An Explanation of Justice Mapping: Three Examples

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THE VAST MAJORITY OF INCARCERATED PEOPLE comes from and returns in concentration to a small set of inner-city neighborhoods. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) analysis, otherwise know as computer mapping, has become key to understanding how the removal and return of so many people from a single neighborhood is having an impact on the health, housing, employment, and social networks in those communities. When information about where other government needs-based program populations reside is added, the overlap between criminal justice and other needs-based services populations becomes starkly apparent.

By developing a neighborhood-level account of criminal justice populations and resources, "justice mapping" reveals the extent to which re-entry constitutes a critical backdrop to a range of other government services and neighborhood activities. More important, justice mapping is highly suggestive of opportunities for cross-sector government collaborations and pooled investments that can achieve substantial economies of scale. The following set of maps provides three examples of how justice mapping can suggest new solutions to the challenges of re-entry and help states and local jurisdictions identify opportunities for using existing resources in more effective ways.

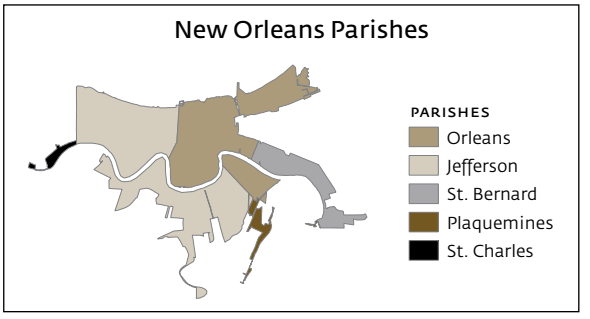
The first map (of New Orleans, Louisiana) provides a neighborhood-by-neighborhood estimate of how much the state spends each year to incarcerate residents of those communities. The individual, case-by-case decisions to remove and return residents to and from prison add up to considerable expenditures for the well-being of particular neighborhoods. In some neighborhoods, mapping reveals "million dollar blocks," in which more than a million dollars are spent to incarcerate and return residents from that block in a single year. Cumulatively, over $87 million dollars are spent to imprison people from the city each year, over half of which ($46.5 million) is accounted for by people admitted to prison due to parole violations. One reason it is important to take account of the deployment of resources for any particular geographical location is that when added up the cumulative resources may have a social impact that is unanticipated by any of the individual decisions. And when considered as a pool or resources, more strategic options to affect positive changes in the neighborhood as a whole may become apparent.

