics;
- Major contributors to the tax base;
- Major employment centers; and
- Areas identified for redevelopment.

With this data, the community analyst may evaluate the potential effects that transportation improvements may have on the economic vitality of the community. The community analyst is responsible for the community contact and research necessary to identify areas that may benefit from transit initiatives, divided highways, or pedestrian oriented travel ways. It also conceptualizes the types of transportation improvements that compliment the economy of the community as well as those that potentially will have a detrimental effect.

Land Use characteristics are an important component of the CCI. The community analyst compiles and analyzes existing and future land uses by identifying:

- Industrial areas;
- Residential areas;
- Major commercial areas;
- Areas slated for multi-family development and single family development;
- Areas of regional importance and the characteristics that distinguish them;
- Areas used predominantly by tourists;
- Recently permitted projects; and
- Recently developed projects.

The community analyst evaluates the consistency of the proposed improvements with the existing and future character of the area using this information. It also allows the determination of whether improvements are consistent with comprehensive planning efforts.

Mobility characteristics are integral parts of a CCI. Information considered by the community analyst in assessing the mobility characteristics of a community include:

- The ability of industrial centers to accommodate large truck traffic;
- The potential for roads through residential areas to increase or decrease safety and pedestrian mobility;
- The potential for roads through major commercial centers to attract or discourage traffic; and
- The ability of residents to travel to and from work, school, shopping, etc.

The CCI includes a summary of the community's aesthetic characteristics and values, such as:

- Scenic vistas;
- Scenic corridors;
- Canopy roads;
- Parks;
- Historic sites;
- Benefits from a scenic road or access relative to these vistas;
- Community preferences for their vistas to remain isolated and undisturbed; and
- Noise.

Relocation issues summarized in the CCI include:

- Historical, residential and commercial growth rates;
- Recent influx of residents or businesses;
- Transitional areas;

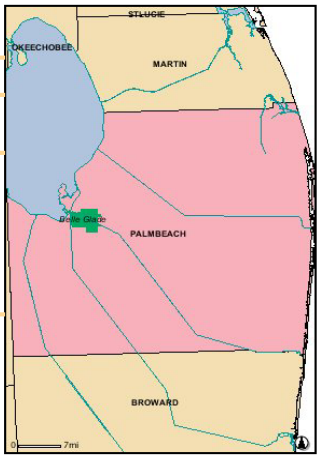
- Immigration to and from the community by population groups (age, race, home ownership characteristics);
- Population groups in fixed or low income categories that may not be able to relocate;
- Low income or publicly subsidized housing areas that may be affected;
- Potential displacements; and
- Rental properties versus owned properties.

The Community Characteristics Inventory is a continuously evolving tool that should be evaluated and updated based on newly available data and public involvement efforts. The CCI is a useful tool for professionals and community members to accurately summarize the sociocultural attributes of the affected area. Figure 3-6 is a sample CCI.

Figure 3-6 Belle Glade Community Characteristics Inventory

2005/09/27

Community Characteristics Inventory Report
Belle Glade



	COMMUNITY STATISTIC	DESCRIPTION
AREA	17.36	Square Miles
JURISDICTION	Cities	Belle Glade, South Bay
	Counties	Palmbeach
POPULATION	17,895	Total Pop
	5,803	Total Households
	1.61	Avg Persons per Acre
	2.24	Avg Persons per Family
	4,567	Under 18
	1,486	65 or higher
	29.9	Median Age
HOUSING	6,428	Total Housing Units
	0.58	Units per Acre
	2,000	Total Single Family
	806	Total Multi-Family
	3,479	Total Renter Units
	2,324	Total Owner Units
	625	Total Vacant Units
	$63,514	Median Household Value
	1,318	Number of Households w/no Vehicle
INCOME	$22,639	Median Household Income
	$26,756	Median Family Income
	4,398	Number of households below poverty level
	257	Number of households on public assistance

