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METROPOLITAN OPPORTUNITY SERIES

Strained Suburbs:
The Social Service Challenges of Rising Suburban Poverty

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"Suburbs were home to a large and fast-growing poor population in the 2000s, yet many don't have an adequate social services infrastructure in place to address the challenge."

Findings

This report examines data from the Census Bureau and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), along with in-depth interviews and a new survey of social services providers in suburban communities surrounding Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; and Washington, D.C. to assess the challenges that rising suburban poverty poses for local safety nets and community-based organizations. It finds that:

- **Suburban jurisdictions outside of Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. vary significantly in their levels of poverty, recent poverty trends, and racial/ethnic profiles, both among and within these metro areas.** Several suburban counties outside of Chicago experienced more than 40 percent increases of poor residents from 2000 to 2008, as did portions of counties in suburban Maryland and northern Virginia. Yet poverty rates declined for suburban counties in metropolitan Los Angeles. While several suburban Los Angeles municipalities are majority Hispanic and a handful of Chicago suburbs have sizeable Hispanic populations, many Washington, D.C. suburbs have substantial black and Asian populations as well.
- **Suburban safety nets rely on relatively few social services organizations, and tend to stretch operations across much larger service delivery areas than their urban counterparts.** Thirty-four percent of nonprofits surveyed reported operating in more than one suburban county, and 60 percent offered services in more than one suburban municipality. The size and capacity of the nonprofit social service sector varies widely across suburbs, with 357 poor residents per nonprofit provider in Montgomery County, MD, to 1,627 in Riverside County, CA. Place of residence may greatly affect one's access to certain types of help.
- **In the wake of the Great Recession, demand is up significantly for the typical suburban provider, and almost three-quarters (73 percent) of suburban nonprofits are seeing more clients with no previous connection to safety net programs.** Needs have changed as well, with nearly 80 percent of suburban nonprofits surveyed seeing families with food needs more often than one year prior, and nearly 60 percent reporting more frequent requests for help with mortgage or rent payments.
- **Almost half of suburban nonprofits surveyed (47 percent) reported a loss in a key revenue source last year, with more funding cuts anticipated in the year to come.** Due in large part to this bleak fiscal situation, more than one in five suburban nonprofits has reduced services available since the start of the recession and one in seven has actively cut caseloads. Nearly 30 percent of nonprofits have laid off full-time and part-time staff as a result of lost program grants or to reduce operating costs.

Suburbs were home to a large and fast-growing poor population in the 2000s, yet few of the suburban communities studied have an adequate social services infrastructure to address the challenge. The Great Recession has exacerbated this gap between demand and capacity in the suburbs, as nonprofit social service providers have been increasingly asked to help rising numbers of low-income families with tighter budgets and fewer resources. As is true for cities and rural places, the nonprofit social service sector in suburbs can help these communities alleviate the worst impacts of the current downturn and future increases in poverty. Promoting stronger region-wide providers and better engaging charitable foundations in metropolitan safety net planning represent important strategies for strengthening suburban social services infrastructure.

Introduction

Cities and suburbs occupy well-defined roles within the discussion of poverty, opportunity, and social welfare policy in metropolitan America. Research exploring issues of poverty typically has focused on central-city neighborhoods, where poverty and joblessness have been most concentrated. As a result, place-based U.S. antipoverty policies focus primarily on ameliorating concentrated poverty in inner-city (and, in some cases, rural) areas. Suburbs, by contrast, are seen as destinations of opportunity for quality schools, safe neighborhoods, or good jobs. Mention of suburbs in conversations about poverty in metropolitan America typically revolves around efforts to connect low-income families in central cities to better homes and jobs in suburban communities.[2]

Several recent trends have begun to upset this familiar urban-suburban narrative about poverty and opportunity in metropolitan America. In 1999, large U.S. cities and their suburbs had roughly equal numbers of poor residents, but by 2008 the number of suburban poor exceeded the poor in central cities by 1.5 million. Although poverty rates remain higher in central cities than in suburbs (18.2 percent versus 9.5 percent in 2008), poverty rates have increased at a quicker pace in suburban areas.[3] In part this is due to sustained population growth outside of cities, such that the U.S. has become a nation where a majority of all Americans now reside in the suburbs. The two economic recessions that bracketed the past decade, however, have also contributed to the changing mix of opportunity in urban and suburban areas. More than in previous recessions, suburban communities have experienced rates of unemployment comparable to those in cities.[4] Moreover, the urban and suburban poor are quite similar in the aggregate in terms of their work effort and household structure.[5]

Strategies to address poverty in suburbs, as in cities, include both cash assistance programs and social service programs. Five cash assistance programs are particularly prominent today: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) welfare cash assistance; the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program); Unemployment Insurance (UI); the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); and the refundable portion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC). Combined these five core cash assistance programs delivered about $230 billion in aid nationally in 2009, driven in part by significant expansions in SNAP and UI that have helped millions of families cope with income losses during the Great Recession.[6]

Though these cash assistance programs deliver aid directly to people rather than places, many have expanded in recent years to meet rising poverty in suburban areas. For example, half the recent growth in EITC filings has occurred in suburban communities as more workers in those areas qualify for the tax credit.[7] SNAP and UI caseloads, meanwhile, rose at a faster rate in suburban communities than in central cities during the first year of the Great Recession.[8]

Of equal magnitude to the cash assistance safety net, the United States also spends $150 billion to $200 billion each year on social or human service programs that provide specialized services for low-income populations (e.g., job training, adult education, child care, substance abuse or mental health services, emergency assistance).[9] Most social service programs are funded by federal, state, or local government, but delivered by community-based nonprofit organizations. Even though they often get overlooked in policy discussions, social service programs provide essential help to millions of low-income Americans, including many who may not be eligible for cash assistance. Measures of social service program utilization are limited, but there is evidence that more families are seeking help from such organizations in recent years. For example, visits to food pantries are up 46 percent since 2005 and the number of sheltered homeless families increased by 30 percent since 2007.[10]

