Locational Analysis for Church Planting in Pierce and King County

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Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this project was to identify the top five hypothetical locations for a second campus of the faith-based church New Horizon Christian Center (NHCC). Central to the vision of this church is actively serving in the community and meeting the needs of those around them, but one location can only affect positive change within a certain area before seeking to expand. Therefore a second campus would open up the ability to provide services and support to an even wider range of people across a much broader area of influence. This project was based on two primary research questions. First (1), what are the primary areas which people come from to attend NHCC and what areas are not being reached? Why are there no members from these areas (i.e. other churches in the area)? Second (2), what is the optimal location for a second campus of NHCC based on the locational analyses performed in question 1?

Methods of Analysis

The first step in the analysis was to determine the parameters. These parameters were arrived at through conversations with members of the NHCC leadership team, in-class discussions, and various literature on the subject of church planting.

- Area Characteristics (see rasters at left): medium to low number of churches in the surrounding area, and medium to medium-low density of current NHCC members.
- Census Tract Demographics: high population density, kid density, and youth density. Medium income or below.
- Parcel Characteristics: vacant; minimum of two acres; relatively close to both residential and commercial; not excessive tree cover; assessed cost no higher than $300k; not next to industrial land uses; compatible zoning; and must be within city limits.

After the parameters had been determined it was time to begin the actual analysis. By overlaying the membership and church density rasters with the census demographic data it was determined the general areas that would fit the parameters. Then user a Select by Attributes' query all vacant parcels were selected that were over two and less than five acres in size. At this point it became a time-consuming parcel-by-parcel analysis to determine which of the parcels met the most of the criteria which had been set out. This was a time consuming process, involving cross-referencing the parcel data with the Pierce and King County parcel search websites, checking the zoning maps and codes for each municipality to determine use compatibility; and analyzing orthophotos overlaid with parcel data to determine proximity to the desired local land uses.

Outcomes

While there were around eight different parcels that met nearly all the parameters set forth, the four parcels shown above were determined to be the most promising. Between the visualization of membership data, demographic data, and church density data, this project has created a wealth of resources for strategic planning with NHCC. This project was completed in a hypothetical scenario of church expansion, so while these parcels will likely not be pursued at this time, it was determined the general areas that would fit the parameters. Thus creating a wealth of resources for strategic planning with NHCC.

Minority Source Citation


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Map Info

Map created by: Robert E. Leavitt

Primary Data Sources: Pierce County, King County, New Horizon Christian Center, United States Census Bureau, NWChurches.com, City of Tacoma, City of University Place, City of Federal Way, City of Kent, City of Renton, City of Auburn, City of Lakewood

Credits

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