

Redlining & Environmental Injustice in Springfield, Ohio

Redlining has made lasting impacts on society that can still be seen today. Redlining can be defined as the systematic denial of loans to certain areas based on factors such as race and economic status (Berkovek et al). One factor that may be linked to redlining are suicide attempts in Springfield based on redlined areas. The Home Owners' Loan Corporation created maps depicting "Residential Security," showing how mortgages were formerly evaluated based on location in the city. Areas of were designated with one of the following statuses: A-Best, B-Still Desirable, C-Definitely Declining, and D-Hazardous. In Figure 2, these areas are shown, along with overlaying data depicting suicide-related calls. The suicide data pulled for my study are 2013 data, with 280 total calls. For the data to be used, the call had to be for a suicide, an attempt, or a suicidal person. Housing Zone A had 4 calls. Zone B had 58 calls, C had 185 calls, and D had 33 calls. Due to the fact that some areas are much larger than others, calculations were made for calls per square mile, and the results were notable.

| Housing Zone | Calls Per Square Mile |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| Zone A | 5 |
| Zone B | 34 |
| Zone C | 48 |
| Zone D | 22 |

Figure 1: Suicide calls per square mile in each housing zone

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention stated that the national average for suicide rate is lower than the rate in Ohio. The national average is 12.57 per 100,000

as opposed to Ohio's 12.78 (Bruce). Some factors of suicide are considered to be of a socioeconomic nature. Socioeconomic factors are factors to be considered social and economic. These could include wealth and social status.

In regards to Springfield, it can be noted the significance of the call locations. Zone A has less than 5% of the overall calls per square mile in the areas of interest. Some of this can likely be attributed to the socioeconomic factors affecting each zone. Each zone has a different group of people residing in it, with different struggles historically. Zone C has by far the most amount of calls per square mile, and this can be seen by the clustering of data on figure two in the yellow areas. Zone D has less calls than zone C, but a significant amount more than zones A and B. Household poverty levels have been studied to have an impact on individual health and behaviors, and has also been linked to suicide rate in suffering areas (Bernburg).

Solutions to suicide are hard to come by, but suicide prevention could be an effective means for the city of Springfield. The education of physicians and limiting access to lethal means were found to be effective means for suicide prevention, and other means such as public education and media education could be effective, but need more testing (Mann).

