Best Practices

& Tips for the Housing Assessment Team

1. **Keep in mind that everyone has a different starting point and destination in their community development goals.** Geography, available resources, political will, population, and more all factor into potential progress made in on any local initiative. This is also true in the GICH program. Avoid the temptation to compare your community with others, and simply begin working with what you have.

2. **Transparency and good communication with residents in the neighborhoods you survey is key.**

3. **If you feed them, they will come.** Consider providing lunch for your volunteers as a way to say thank you for their participation.

4. **Police and code enforcement should avoid directly conducting surveys in uniform.**

5. **While the housing team may be up to speed and knowledgeable on the housing initiatives in your community, sometimes residents and local leaders may not be.** Increasing awareness among the public and local leadership is crucial. This may involve a power-point presentation to city council, chamber of commerce, county commission, board of education, industrial development authority, downtown development authority, or planning and zoning board. Provide clear information on local demographics, the primary housing issues in the area, who serves on the housing team, what the GICH program is, and how these projects help and support other local initiatives.

Best Practices

& Tips for Volunteers

1. **The respect of private property is paramount in conducting housing conditions surveys.** Stay on the public sidewalk or street, and do not trespass on private property. Your goal is to assess what you see from the street.

2. **Wear your team shirt or safety vest when conducting surveys.**

3. **Talk to residents!** People may be curious about your presence in their neighborhood. Be prepared to succinctly explain who you are, why you are there, and what you are doing.

Editable digital copies can be provided.   PAGE 1

Housing and Residential Lot Assessment

Reviewed by (Group #/Name):

Date:

Address:

Parcel ID:

Section 1: General property Information

☐ Single Family w/Attached Garage/ Car Port
☐ Single Family w/Detached Garage/Car Port
☐ Single Family- No Garage
☐ Multi=family   # of units_____
☐ Mobile Home
☐ Vacant Lot (Skip to Section ____)
☐ Non-residential property (skip to _____)
☐ Other

☐ Occupied
☐ Vacant/Unoccupied
☐ For Sale
☐ Unknown

# of Stories

☐ 1   ☐ 1 ½   ☐ 2   ☐ more than 2

Section 2: Housing Unit Characteristics

Foundation: [check one]
☐ Good condition (0)
☐ Cracked/broken but repairable (5)
☐ Needs partial replacement (10)
☐ Needs complete replacement or is missing entirely (20)
☐ Not visible from car or sidewalk (0)

Exterior Surfaces/Siding: [check all that apply]
☐ Good condition (0)
☐ Needs repainting (3)
☐ Cracked/minor dry rot/ in spots, repairable (5)
☐ Needs replacement (siding missing or too deteriorated to repair) (10)
☐ Chimney sections missing/major repairs needed (10)
☐ No siding on house, needs complete replacement (20)
☐ Not visible from car or sidewalk (0)

Windows/Doors (includes jambs/frames): [check all that apply]
☐ Good condition (0)
☐ Needs repainting (3)
☐ Cracked/broken panes/minor dry rot, but repairable (5)
☐ 1-3 windows in need of complete replacement (10)
☐ More than 3 windows in need of complete replacement (15)

Stairs, Rails, Steps, Porches: [check one]
☐ Good condition (0)
☐ Needs repainting (3)
☐ Cracked/minor dry rot in spots, portion of railing missing, repairable (5)
☐ Needs major repair or replacement (10)

Roofing: [check all that apply]
☐ Good condition (0)
☐ Gutters in need of repair (5)
☐ Cracked/broken/curled or missing shingles or shakes, repairable without replacement (5)
☐ Needs partial re-roofing (10)
☐ Needs complete reroofing (shingles and some or all of wood sheathing) (20)
☐ Roof structure needs replacement (roof is rusted, bowing, wavy, or very uneven) (25)

Section 3: Residential Lot Assessment	Section 4: Optional questions
☐ Satisfactory ☐ Lawn/weeds overgrown (exceed 12 in in length) ☐ Missing grown cover (grass, pine straw, mulch) on non paved areas ☐ Yard includes dead or hazardous trees ☐ Inoperable vehicle in driveway or yard ☐ Major cleanup/junk in yard ☐ Porch used as storage, filled with junk items ☐ Graffiti on house, fence, exterior lot	

Housing Unit Condition Rating (from Section 2) and Definitions:

Well-maintained (0) – New or in good condition. Does not need any repairs.

Sound (3-9) – In good condition but is in need of some maintenance work, such as repainting or minor repairs.

Minor repairs needed (10-15) – Housing unit has several deferred maintenance issues or one moderate repair project (i.e. replacement of several windows)

Moderate rehabilitation (16-39) – Requires multiple repairs, including the repair/replacement of one major component.

