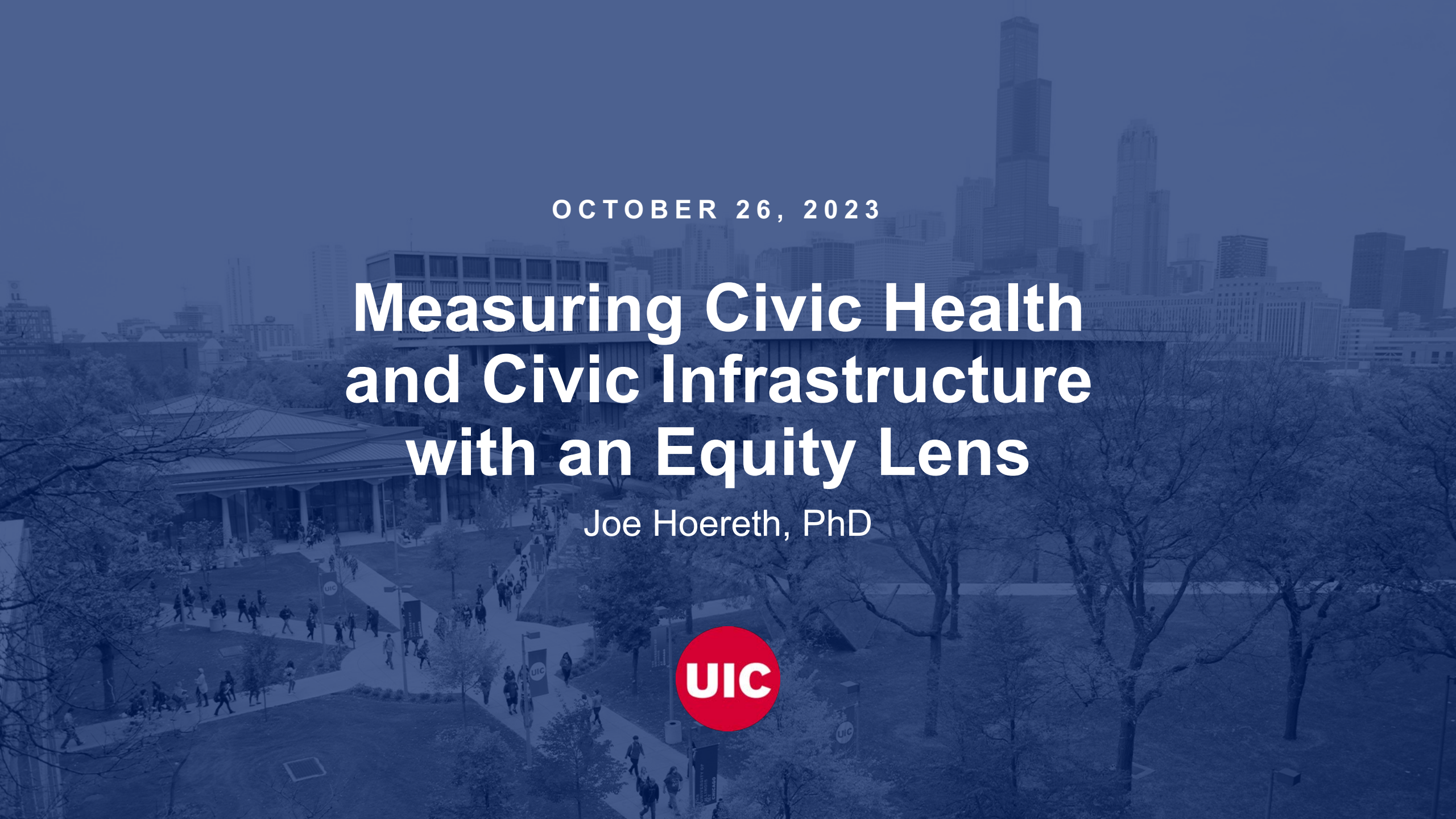

OCTOBER 26, 2023

Measuring Civic Health and Civic Infrastructure with an Equity Lens

Joe Hoereth, PhD

UIC

Who am I?