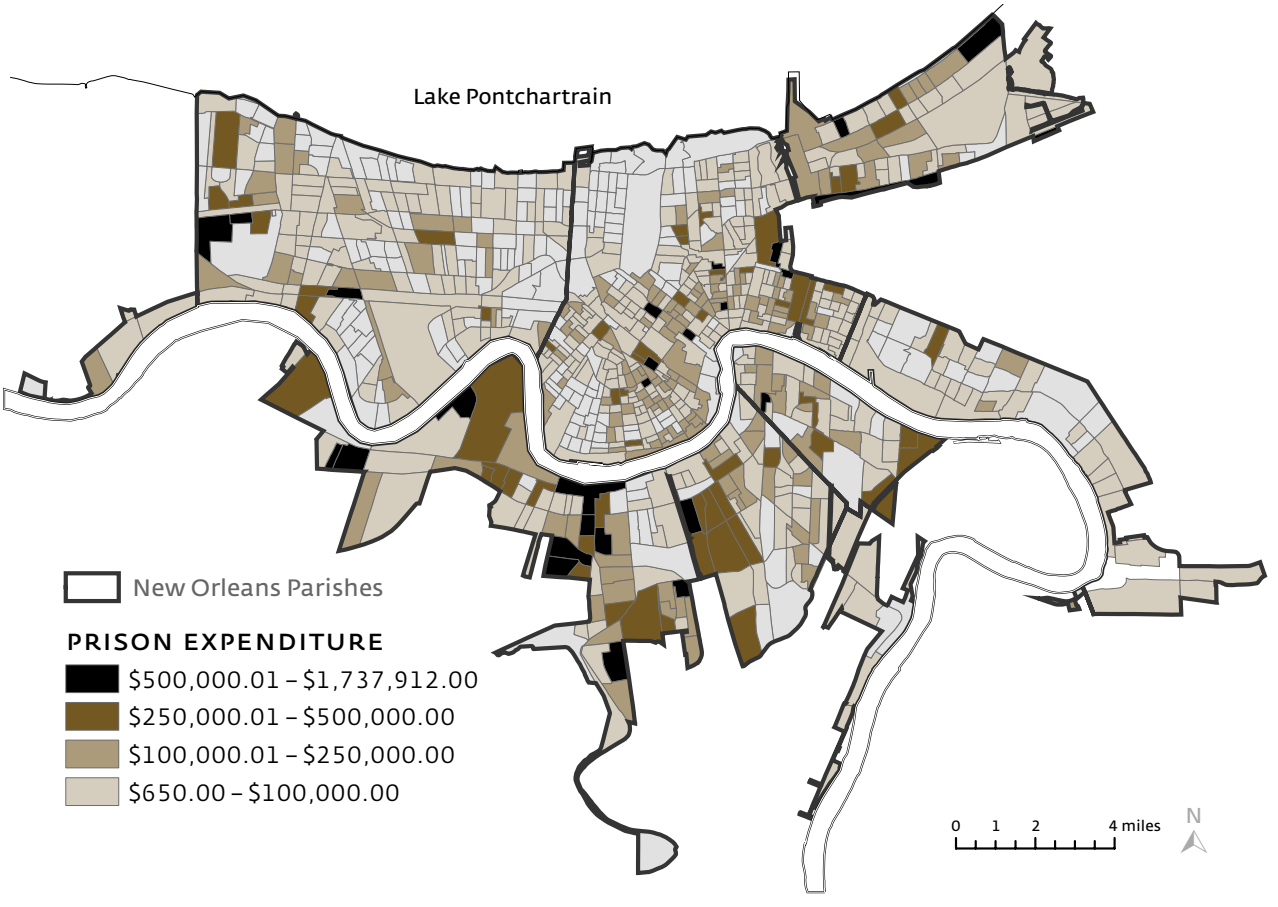
The second map (of Brooklyn, New York) compares the rates of incarcerated residents and residents receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (expressed in terms of standard deviations from the mean). The substantial overlap identified in the highest

PRISON EXPENDITURE IN NEW ORLEANS, 2003

by Census Block-Group with Parish Boundaries

Parole violators accounted for approximately $46.5 million (53%) of the city's $87 million annual prison costs in 2003





ADMISSION TYPE	COUNT	EXPENDITURE	% OF TOTAL
New commitment	946	$40,675,258	46.63%
Non-technical PV	937	$25,065,338	28.74
Technical PV	952	$21,487,585	24.63
TOTAL	**2,835**	**$87,228,181**	**100%**

PARISH	POP.	ADMISSIONS	EXPENDITURE	% OF TOTAL
Orleans	465,906	1,652	$47,624,980	55.78%
Jefferson	428,638	1,026	$36,055,784	42.23
St. Bernard	60,035	86	$1,614,470	1.89
Plaquemines	5,319	3	$74,715	0.09
St. Charles	3,127	2	$9,209	0.01
TOTAL	**963,025**	**2,769**	**$85,379,158**	**100%**

Justice Mapping Center (JMC) with JFA Institute | Map produced by Eric Cadora & Charles Swartz
Data Source: Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, All Prison Admissions in 2003