DEMOGRAPHICS Community and State	Community %	Community #	State %	State #	
	23.61	5,380	65.42	10,456,458	White
	41.02	9,347	14.04	2,244,701	Black or African American
	21.47	4,892	16.77	2,680,314	Hispanic
	0.06	13	0.03	5,409	Hawiian or Pacific Islander
	0.16	37	1.63	260,532	Asian
	0.13	29	0.27	43,888	American Indian or Eskimo
	7.42	1,690	0.17	27,676	Other
	6.14	1,399	1.65	263,400	Claimed 2 or More Races

DEMOGRAPHICS County	Palm Beach %	Palm Beach #	
	70.34	894,207	White
	12.28	156,055	Black or African American
	11.07	140,675	Hispanic
	1.35	17,127	Hawiian or Pacific Islander
	0.19	2,466	Asian
	0.00	60	American Indian or Eskimo
	2.65	33,709	Other
	2.12	26,928	Claimed 2 or More Races

EXISTING LAND USE	Community %	Acres	
	0.42	44.07	Nonagricultural
	63.26	6689.48	Agricultural
	0.94	99.73	Industrial
	5.41	572.18	Institutional
	0.00	0.00	Mining
	8.22	869.59	Other
	9.48	1002.01	Public/Semipublic
	0.65	68.58	Recreational
	8.25	872.31	Residential
	2.12	224.14	Retail
	0.00	0.10	Right of way
	1.25	132.25	Water

EDUCATION		
	2,943	Highschool grad or higher (Population 25 yrs and over)
	1,046	College grad or higher (Population 25 yrs and over)

Figure 3-6 Belle Glade Community Characteristics Inventory

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Community Characteristics Inventory Report
Belle Glade

GOALS AND VALUES

Belle Glade City Government Mission: Move into the future by improving the quality of life and promoting growth through economic diversification and development of human and natural resources while providing a safe and healthy environment.

Belle Glade Chamber of Commerce Mission: Promote the growth of economic and community opportunities that enhance our area's quality of life.

HISTORY

Belle Glade is the largest city within the 2,862,00-acre subtropical Everglades in the heartland of Florida. Originally known as Hillsboro, Belle Glade was incorporated in 1928 with a population of less than 500. The earliest known inhabitants of the Belle Glade area were the Calusa Indians. Their prehistoric habitation and burial mounds are located just west of Belle Glade in Chosen which is known by many as the "Indian Mound." These sites were excavated by the Smithsonian Institution during the early 1930's and later by archaeologists from the Florida State Museum in Gainesville.

The Seminole Indians generally associated with this part of Florida are descendants of tribes from Georgia and Alabama who moved further and further south as white men pushed for expansion and development of new lands. It was the Seminole who gave the lake region the name of "Okeechobeeland," meaning Land of Big Water. Florida became a territory in 1821 and a state of the union in 1845. Although there was a boom in land sales in this area, many of the purchasers were disillusioned with drainage problems most of the land reverted back to the state. By 1912, construction had begun on three major canals for controlling Lake Okeechobee's floodwaters. Canals completed in 1913 were the Hillsboro, the North New River, and the Miami Canal.

One of the colorful versions concerning the naming of the community tells that a blackboard was placed in a hotel lobby where suggestions could be written on the board. The suggestion receiving the most votes was that it should be called Belle Glade since the settlement was "the belle of the Glades." The Hillsboro Community Council was formed in 1919 and operated as the town's governing body until its incorporation on April 9, 1928. This council was directly responsible for the location here of Everglades Experiment Station, a University of Florida agricultural research and experiment station. The center's name was recently changed to Agricultural Research and Education Center.

On September 16, 1928, a storm more devastating than any other predecessor blew in from the coast and left monumental destruction. The force of the wind simply pushed all of the water from the northern portion of the lake and sent it surging madly through the area, like tipping a giant saucer full of water onto the earth. Approximately 2,500 people died in the hurricane and a statue today commemorates those who perished. The loss of life caused by the storm brought to national prominence the need for Lake Okeechobee flood control. Following President Herbert Hoover's visit in 1929, federal and state governments agreed to undertake the construction of a levee. Today, the Hoover Dike includes approximately 85 miles of levee whose height varies from 34 feet upward. It is 22 feet above sea level and it is at least five feet above the highest point that the lake has ever reached.