- Urban Planner (PhD), ‘’wanna-be’ economist (BA),
- Have taught Urban Planning and Public Administration courses
- Director, Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement
- Member, Independent Monitoring Team, Chicago Police Consent Decree
- Senior Fellow, National Civic League
- 30-year Chicago area resident, grew up in Southern California
- Soccer dad, music lover, favorite movie: Blues Brothers

What do we do?

- Design and lead public engagements
- Leadership development and civic learning programming
- Research on the “science and art” of civic engagement practice

MEASURING CIVIC HEALTH AND CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE WITH AN EQUITY LENS

Roadmap

1. BACKGROUND – VALUING AND IMPROVING MEASUREMENT

2. BUILDING OUR MEASURE- THE CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE INDEX (CII)

3. HOW CAN BETTER MEASURES HELP PROMOTE EQUITY?

Changing the Frame: Civic Engagement Through an Equity Lens, by IRRPP, Amanda Lewis, Director

- Studies civic engagement in Chicago through census data focus groups, and interviews with community leaders and academics
- Identifies a gap in traditional conceptions of civic health, and specifically how we measure it
- Focus on voting and volunteering bypasses other forms of engagement, which may be more common in minority communities
- Intent is to flip from a “deficits” model to a more inclusive conception of civic engagement

Changing the Frame: Civic Engagement Through an Equity Lens, by IRRPP, Amanda Lewis, Director (cont.)

CHICAGO NUMBERS THAT COUNT

Current Population Survey "Helpful Hints" for what counts as Volunteering

Question S16, S16a: Volunteer Activities

Included	Not Included
Collecting eyeglasses for the Lions Club to send overseas	Being a member of the Lions Club
Giving out drinks and cookies at a blood drive	Giving blood
Sorting donations at Goodwill (unapid)	Taking your old clothes to Goodwill
Distributing food at a food bank	Giving food to a food bank
Helping with a religious service (cantor, chalice bearer, acolyte, muezzin)	Attending religious services
Mentoring with Big Brothers / Big Sisters	Mentoring / guiding a child you know (not througn an organization)
Participating in the Adopt-a-Highway program	Cleaning trash from streets as an individual
Repair / build a house through Habitat for Humanity	Fixing an elderly neighbor's house on your own
Presiding over a homeowners association meeting	Attending a homeowners association meeting
Being the secretary at the church voters meeting	Attending a church voters meeting

Changing the Frame… (cont.) – My Afterword

"Traditional" civic engagement vs. A tradition of community organizing, a healthy tension in Chicago

- The tradition of the Alinsky model is deeply rooted in Chicago neighborhoods and community organizations, particularly with its highly segregated neighborhoods
- In Chicago – Challenging power is civic engagement, but our measures don't currently capture this
- "Big Point" – We need to work toward broader conceptions and measures of civic engagement

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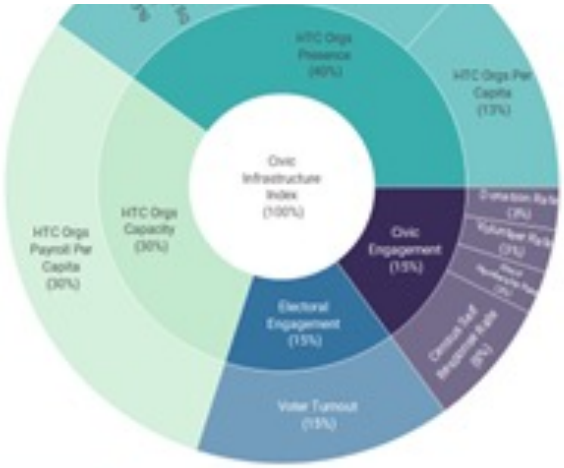
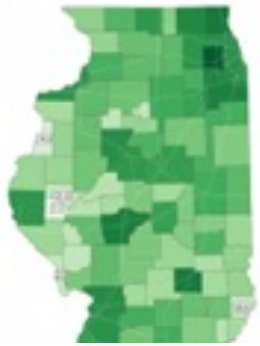