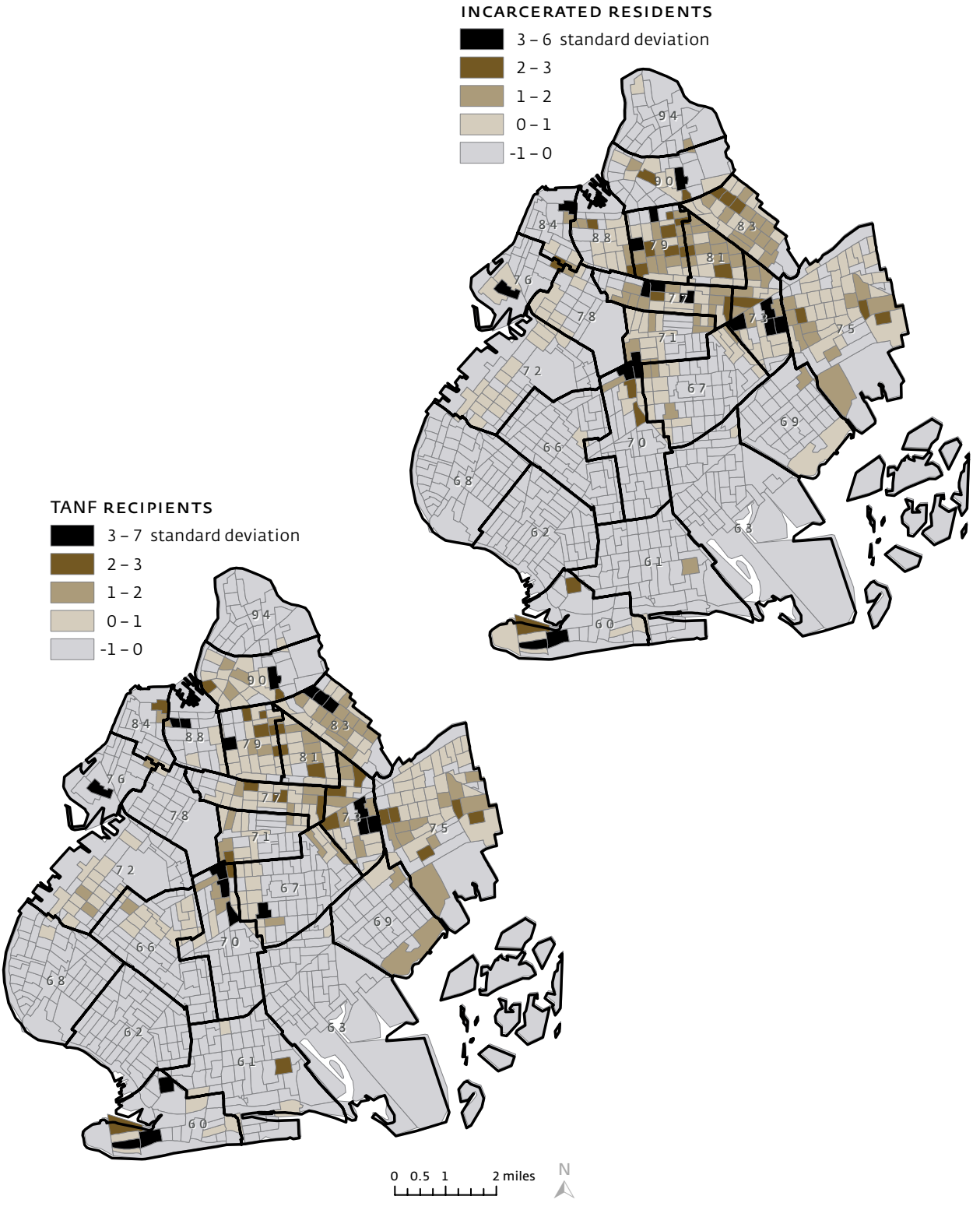
concentration neighborhoods suggests that these may be coincident populations. One important implication of this very close overlap is that considerable resources are being invested in the same place by different government agencies without coordination, which may represent policy interventions which at best do not take advantage of opportunities to blend resources in more effective service combinations, and which at worst may be working against one another.

The third map (of New Haven, Connecticut) shows an example of how most probation and parole departments in the country are not currently organized around geographical concentrations of their populations. As with incarceration expenditures, the deployment of probation and parole supervision resources is important to understand geographically. For example, this map shows the residences of one probation officer's caseload in New Haven. That officer supervises people who are assessed to be "Level 2" or moderate risk probationers. The officer's caseload is 93 probationers. Focusing on just one neighborhood (the Hill), highlighted in this map, reveals that in that single neighborhood there are 142 Level 2 probationers—about the size of one and one-half caseloads. These 142 probationers, at current, fall into the caseloads of eight different officers. The opportunity made evident by this geographical caseload analysis is that all the moderate risk probationers in this neighborhood could theoretically be assigned to two instead of eight different officers. Moreover, if they worked in the precinct instead of the downtown office, they would have a substantially greater understanding of the neighborhood in which their probationers resided.

