THE GEOGRAPHY OF JOBS

The increasing distance between jobs and workers in Northeast Ohio and why it matters for future growth.

By Emily Garr Pacetti with Cecile Murray and Sam Hartman

Updated June 2016
The vitality of a region’s economy depends on its ability to connect people to good jobs, and firms to workers with the appropriate skill set.
The Geography of Jobs

In this slow-growth context, spatial dimensions of job growth often get overlooked. Emphasis is naturally placed on job development strategies, without considering factors such as the quality, location and accessibility of those jobs. If the disconnect between where jobs are and where people who need jobs live perpetuates, especially in an environment of stagnant population, Northeast Ohio won’t be able to sustain its nascent recovery.

Issues of sprawl and spatial access to jobs are not new problems. But the conversation about the “geography of jobs” is still largely absent in business development discussions and seldom makes the list of top civic priorities. Job access may be the most important issue no one is talking about. That needs to change.

As jobs in Northeast Ohio climb back to pre-recession levels, understanding job growth patterns is critical to avoiding the pitfalls of promoting isolated pockets of limited growth. Particularly if the region’s population remains flat, the focus should be on investing strategically in Northeast Ohio’s existing infrastructure and assets to ensure its long-term economic competitiveness in the global economy.

Given the urgency of this issue, and to jumpstart the conversation, the Fund for Our Economic Future (the Fund) took a closer look at what’s happening to job access in Northeast Ohio.

This report synthesizes evidence on where jobs are located in the region, who has access to them, and how current trends may affect future growth. The evidence is drawn primarily from the most recent research available at the local level, and is supplemented by original, region-wide analysis where appropriate. The main findings from this exercise are:

1. Job growth over the past 20 years occurred predominantly in suburbs and the conversion of rural areas, continuing a long-term trend since the 1950s.
2. Outward job growth affects all Northeast Ohio residents regardless of where they live.
3. Outward job growth disproportionately affects residents who need jobs the most, particularly the 200,000 residents living in the region’s economically distressed neighborhoods.

Ultimately, the goal of this report is to bring the issue of spatial access to jobs to the fore and equip decision makers with the data to make smart job development decisions now and in the future.

INTRODUCTION

The vitality of a region’s economy depends on its ability to connect people to good jobs and connect firms to workers with the appropriate skill set. Spatially—on both these counts—Northeast Ohio is falling short relative to other regions in the U.S. and relative to its potential to be globally competitive.

Since the end of the recession in 2009, the Northeast Ohio economy has been gearing up for the future—undergoing a transition that’s about new products, new companies, new industries, and new opportunities. The region has countless assets on which to build. Jobs are coming back. But Northeast Ohio still isn’t creating enough good jobs, and the jobs are more dispersed and harder to reach.

In this slow-growth context, spatial dimensions of job growth often get overlooked. Emphasis is naturally placed on job development strategies, without considering factors such as the quality, location and accessibility of those jobs. The disconnect between where jobs are and where people who need jobs live perpetuates, especially in an environment of stagnant population. Northeast Ohio won’t be able to sustain its nascent recovery.

Issues of sprawl and spatial access to jobs are not new problems. But the conversation about the “geography of jobs” is still largely absent in business development discussions and seldom makes the list of top civic priorities. Job access may be the most important issue no one is talking about. That needs to change.

As jobs in Northeast Ohio climb back to pre-recession levels, understanding job growth patterns is critical to avoiding the pitfalls of promoting isolated pockets of limited growth. Particularly if the region’s population remains flat, the focus should be on investing strategically in Northeast Ohio’s existing infrastructure and assets to ensure its long-term economic competitiveness in the global economy.

Given the urgency of this issue, and to jumpstart the conversation, the Fund for Our Economic Future (the Fund) took a closer look at what’s happening to job access in Northeast Ohio.