Bottom Ten Counties by Civic Infrastructure Index

County	Civic Infrastructure Index	Population
Alexander	5.0	6,260
Brown	7.1	6,628
Pope	9.6	4,203
Henderson	14.5	6,809
Gallatin	14.9	5,264
Johnson	19.5	12,494
Lawrence	20.5	16,033
Calhoun	21.0	4,800

Building Our Measure- Civic Infrastructure Index (CII)

- Conceptual framework – constructing an index
- What goes into the measure – the data
- Our first test of the measure

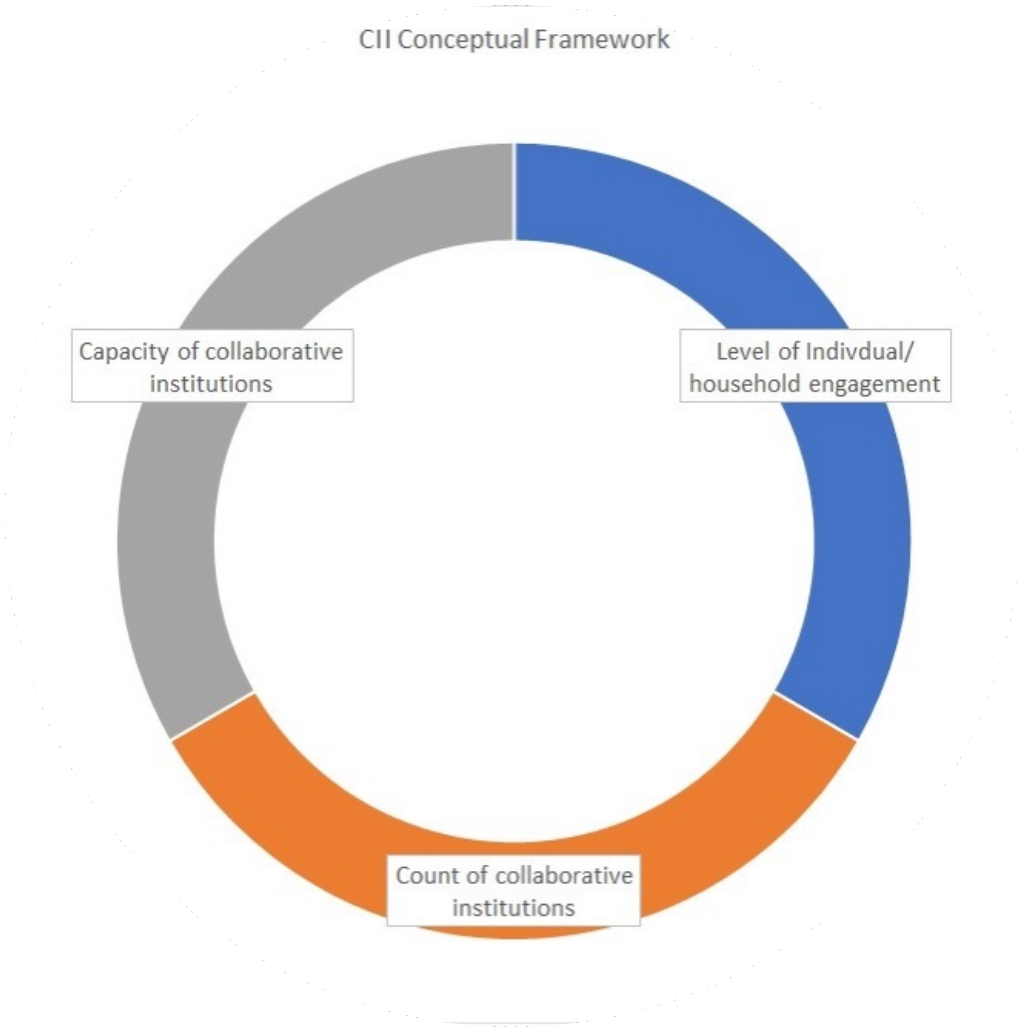
The Civic Infrastructure Index (CII) - The Conceptual Framework