Substantial rehabilitation (40-55) – Requires the repair and replacement of most or all exterior components

Dilapidated (OR Not salvageable OR Substantial deterioration/Not feasible to rehab) (56+) – Housing unit suffers from excessive neglect, appears structurally unsound and not safe for human habitation, and may not be feasible to rehabilitate.

Survey set-up with Open Data Kit (ODK)

Setting up a Kindle Fire for use with ODK Collect and Ona.io

Housing and Demographics Research Center | Community Mapping Lab
Instructions last updated 4/22/19
Live version of form at **https://goo.gl/vKE4rB**

Many communities choose to use **OpenDataKit** (ODK) for data collection, an open source survey tool that can include multimedia and geographic data. Those data need to be stored somewhere, and we use a service called Ona which provides free public accounts for storing ODK data.

ODK can work on both Apple and Android devices, but it works best on the ODK Collect app which is available only for Android. We have a borrowing library of Android tablets that are available to communities we work with, but Android based phones (Samsung, Motorola, etc.) can also work. More instructions on installing and using the ODK app are listed below.

A walkthrough of using the ODK app is also available through this link: https://youtu.be/Qm1PD314x9c

Installing ODK Collect

The ODK Collect app is available on the Google Play Store. If you are installing on a Kindle or other devices that don't have the Play Store, you will have to "sideload" it-- manually placing the installation file on the device and installing it from there. These instructions presume you have registered your Kindle with Amazon, which you'll need to do in order to install the needed software

Here are the steps to follow:

"Sideloading" ODK Collect on Amazon devices

1. Download the most recent version of ODK Collect's apk file (installation file for Android devices) to your local computer. That's available at this link: **https://opendatakit.org/downloads/ download-info/odk-collect-apk/**

2. Connect the Kindle to your computer via the USB port. You should be able to use the Kindle's charging cord to make this connection. On Windows, the computer will ask you how to use this device--you want to open the folder to view the internal storage. On Apple laptops, the Kindle should just appear on the desktop. In either case, open the Kindle on your computer. You should see several folders listed.

3. Copy the ODK Collect app to the Kindle's internal storage. After doing so, you can disconnect from the computer.

4. From Amazon's Appstore, install "ES File Explorer". This will allow you to access files stored on your device.

5. You also need to change your security settings. Pull down the top notifications menu on the Kindle and click on the "Settings" button. Then choose "Security." Check the box to allow apps to be installed from unknown sources.

6. Now open ES File Explorer. You should see the ODK Collect apk file listed in your root directory. Tap on it to start installation.

Setting up ODK Collect

1. If you are on a regular (non-Amazon Android Device), install the ODK Collect app from the Google Play Store.

2. Open the ODK Collect app, and open the drop-down menu in the top-right corner of the main menu and click on "General Settings."

3. Under Server Settings, click on Platform and select "Other."

4. Return to the General Settings menu and click on "Configure platform settings." Use the following settings:

    URL: **https://odk.ona.io**

    User name: communitymapuga

5. The password should have been emailed to your group. Once this is filled in, ODK Collect can download the forms from ONA's website.

6. Enter in the ONA username and password (emailed to you) in the Username and Password fields. You should now be set up to fill out your ONA form on the tablet.

7. Return to the Main Menu and click on "Get Blank Form." A prompt asking for username and password will appear, and if not already pre-filled, enter your ONA username/password in the appropriate fields.

8. Click the checkbox(es) next to the form(s) that you wish to fill. Click "Get Selected." A prompt indicating download success should appear. Click "OK."

9. Return to the Main Menu if not redirected. Click "Fill Blank Form" to view forms on the device, and click on the form to be completed.

10. Save changes as needed. If you need to come back to a saved form, click "Edit Saved Form" on the Main Menu. When done with a form, click "Send Finalized Form" on the Main Menu, select the completed form, and click "Send Selected."

11. You can delete old forms by clicking on "Delete Saved Form." Click on the "Blank Forms" tab at the top of the screen and then select the old form you'd like to delete. Click on "Delete Selected" at the bottom of the screen to remove the form.

12. If you need to update a form, just click on the "Get Blank Form" again and select the form you'd like to load.

Using the app

1. Open ODK Collect on your Android device. Click on "Fill Blank Form" and select the survey form you would like to use.

2. You can move from question to question by swiping left (move forward) and right (move backwards).

3. For use in mapping, it is very important that we use an exact parcel number if available. Addresses are more difficult, as not all properties have them and they can be written in multiple ways. When you come to the question that asks for a parcel number, use the online reference map or other tool to find the parcel number. Enter at least the first 3-4 characters and then swipe to the next screen to see a list of matching options. Select the correct parcel number and move forward.

4. If no matching parcels (or no parcels at all) are listed, swipe back to the parcel question to check for errors. If you are certain there is no matching parcel, you can type and then choose NA and enter the address manually on the following questions.