This report synthesizes evidence on where jobs are located in the region, who has access to them, and how current trends may affect future growth. The evidence is drawn primarily from the most recent research available at the local level, and is supplemented by original, region-wide analysis where appropriate. The main findings from this exercise are:

1. Job growth over the past 20 years occurred predominantly in suburbs and the conversion of rural areas, continuing a long-term trend since the 1950s.
2. Outward job growth affects all Northeast Ohio residents regardless of where they live.
3. Outward job growth disproportionately affects residents who need jobs the most, particularly the 200,000 residents living in the region’s economically distressed neighborhoods.

Ultimately, the goal of this report is to bring the issue of spatial access to jobs to the fore and equip decision makers with the data to make smart job development decisions now and in the future.

ABOUT THE DATA

Jobs data, often referred to as “payroll data,” is reported by firms according to where workers are employed rather than where they live. It is highly variable at the local level and usually lagged (i.e., based on data from two to three years prior to release). Until recently, local data on jobs has been limited to metros, counties or ZIP codes through the Current Employment Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, and ZIP Code Business Patterns, respectively. It is now available at the tract or neighborhood level through the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program of the Census. Payroll data should not be confused with household employment data that is reported by workers from their place of residence (i.e., the American Community Survey).

This report references a number of datasets, including those mentioned above, in order to get the most complete picture of job growth as a local level in Northeast Ohio today. For more information on each dataset, and how to access it, please see Appendix A.
The Fund has suggested that “Growth & Opportunity,” or the mutual reinforcement of economic growth alongside economic opportunity for all residents, be a community imperative. In its work with civic leaders across sectors, the Fund has identified a framework by which it aims to strengthen the Northeast Ohio economy through “good” job growth (job creation), a workforce prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow (job preparation), and tighter connectivity between jobs and workers (job access) (Garr Pacetti 2014).

DEFINING “JOB ACCESS”

Job access refers to the level of connectivity between jobs and people. Access can be defined economically, socially, culturally, and politically. In this report, we focus on geographic distance (measured in time or miles), as this factor has been and remains a critical contributor to economic performance.

Cities with less sprawl, as measured by commutes of 15 minutes or less, have ‘significantly higher rates of upward mobility’ (Chetty 2014).
THE LANDSCAPE OF JOB GROWTH

Job growth over the past 20 years in Northeast Ohio occurred predominantly in suburbs and the conversion of rural areas, continuing a long-term trend since the 1950s. Between 2000 and 2010 alone, regional job growth declined within and around Northeast Ohio's central business districts more so than other places in the country, as jobs became more dispersed and harder to get to (Murray 2015, Kneebone 2013).

Implications of this outward growth are particularly acute given a stagnant population. Although 88,000 jobs have been added to the region’s economy since 2010, progress in bringing jobs back to the region has been slow, with growth rates about 1 percent per year compared to 2 percent nationally.

The number of jobs gained since 2010 add up to only about 3% of the 187,000 jobs that were lost since 2000 (fig 1).

In order to understand if and how the spatial distribution of jobs has shifted over time, we use the latest data available to compare two years when the region had roughly 2 million jobs, 1994 and 2013 (latest data available at the neighborhood level). In this time period in Northeast Ohio, job growth outside of city centers far surpassed job growth within them.

NORTHEAST OHIO EMPLOYMENT IN 18 COUNTIES (in million)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>StarkWayne</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huron</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorain Trumbull</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashtabula</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portage</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erie</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medina</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richland</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summit</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geauga</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashland</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscarawas</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuyahoga</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbiana</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahoning</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fund and Team NED analysis of Moody’s Economy.com data for 18 Northeast Ohio counties.

Employment Change by Neighborhood Type, 1994–2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood Type</th>
<th>1994–2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suburb</td>
<td>+4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>-28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Metro</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Metro</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout the region, only suburbs experienced a net increase in jobs (albeit a modest one) over the period studied, while jobs in the cities declined 28 percent (fig 2).

Job losses were especially acute in economically distressed neighborhoods. These neighborhoods account for only about 5 percent of jobs in the region, but 26 percent of the jobs lost.