Two Civic Infrastructure definitions:

"The "the laws, processes, institutions, and associations that support regular opportunities for people to connect with each other, solve problems, make decisions, and celebrate community." (Nabatchi and Leighninger, 2015)

"Civic infrastructure encompasses the physical spaces, buildings, and assets themselves, as well as the habits, traditions, management, and other social, political, and cultural processes that bring them to life—two realms that, together, constitute a whole." (William Penn Foundation, 2017)

How might we start to measure this?



The CII Conceptual Framework

This seemed feasible:

- *How can we bring together existing measures/data on civic engagement with readily available data on local institutions to start to develop a relative measure of civic infrastructure?*

Our general framework included three components that together would comprise an index:

1) Individual and household civic engagement

2) The presence of institutions that can support civic engagement activities (“collaborative local institutions”)

3) The capacity of those institutions (for example, a hospital is very different from a CBO)

Building the CII Measure
Measures of Individual and Household Engagement

Voter turnout

- **Source:** MIT Election Data and Science Lab
- **Time frame:** 2020
- **Geographic level:** County
- **Method:** vote total divided by 2019 Voting Age Population estimate

Census self-response

- **Source:** U.S. Census
- **Time frame:** 2020
- **Geographic level:** County

Volunteering, Donating, and Group Membership

- **Source:** U.S. Census
- **Time frame:** 2019
- **Geographic level:** Limited Counties Available Nationwide
- **Method:** Model based estimates using multilevel regression with postratification

Building the CII Measure
Presence/density of "Collaborative Local Institutions"

The number of potential collaborators by population

- **Source:** U.S. Census County Business Patterns
- **Time frame:** 2019
- **Geographic level:** County
- **Method:** Using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), IPCE identified 95 types of collaborating organizations. Add up the total number of organizations that fall into one of those 64 industry types and divide by the County ACS 5-year 2019 population estimate.

The number of potential collaborator types

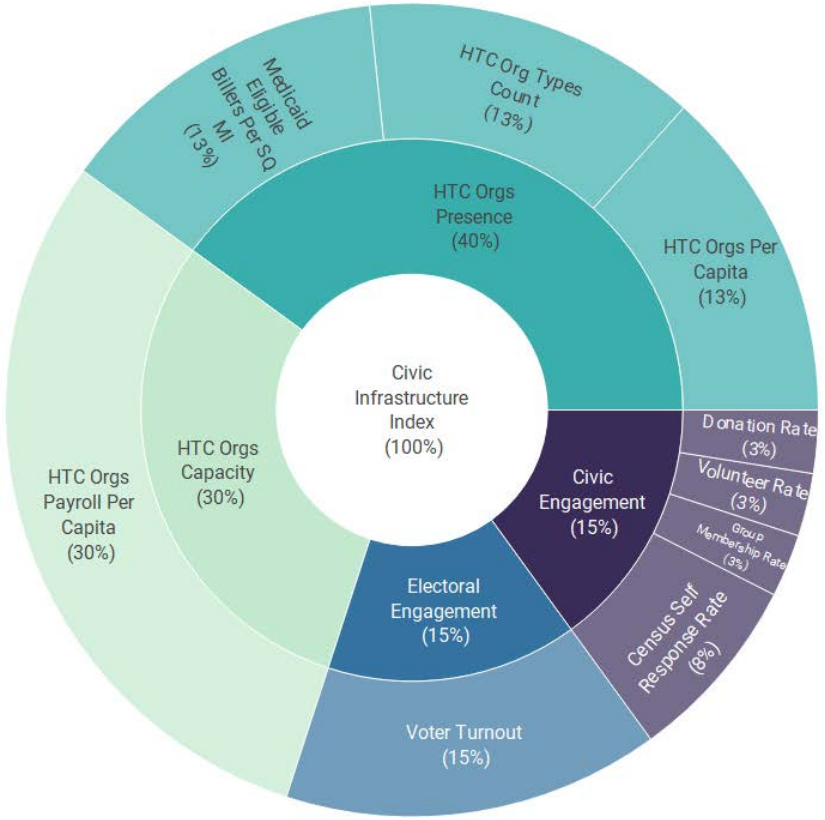
- **Source:** U.S. Census County Business Patterns
- **Time frame:** 2019
- **Geographic level:** County
- **Method:** The number of NAICS types in county divided by the number of types that appear in the data set.

