

Quality of Life Explorer

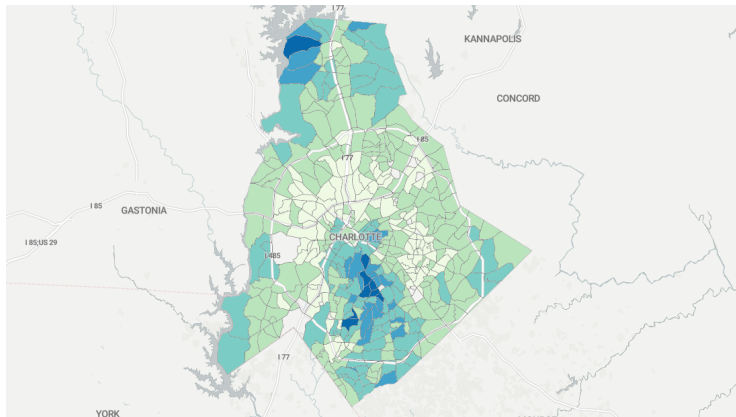


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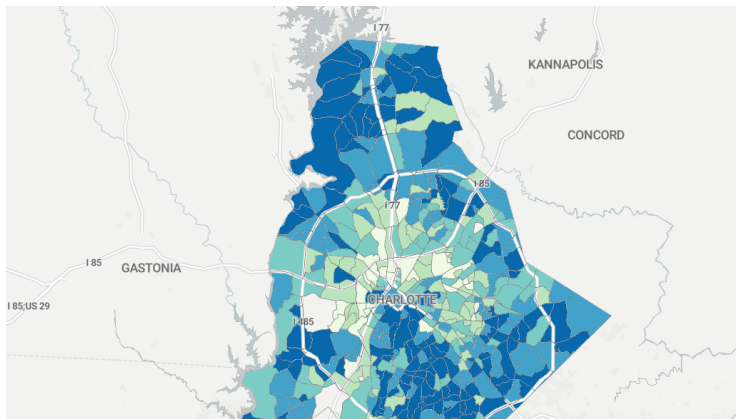


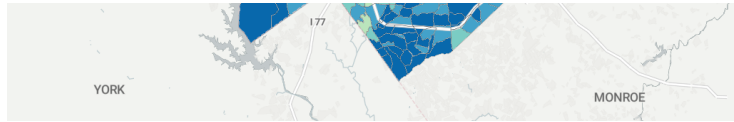
The Quality of Life Explorer: 10 Years and Counting

By: Katie Zager

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Quality of Life Explorer launched ten years ago as a collaboration between UNC Charlotte, The City of Charlotte, and Mecklenburg County. The dashboard, which can be found online at mcmmap.org/qol is a neighborhood indicators project, showcasing over 80 different variables for 460 different neighborhoods in the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

When launched, the Quality of Life Explorer represented the next phase of a long-time partnership between the city and university researchers. From 2000 to 2010, the Metropolitan Studies Group at UNC Charlotte, at the request of the City of Charlotte and in cooperation with several city and county departments, published a biannual written report analyzing trends among a defined set of neighborhoods. By 2012, the Quality of Life Explorer had moved online.





Quality of Life Explorer: Making Data Intelligible and Available for Journalists (like me) who aren't Ph.D.'s

Special Contributor: Ely Portillo, WFAE

What neighborhoods in Charlotte have a high share of renter households, and where are people most likely to own their homes?

What parts of the county have the highest concentration of babies with low birth weights?

Where can you find two adjacent communities with a nearly three-decade difference in average lifespans?

If you're a journalist like me and you want to answer these questions, you have three basic options:

- Figure out where the data lives, as well as how to download it, process it, map it and understand it.
- Ask someone much smarter and better with numbers than you are to do that for you.
- Or click on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Quality of Life Explorer.

It's probably no big surprise that I've always opted for the third option here.

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