Let’s take a closer look at what this looks like on the ground. For a resident living in an economically distressed area of the Kinsman neighborhood of Cleveland—where the average labor force participation rate is around 55 percent and median household income is $15,788—the number of jobs within his or her vicinity declined by 35 percent from 1998 to 2013.

The discrepancy between city and suburban growth is not just an artifact of history. Data suggest that the outward growth of jobs in Northeast Ohio continued after the latest recession. After a brief recessionary pause between 2006 and 2010, job gains in suburbs once again outpaced those in cities as a share of overall employment between 2010 and 2012. While some recently published research suggests that job sprawl nationally may have staled early on in the recovery (Cortright 2015, Kneebone 2013), that does not seem to be the case for Northeast Ohio. The “stall” may have been true for the years immediately following the recession, but a downtown revival—while nascent and certainly plausible—is not enough to offset the overall trends, which swamp the otherwise promising results.

Employment Growth 1994–2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1994–2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss or No Growth</td>
<td>1–500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501–1,000</td>
<td>501–3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,501–6,000</td>
<td>More than 6,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AMATS and Fund analysis of Census ZIP Code Business Patterns data, 2013 and 1994, when total employment was about 2 million across 18 counties.

Data suggest that the outward growth of jobs in Northeast Ohio continued after the latest recession.
These are comparatively smaller than the number of jobs also declined in the average commute range.\(^{22}\) The number of jobs within the typical commute range of Northeast Ohio residents declined by 22 percent, meaning that one in five Northeast Ohio residents experienced a steep decline in the number of jobs they had access to.\(^{39}\) Between 2000 and 2012, the number of jobs within the typical commute distance of Northeast Ohio residents declined by 22 percent, meaning that one in five jobs disappeared within the typical commute range.\(^{39}\) Comparison of the number of jobs also declined in the nation’s largest metros, but by a significantly lesser extent (7 percent, or about one in 15 jobs).\(^{39}\) In fact, residents of the greater Cleveland area experienced the largest decline in access to any large metro in the country. Intuitively, it is harder to get to jobs if there are fewer of them. But in Northeast Ohio, one can also attribute the decline in access to the location or relocation of jobs further out from city centers. Proximity to jobs is especially dismal in high-poverty neighborhoods—the places where people who arguably need jobs the most live. More than a quarter of “accessible” jobs have disappeared for residents in high-poverty neighborhoods.\(^{60}\) These are the residents who are often in need of jobs, but seem to be the farthest away from where the growth (if any) is occurring. Research points us to an important finding: job access has declined for everyone—in cities, suburbs and rural areas—constraining workers’ and firms’ ability to reach each other. Even given the outward movement of the population to the suburbs, these data illustrate that it is still harder to get to a job today than it was in 2000.\(^{40}\) MEASURED BY TIME Commutes by public transit are “substantially longer” than commutes by car, affecting low-income people who may not have access to a vehicle. Relative to other metro areas across the country, Northeast Ohio residents consistently fare worse in access to public transit (Tomer 2012). In a recent analysis of access to job hubs (with hubs being defined as census tracts with twice as many jobs as residents), the nearest hub for the average resident by transit is 75 minutes away versus 20 minutes by car.\(^{40}\) In fact, the nearest hub is less than 45 minutes away by transit for only a quarter of Northeast Ohio neighborhoods (Murray 2015). Limited or lack of access to employers makes it harder for workers to hold steady, full-time positions, particularly if workers are already disadvantaged economically (Anderson 2014).\(^{40}\) Take, for instance, the commute of a resident living in the Central neighborhood of Cleveland to Solon, Solon, a suburb approximately 18 miles southeast of Cleveland in Cuyahoga County, has added more jobs between 2010 and 2012 than any other city in Northeast Ohio. For a resident living in the Central neighborhood of Cleveland, a low-income neighborhood just south of the city center, where more than half of residents don’t have access to a car, it would take 89 minutes by bus on a Monday morning (more precisely, two buses and 88 stops later) to arrive at his or her destination.\(^{40}\) Now imagine that was a part-time job, or there were family responsibilities added to that commute. This is not a singular experience. For the roughly 15,000 working-age residents in and around the Central neighborhood, 47 percent of those employed work outside of nearby Cleveland but within Cuyahoga County, with Solon among the top employment locations for these residents. Regardless of where residents in and around the Central neighborhood work, incomes are extraordinarily low, with more than 80 percent of employed area residents earning less than $40,000 a year. Conversely, 80 percent of people who work in and around the Central neighborhood live outside of nearby Cleveland and consume nearly all of the high-paying jobs in this area.\(^{40}\) The spatial disconnect between jobs and workers has real implications for an individual’s opportunity to provide for his or her family, apply his or her talents and excel in his or her trade. The inability for thousands of residents to access these opportunities, however, is not just a problem for the individual. Ultimately, it is the region that loses its competitive edge.
The Geography of Jobs