Building the CII Measure
Capacity of "collaborative local institutions"

The total payroll of potential HTC collaborators by population

- **The total payroll of potential HTC collaborators by population**
  - **Source:** U.S. Census County Business Patterns
  - **Time frame:** 2019
  - **Geographic level:** County
  - **Method:** Using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), IPCE identified 95 types of collaborating organizations. For each County, add up the total payroll for all organizations that fall into one of those 70 industry types and divide by the County ACS 5-year 2019 population estimate.

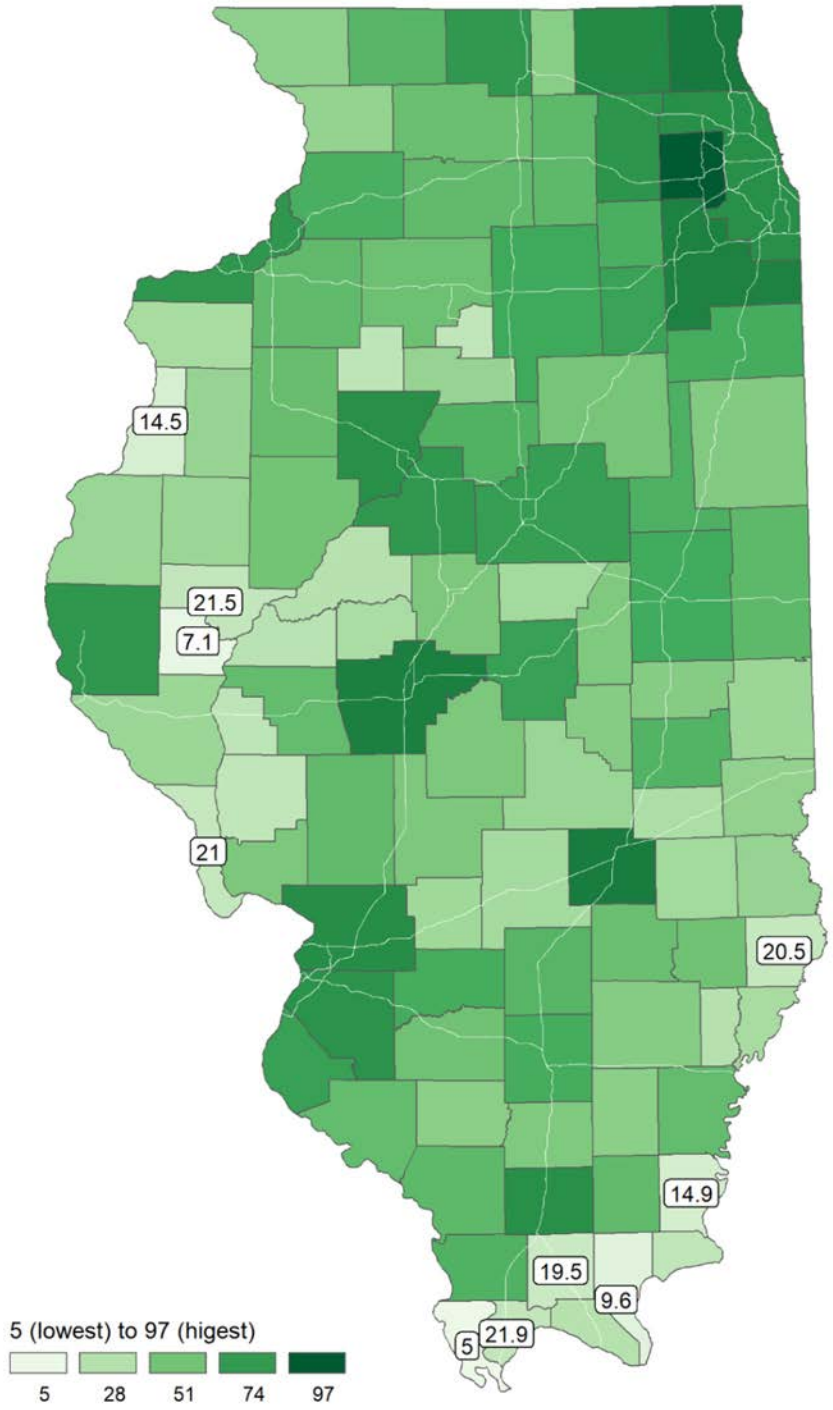
Our First Test of the CII – The Healthcare Transformation Collaborative Project