Along with flood control, two important activities have contributed to Belle Glade's progress. Existing side by side through good water management, sport fishing and a thriving agricultural industry are each closely tied to Lake Okeechobee. The Belle Glade Marina Campground has become a home away from home for many visitors who want to try their luck catching of the "Big O's" famous wide mouth bass. The campground offers 350 campsites, tent camping, boat ramps, picnic facilities and miniature golf. It is in walking distance to a challenging 18-hole public golf course.

The city motto "Her Soil Is Her Fortune" speaks the truth… The soil is known as Black Gold which also speaks the truth in that the soil surrounding the Glades is rich black humus muck created from thousands of years of subtropical vegetation growth and decay. When early pioneers arrived in the area, they realized that they had discovered a virtual paradise for growing crops. Although green beans led the way at one time in area production, today's most important crops are celery, lettuce, sweet corn (we think the world's best") and sugar cane. Also, the area has become known for its ornamental farms for landscaping and sod farms.

Figure 3-6 Belle Glade Community Characteristics Inventory

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Community Characteristics Inventory Report
Belle Glade

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

NAME	MAILING ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
SCHOOL				
GOVE ELEMENTARY	900 SE AVE G	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
GLADE VIEW ELEMENTARY	1100 SW AVE G	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
PIONEER PARK ELEMENTARY	39500 PIONEER PARK RD	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
GLADES CENTRAL HIGH	1001 SW AVE M	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
BELLE GLADE ELEMENTARY	500 NW AVE L	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
LAKESHORE MIDDLE	1101 SW AVE E	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
GLADES DAY SCHOOL	400 NE GATOR BLVD	BELLE GLADE	FL	N/A
PALM BEACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE - GLADES	1977 COLLEGE DR	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
BETHUNE-COOKMAN COLLEGE - BELLE GLADE	1001 SW AVENUE M	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
LAKESHORE ANNEX ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL	3320 FOREST HILL BLV # C331	WEST PALM BEACH	FL	33406
RELIGIOUS FACILITY				
FAITH MISSIONARY BAPTIST	PO BOX 1282	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
SUTTERFIELD, DOLAN C & MARGARET	5250 HILL DR	ZEPHYRHILLS	FL	33541
CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE APOSTLE MISSION	PO BOX 444	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH	1424 W CANAL ST S	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
CHOSEN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH INC	PO BOX 174	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JESUS	PO BOX 882	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
YOKEFELLOWS OF PRIMERA	17 NW AVENUE B	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
LUTZ, KENNETH E JR	301 NW AVENUE C	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
BELLE GLADE CHURCH OF CHRIST	125 NW AVENUE D	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE ASSN	180 N WESTMONTE DR	ALTAMONTE SPRINGS	FL	32714
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BELLE GLADE	17 NW AVENUE B	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
ST PETERS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN	125 E CANAL ST N	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BELLE GLADE	17 NW AVENUE B	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER	50 E NORTH TEMPLE FLR 22	SALT LAKE CITY	UT	84150
NEW BETHEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST	1101 W AVENUE A	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
ST PAULS CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST INC	PO BOX 1127	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
SHTECA INC	217 NW AVENUE D	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430