Measured in terms of access to job hubs, rather than individual Chetty finds the correlation between commute times and upward For historical documentation of sprawl, refer to Jaquay (1993, 1994); Based on analysis of nearly 1,200 tracts across 18 counties in Based on 2013 ZIP Code Business Patterns data for the Metro areas are defined by population density and commuting patterns. They include urban, suburban, and rural areas in large metros like Cleveland, Akron and Youngstown, and small metros like Canton, Massillon and Mansfield. In order to compare the distribution of jobs by neighborhood type, we borrow Kneebone and Holmes (2015) neighborhood typology, where “city” represents any primary cities of Cleveland, Akron and Youngstown and “suburbs” represent the remainder of the metro area outside of the primary city. “Small metro” generally represents metro areas with less than 500,000 in population and includes Canton, Massillon and Mansfield.

5. Based on 2013 ZIP Code Business Patterns data for the ZIP code 44104.
6. Based on a cursory analysis of 10 years of recently released LEHD data through 2015. Similar to the ZIP code data we used the Kneebone and Holmes (2015) neighborhood typology to examine changing among different types of neighborhoods year to year.
7. Measured in terms of access to job hubs, rather than individual commuting distance. Murray (2015) finds that the median average distance from NEO census tracts to the nearest 10 job hubs increased from 1.8 miles to 2.4 miles between 2002 and 2011.
8. Typical commute distance refers to the median commute distance for metro area residents analyzed in this study. Typical commute distance varies by the metro area and is approximately eight miles for Cleveland area residents of Geauga, Cuyahoga, Lake, Medina, and Lorain counties; six miles for Akron area residents of Summit and Portage counties; and six miles for Youngstown area residents of Mahoning and Trumbull counties.
9. Access is defined here as those jobs that are within a typical commute distance for that metro, referred to above.
10. Based on analysis of nearly 1,200 tracts across 18 counties in Northeast Ohio. Tracts are the densest geographical approximation to what we would consider to be neighborhoods.
12. Based on 2012 LODES data in this example, “in and around the Central neighborhood” is defined as 14 census tracts that encompass Central and the surrounding neighborhoods; “nearby Cleveland” extends beyond that and includes the Buckeye-Shaker, Central, Corlett, Downtown, Glenville, Goodrich-Kirtland Park, Slough, Industrial Valley, Mt. Pleasant, North Broadway, Ohio, City, South Broadway, St. Clair-Superior, Tremont, Union-Miles, University, and Woodland Hills neighborhoods.

In November 2015, the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland released some analysis that looked at this issue further, comparing levels of job access via public transportation by industry and skill type. It found that jobs in Northeast Ohio are the least accessible for workers with only a high school degree—workers who make up the largest share of the Northeast Ohio workforce. Looking at the issue from an employer’s perspective, the Cleveland Fed study found that half of Northeast Ohio’s top 10 employment centers have access to 15 percent or less of the regional workforce. What’s more, employment centers with higher concentrations of low-skill jobs tend to be less accessible,” with Downtown Canton, Elyria, Medina, and Solon having the unfortunate combination of high concentrations of low-skill jobs and limited public transit. (Barkey and Gomes-Pereira 2015).