The Project: Designed to improve healthcare outcomes, reduce healthcare disparities, and realign resources in distressed communities throughout Illinois. HFS funding available to local collaborations to increase access to a wide range of community-based health services.

The question: How might HFS identify communities that lack thee local infrastructure to apply and provide support so that they can apply for Transformation funding?

Civic Infrastructure Index



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Schuyler	21.5	6,953
Pulaski	21.9	5,510

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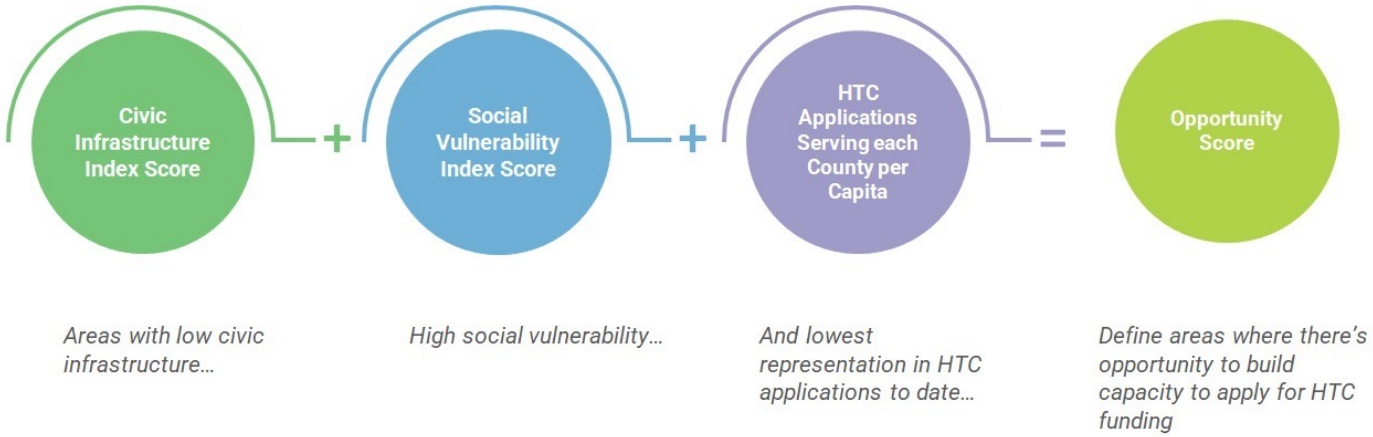
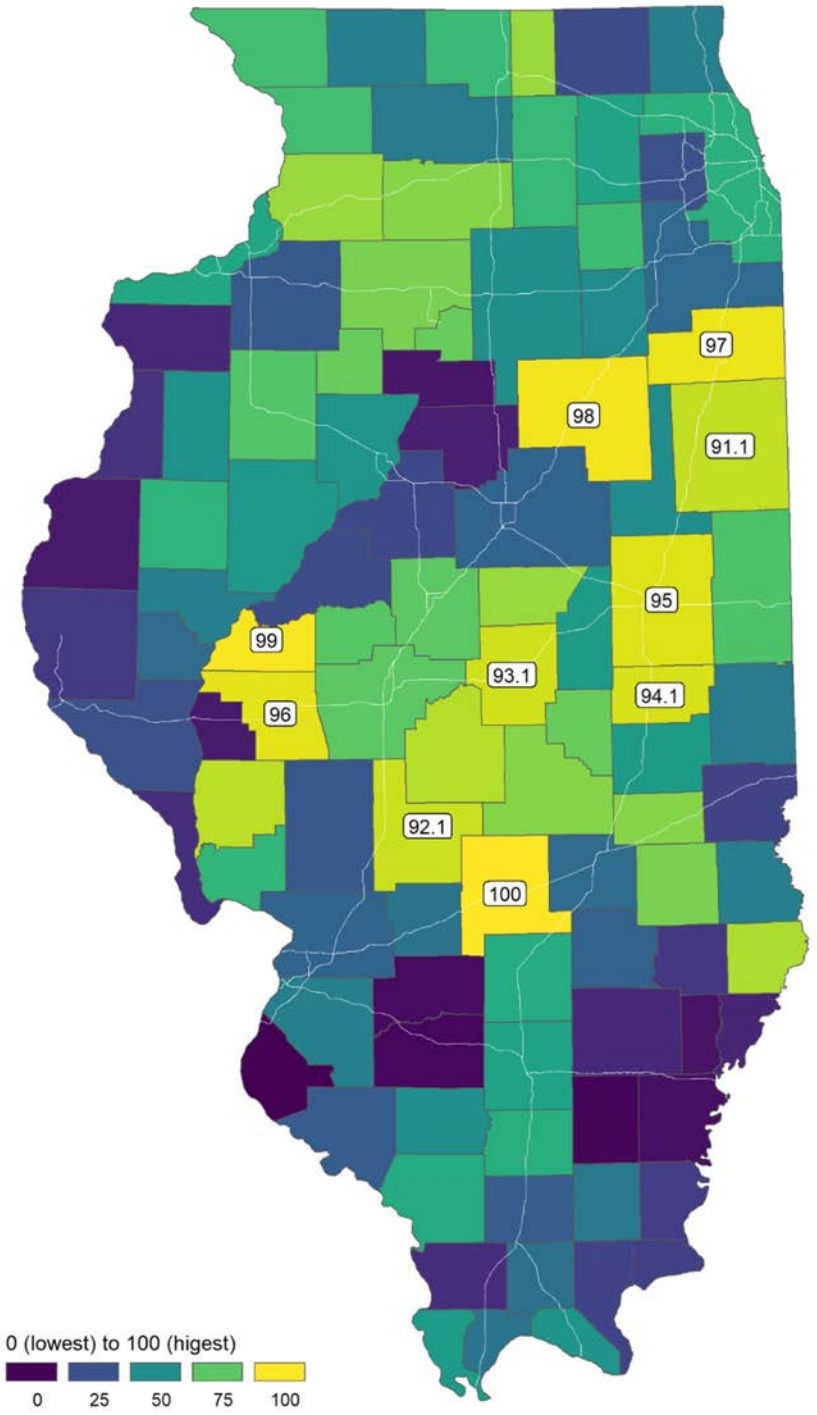
From the CII to an “Opportunity Score” – An example of its Potential



The real potential value of the CII lies in how it might be combined with other measures and data for powerful analysis.

HTC Opportunity Areas

Lowest civic infrastructure, highest social vulnerability, and least served by HTC applicants



Top Ten Counties by Opportunity Score, Sorted by Total Medicaid Enrollees

County	Opportunity Score	Population	Medicaid Enrollees
Champaign	95.0	209,922	47,821
Macon	93.1	105,528	36,267
Kankakee	97.0	110,637	33,537
Morgan	96.0	34,247	10,474
Livingston	98.0	36,040	8,748
Montgomery	92.1	28,828	8,684
Iroquois	91.1	27,812	7,561
Fayette	100.0	21,565	6,617
Douglas	94.1	19,623	4,749
Cass	99.0	12,493	4,458

Thank You!