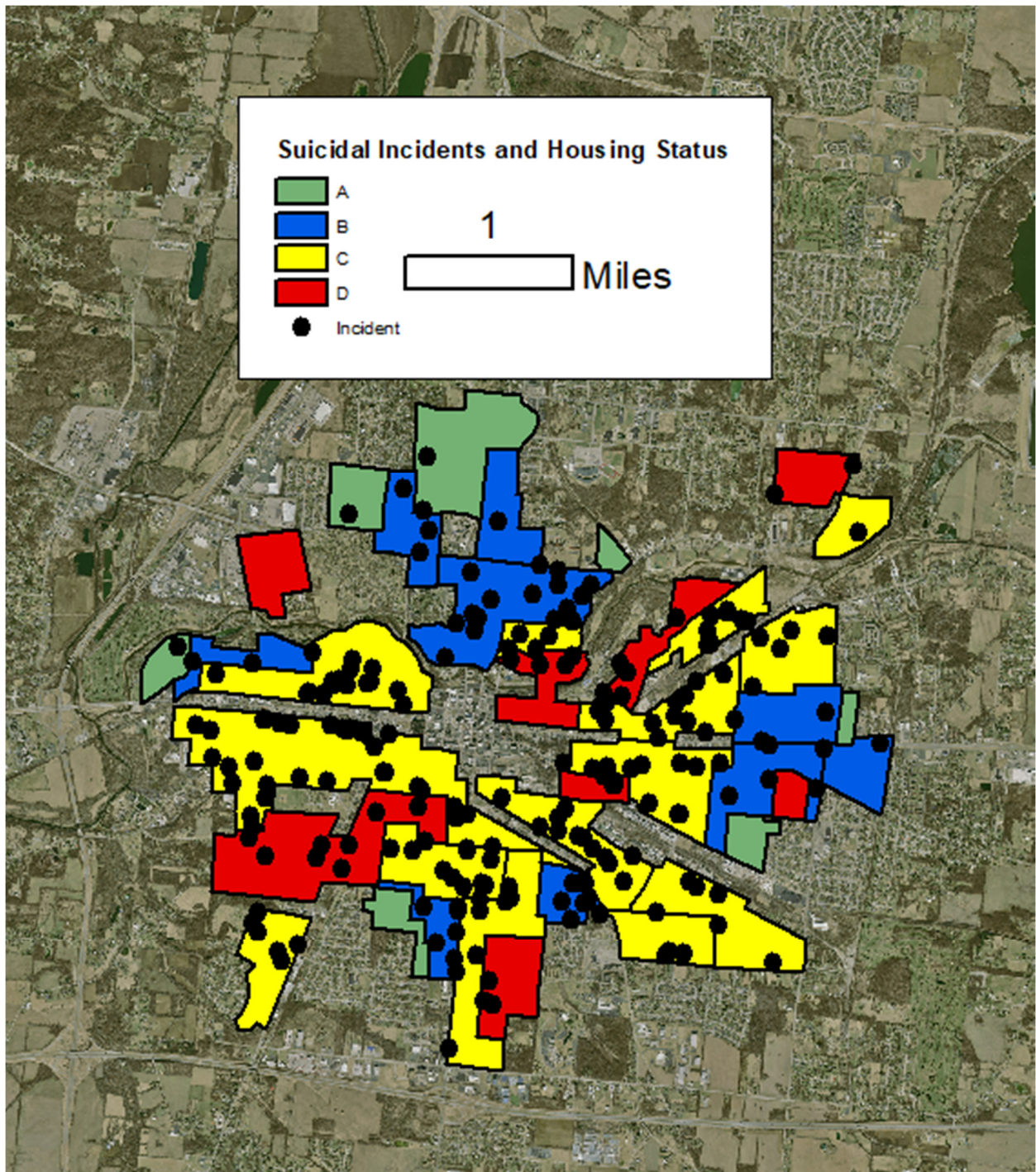


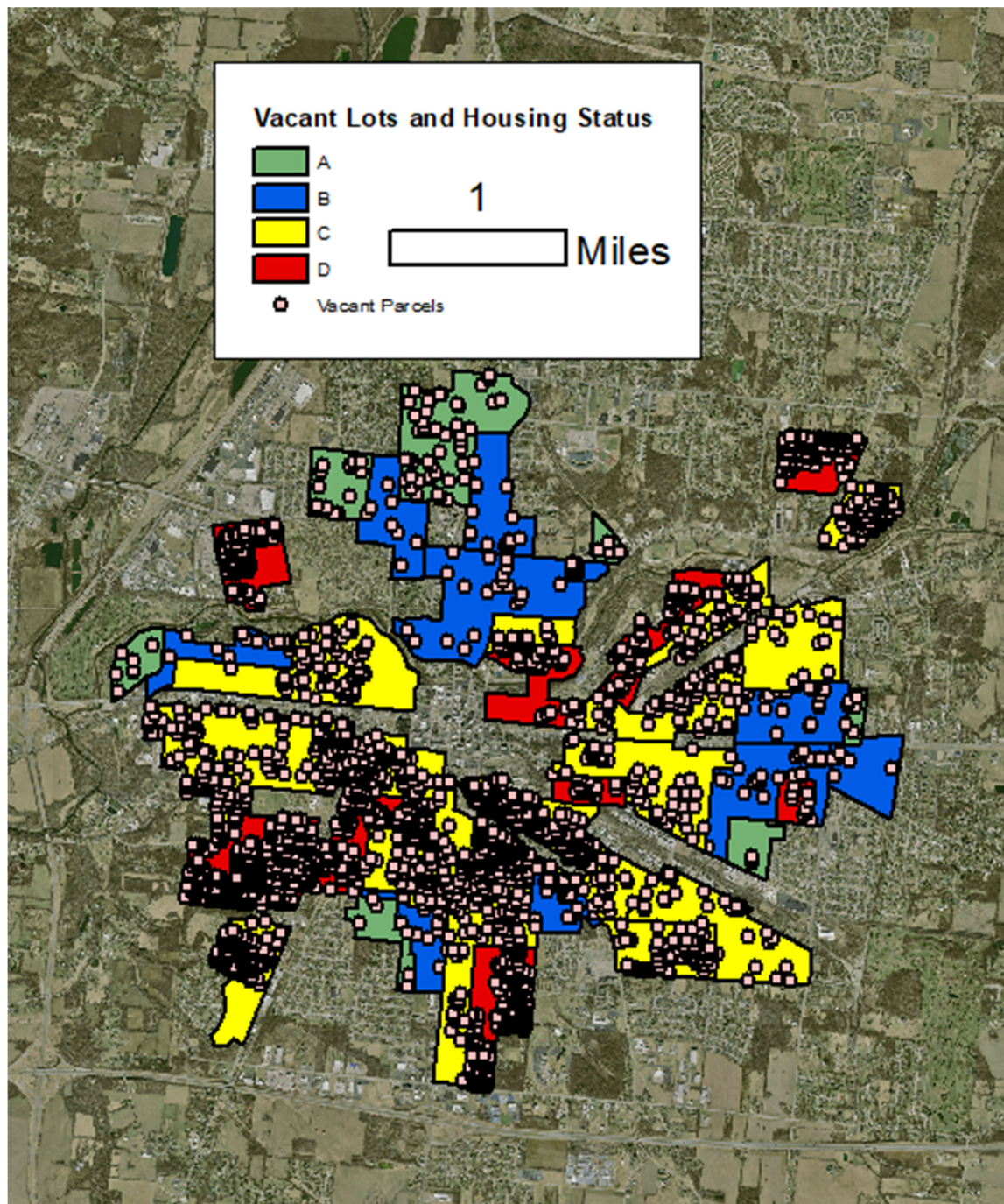
Figure 2: Suicide Locations in Regards to Housing Status and Redlining

Vacancies run rampant through Springfield, but there are large clusters within the redlined districts. This can be seen in figure 4. Due to the varying size in areas, the number of vacancies per square mile were pulled, and this can be seen in figure 3. Vacancy rates in have been noted as a sign of an area in poverty, and as the vacancy rates lower, the area typically does better (Briggs). It is important to note in Figure 4 how the housing vacancies are so dense in areas C and D, that much of the underlay is unable to be seen. Of the four zones, Zone A had 3% of the total vacancies, Zone B had 6%, Zone C had 51%, and Zone D had 40%. Between zones C and D, C being deemed “Definitely Declining” and D being deemed “Hazardous” by the HOLC, 91% of the total vacancies are in these two zones.

| Housing Zone | Vacancies | Vacancies/Square Mile |
|--------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| A | 88 | 109 |
| B | 154 | 89 |
| C | 1403 | 361 |
| D | 1105 | 753 |

Figure 3: Vacancies per Square Mile

Figure 4: Vacant Lots and Housing Status



Works Cited

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