As a region, Northeast Ohio must do more to ensure growth not only accelerates but is strategic and shared broadly across income groups. The answers are not easy and they are certainly not limited to, nor solved by, one sector. Northeast Ohio civic leaders must focus efforts on bringing people to jobs (transit) in the short-to-medium term, but also be strategic about where and how the public, private and nonprofit sectors incentivize business development over the long term. Some considerations for the short-term in 2014, the region completed a three-year-long planning process which resulted in a number of goals and corresponding “aggressive yet feasible” targets the region should work toward as it approaches the year 2040. Among the targets: at least 55 percent of jobs should be near frequent transit service (currently 50 percent) and 38 percent of residents should be near frequent transit service (currently 33 percent). If we continue to increase population and jobs, the hope would be that these shares increase over the subsequent two decades (Vibrant NEO 2040 2015).

To speed up the recovery and ensure it is sustained over the long term, decision makers in all sectors must envision an economy that takes the spatial landscape of jobs into account. That economy would be more broadly shared across the 18-county region, infrastructure investments would be more strategic, and job growth less diffuse. How can this be done? Establish more job hubs proximate to distressed neighborhoods and get rid of market distortions that subsidize outward growth to level the playing field. What else can be done? Keeping the conversation going. Over the last few months, the Fund and PolicyBridge, a Cleveland-based think tank focused on urban and minority policy issues, have worked together to engage public, private and nonprofit leaders to better understand job access and to solicit feedback on what can be done to improve it in Northeast Ohio (see “Roads Less Travelled” Brown, McShepard 2015). We’re seeing momentum build in the community around the issue, and a growing understanding that this is solvable. It’s time job access received its due.

For more information on how to support efforts to improve job access, contact us at info@thefundneo.org.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

Decision makers in all sectors must envision an economy that takes the spatial landscape of jobs into account.
REFERENCES


The Cleveland Foundation. 2014. “Building Opportunities for Cleveland Residents.”


Cortright, Joe. 2015. “Surging Center City Job Growth.” City Observatory.


REFERENCES

APPENDIX A

Data sources referenced in the paper, pertaining to payroll or “jobs” data:

DATA SOURCE | GEOGRAPHY COVERED | YEARS AVAILABLE (as of July 2015) | DESCRIPTION
---|---|---|---
LODES, part of the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program of the Census | Tract level, what we use as the best approximation for “neighborhoods.” | 2002-2012 | Comes from unemployment insurance reporting systems by state; represents 95 percent of private sector employment and most federal employment.

ZIP Code Business Patterns

ZIP Code: Place of work in the past year of persons employed in ZIP codes that were affiliated to one employer between 1994 and 2013, we deleted those from the analysis. Approximately 80 percent of observed ZIP codes remained consistent between those two years.

1994-2013 | Comes from IRS payroll tax information; ZIP codes are not geographic areas, and change at the discretion of the post office; data for some ZIP codes are given in ranges to protect the operations of an individual employer.

Moody’s Economy.com

County | 1994-2014 | Data aggregated by Moody’s Analytics

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere thanks to Robert Jaquay (The George Gund Foundation), Greg Brown and Randy McShepard (PolicyBridge), and Brad Whitehead and Sara Lepro (Fund for Our Economic Future) for their strategic guidance on this project. Additionally, we would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for contributing their time and technical expertise to research referenced in this paper:

Kyle Fee | Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland
Natalie Holmes | Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program

The Fund for Our Economic Future | www.thefundneo.org

“Living Cities Blog, November 12.”


Together, we advance our missions.
Together, we enhance our knowledge.
Together, we leverage our impact.

We are better together.