5. The GPS location is optional and will work best when you have wireless internet access. Feel free to skip it.

6. When done, check the "Mark form as finalized box" and click on "Save Form and Exit".

7. To upload forms to the server once you have completed a round of surveys, click on "Send Finalized Form" on the ODK Collect home screen. If you are asked to sign into the server, you can use the user name and password provided to your group.

Accessing data on Ona

1. You can access Ona through their website**: https://ona.io**

2. Log in with the credentials you've received (probably the Community Mapping Lab account).

3. Click on the title of your housing survey (Pine Mountain Housing Survey) in the example below.
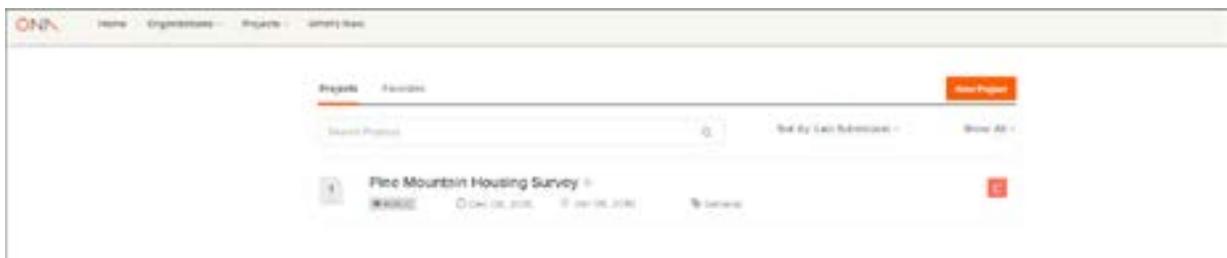
4. Click on the name of your survey to access the dashboard.

5. You should now see basic statistics about your survey (how many records, contributors, etc.). Under "Export Data" you can download your data as a CSV file or pictures as a Zip archive. [Note: as of 1/11/16, the zip download is not working functionally. See the alternative interface below in step 7.]
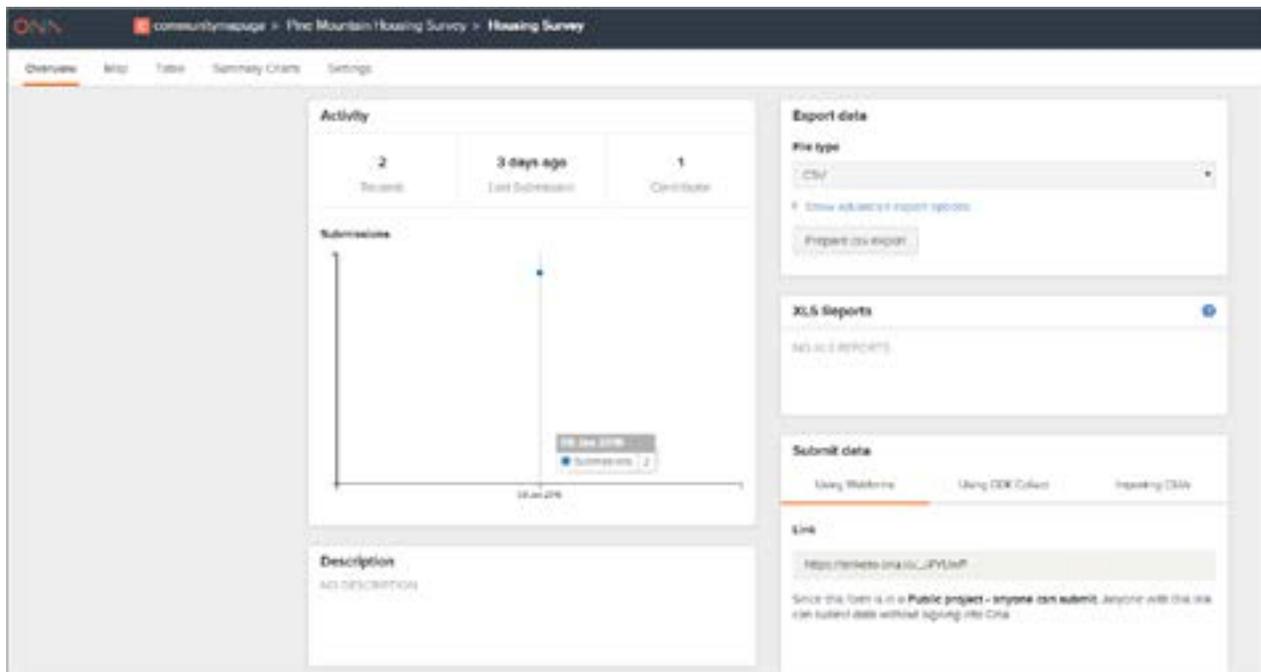
6. If you click on the "Table" tab at the top of the page, you can also see a map of your data online. Individual forms can be edited or deleted by double clicking on a field.