Figure 3-6 Belle Glade Community Characteristics Inventory

RELIGIOUS FACILITY

MIRACLE TEMPLE EVANGELISTIC ASSN INC	941 WHITAKER RD	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST OF BELLE GLADE	PO BOX 1127	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY	PO BOX 1928	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
CHURCH OF GOD BY FAITH INC	1332 SW AVENUE C	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT OF CHRISTIAN	PO BOX 624	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
HOUSE OF GOD	4540 SW 20TH ST	HOLLYWOOD	FL	33023
MT ZION AME CHURCH	PO BOX 1688	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN BELLE GLADE INC	348 E CANAL ST S	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
IGLESIA DE DIOS PENTECOSTAL	24 SE AVENUE C	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
COMMUNITY METHODIST CHURCH OF	401 SW 1ST ST	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
BELLE GLADE CHURCH OF GOD INC	PO BOX 307	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
CHURCH OF GOD OF BELLE GLADE	PO BOX 307	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
CATHOLIC CHURCH	PO BOX 109650	PALM BEACH GARDENS	FL	33410
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY	8875 ELDORADO DR	PAHOKEE	FL	33476
COMMUNITY METHODIST CHURCH INC	401 SW 1ST ST	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
SE CONF SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST	PO BOX 1217	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
FIRST BORN CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD	PO BOX 2092	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
ST JOHNS FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH	600 SW 8TH ST	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
TRUSTEES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY	701 S 22ND ST	PHILADELPHIA	PA	19146
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY	PO BOX 48	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
GLORIUS COMMUNITY HOLINESS	PO BOX 966	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
BELLE GLADE CONGREGATION OF	669 SW 16TH ST	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
ST PHILIP BENIZI CATHOLIC CHURCH	PO BOX 109650	PALM BEACH GARDENS	FL	33410
CHURCH OF GOD TABERNACLE INC	1351 NW 67TH ST	MIAMI	FL	33147
REDEMPTIVE LIFE FELLOWSHIP INC	2101 N AUSTRALIAN AVE	WEST PALM BEACH	FL	33407

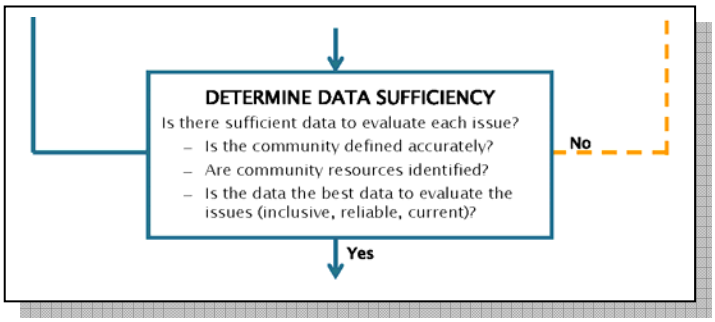
PARKS

BELLE GLADE MARINA & CAMP/BOAT RAMP	PO BOX 24680	WEST PALM BEACH	FL	33416
LAKESHORE PARK POOL	110 SW AVENUE E	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430
GLADES PIONEER PARK	3323 BELVEDERE RD, 503	WEST PALM BEACH	FL	33406
BELLE GLADE COUNTRY CLUB	PO BOX 515	BELLE GLADE	FL	33430

SOURCE

GIS Data and community boundaries initial data source was Census 2000 and Palm Beach County Property Appraiser. The data was then verified by Palm Beach County MPO Staff, MPO CLC and TAC members, community leaders during LRTP Public outreach July 2004, Interviews included the Community Development Manager along with three staff members and the Belle Glade Chamber Executive Director.

3.4 DETERMINE DATA SUFFICIENCY



In preparing for the SCE evaluation, the community analyst has the opportunity to acquire important knowledge of the affected communities and should have some idea of the potential issues. Public involvement activities may generate the identification of additional community issues.

Prior to conducting the SCE evaluation, the community analyst should determine if there is sufficient data to evaluate each identified SCE issue by considering the following questions:

- Is the community defined accurately?
- Are the community resources (including community facilities, services, and focal points) identified?
- Is this data the best data to evaluate the issues (inclusive, comprehensive, reliable, current)?

For example, if a proposed transportation action may affect the community's aesthetics, the community analyst should be able to assess the community's existing aesthetic preferences; identify elements contributing to the community character; and identify the value of aesthetics to the community with data collected. If this is not possible, the community analyst should collect additional data through site visits; additional interviews and community workshops; and further review of community maps, local design criteria, and zoning ordinances, etc.

Identifying a data collection strategy and involving members of the Data Management Committee coupled with early and ongoing public involvement activities will help to ensure that sufficient data has been collected to evaluate the SCE issues.