As the coincidence between criminal justice populations and populations served by other government programs becomes increasingly apparent, opportunities for collaboration begin to emerge. Although the re-entry phenomenon is currently understood as a criminal justice issue, solutions to the challenges that are posed by so many people returning to their neighborhoods from prison cannot be found within the justice system alone. Instead, these solutions will require a coordinated effort among a range of actors stretching from state officials to neighborhood associations. By drilling down to the community level, justice mapping can help foster these collaborations.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND NEED-BASED PROGRAM POPULATIONS

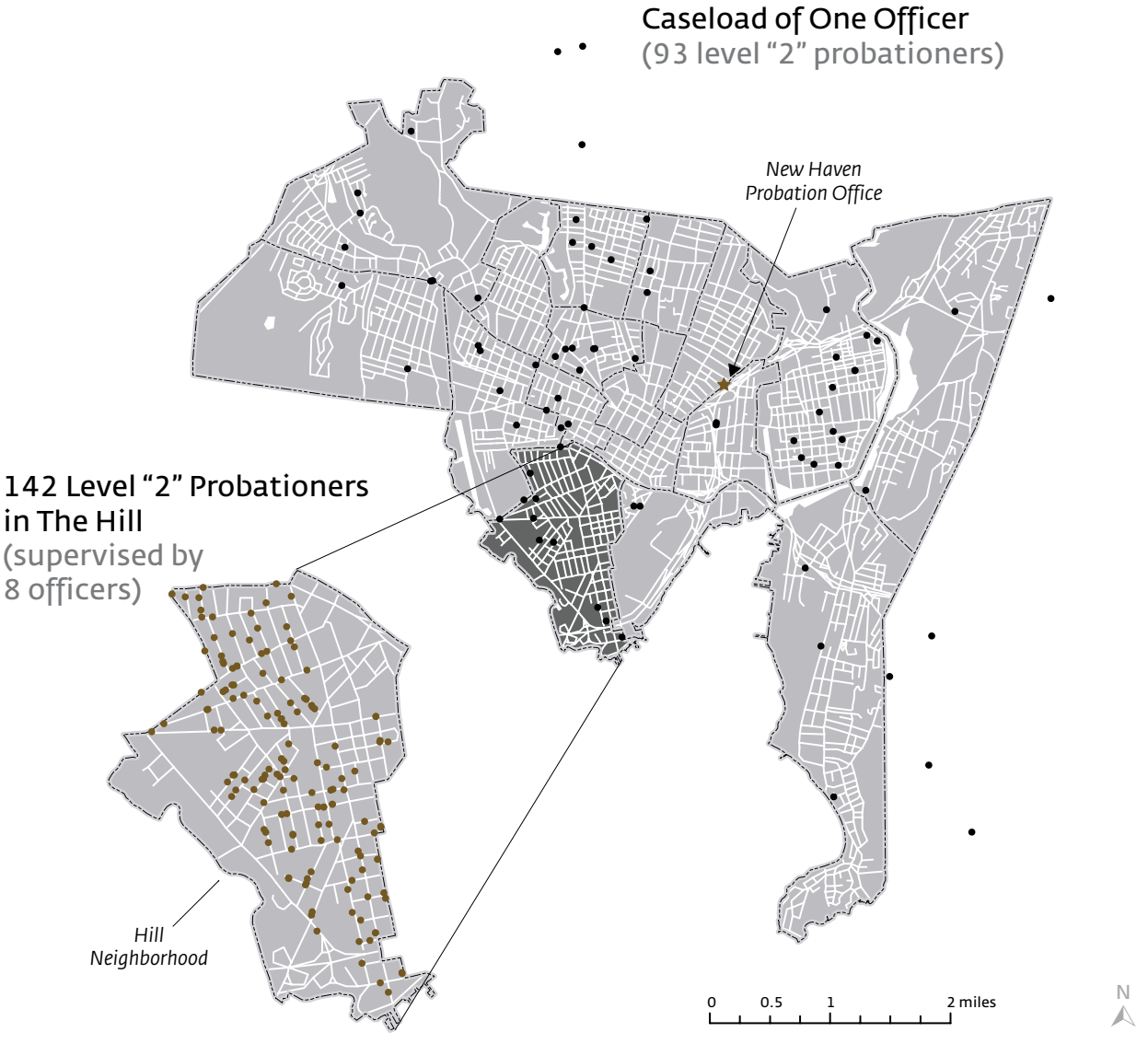
Expressed as Standard Deviations from the Mean
by Census Tract in Brooklyn, New York



Justice Mapping Center (JMC) | Map produced by Eric Cadora & Charles Swartz
Data Sources: NYC Department of Corrections, FY1998 Jail Admissions; NYS DCJS, FY1997 Prison Admissions; NYC Human Resources Administration, CY1998 TANF Recipients

PROBATION CASELOAD DISTRIBUTION EXAMPLE

with New Haven Neighborhoods



Justice Mapping Center (JMC) with JFA Institute | Map produced by Eric Cadora & Charles Swartz
Data Source: Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division, Probation Snapshot from 2002