

CASE STUDY

Identifying Communities For Regional Opportunity



CHALLENGE

Local communities throughout the state of California are both significant sources of wealth and places of concentrated poverty. Enabling the state to thrive will require focused investment to build economic and social capacity. Effective investment decisions require rigorous information about need and opportunity across multiple domains, and the relationship between local neighborhoods and their surrounding regions.

SOLUTION

Most current data and mapping tools are either organized at too large a geographic scale (e.g., counties) or fragmented on an issue-by-issue basis, limiting their utility. Enhancing efforts to benefit low and moderate-income households requires a next generation of data and mapping tools that provide finer-grained and holistic analyses of communities.

The U.C. Davis Center for Regional Change and Rabobank contracted with VESTRA to develop the Regional Opportunity Index (ROI), an index of community and regional opportunity for understanding social and economic opportunity in California's communities, using Esri's ArcGIS platform.

This web application was based on Esri's ArcGIS for Server JavaScript API to display up to three maps side-by-side, which may optionally have their extent and position synchronized for comparing data from various indices on an area-by-area basis.

The goal of the ROI is to help target resources and policies toward people and places with the greatest need, and to foster thriving communities of opportunity for all Californians. It does this by incorporating both a "people" component and a "place" component, and integrating economic, infrastructure, environmental, and social indicators in to a comprehensive assessment of the factors driving opportunity.

Generous support also has been provided by Wells Fargo Bank for continued enhancement of the ROI.

The RIO can be viewed at:
<http://interact.regionalchange.ucdavis.edu/roi/>

BENEFIT

The ROI provide banks, policy makers, advocates and other key leaders with a powerful tool to identify communities with high levels of vulnerability and communities with characteristics that suggest social and economic opportunity. The ROI assesses key measures of community well-being, and how these patterns vary across different places.



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