Unlike many cash assistance programs, which are available to those who meet eligibility criteria, there is no entitlement to social service programs or guarantee that programs will be offered in one's community. Instead, social service provision in cities, rural communities, and suburbs is inherently a local activity, relying heavily on community-based nonprofit organizations to deliver publicly funded social service programs through contracts with state or local government agencies. Even though they operate autonomously from government, nonprofit service organizations are integral components of today's safety net and are critical avenues through which the poor connect to the safety net. The availability of nonprofit social service programs varies from place to place, however, determined by levels of federal, state, and local government funding; substantive orientation of local nonprofits; the engagement of local civic leadership and entrepreneurs with issues of poverty; and the presence of private philanthropy.[11]

Previous research on social service provision in urban and rural areas highlights the challenges communities face in providing accessible and responsive programs to low-income populations. For example, urban neighborhoods with poverty rates over 20 percent have access to about 30 percent fewer social service program opportunities than the average neighborhood. Nearly half of nonprofit service organizations in urban and rural areas also reported a decrease in revenue in recent years. These funding cuts led about three-quarters of urban and rural social service providers to cut programs, staff, client caseloads, or close temporarily.[12]

Evidence about the social services infrastructure in suburbs, however, is quite limited.[13] To fill that important gap, this report explores the challenges faced by suburban safety nets primarily through surveys collected between June 2009 and April 2010 from nonprofit social service providers in the suburban communities of three major metropolitan areas: Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; and, Washington, D.C. It begins by examining the capacity of suburban social service organizations in these three metropolitan areas and discusses the changing needs they confront. The report then assesses the vulnerability of suburban providers to funding cuts and surveys the strategies they are using to cope with rising demand amid falling revenue. It concludes with a discussion of implications for policy and practice.

Methodology

This analysis combines a special survey of suburban social service providers, including in-depth interview transcripts, with publicly available data from the Census Bureau and IRS to examine the composition and coverage of these providers, and the extent to which the Great Recession has affected them and their communities.

Geography

This report defines suburbs as the counties and municipalities neighboring the largest city or cities in a metropolitan area.[14] Much of the social assistance landscape outside of big cities is tied to county and municipal boundaries. Cash assistance programs often are administered by county governments. Similarly, many government and nonprofit social service programs define eligibility according to the county or municipality of residence and administer programs within those jurisdictional boundaries. Philanthropic foundations also typically define their impact areas along county and municipal lines, limiting their grantmaking to specific urban and suburban jurisdictions.

For this study, suburban areas in metropolitan Chicago include municipalities outside the city of Chicago in Cook County, as well as DuPage, Lake, Kane, McHenry, and Will counties. Los Angeles suburbs include municipalities in Los Angeles County outside the city of Los Angeles, as well as Riverside and San Bernardino counties east of Los Angeles.[15] Finally, Washington, D.C. suburbs include Prince George's and Montgomery counties in Maryland; and Arlington, Loudoun, Fairfax, and Prince William counties, and Alexandria city, in northern Virginia.

These study sites were selected for several reasons. First, they yield diverse poverty rates and changes in the number of poor persons across suburban communities within the same metropolitan area.[16] Suburban counties and municipalities, even those neighboring each other, can differ significantly in these regards, producing very different needs and challenges within and across metropolitan areas.[17] These metropolitan areas and sites also vary in the strength and size of their suburban social service sectors. Because local government, philanthropy, and nonprofit service organizations shape which services or programs are delivered in their communities, these services can vary widely from place to place across suburban areas. Finally, this report builds upon previous research completed by the authors on social service providers in the urban centers of these three metropolitan areas.[18]

Survey Data

To better understand the current context for suburban social service provision, this study collected detailed information on the operations and fiscal health of suburban nonprofit social service organizations through four surveys conducted over an 11-month period from June 2009 to April 2010. A survey sample of 225 nonprofit social service providers in the three study sites was purposively selected to ensure adequate variation by organizational size, location, and service mission.[19] Organizations were included if they delivered direct services in one of several areas to low-income persons in their community: substance abuse; mental health; employment assistance; food; housing; children and youth services; family services; emergency assistance; and homeless centers.[20] Verification calls were made to each provider to confirm location and services offered, as well as identify an executive director or program manager who could answer longer survey questions. Of the 225 providers identified, 198 completed verification calls for a response rate of 88 percent.[21]

One hundred (100) of the 198 nonprofit service providers that completed the verification call completed a follow-up 25-minute telephone survey, a response rate of 53 percent.[22] Telephone surveys collected detailed information on client characteristics, services available, funding, changes in demand, shifts in program funding, and strategies for coping with the impact of the recession.[23] About two months after completing the phone survey, 76 respondents to the telephone survey completed a web survey that collected information on changing client populations and needs, as well as information about reserve funds and expectations of public program cuts. A third web survey focused on community collaboration was completed in February 2010 with 77 nonprofits from the original telephone survey. A final set of 77 web surveys was completed in April 2010 that asked organizations to revise their expectations about program funding for the coming fiscal year. Sixty-one organizations completed all four waves and 82 completed three of four waves.[24] In order to gain a more textured understanding of the everyday operation of social services in these three metropolitan areas, the authors conducted site visits and in-depth interviews with 17 agencies that participated in the initial telephone survey.[25]

Profile of Survey Respondents

Suburban nonprofit service organizations in the survey sample offered a variety of services and the median nonprofit we interviewed served 310 adults per month (Appendix Table A-1). Consistent with findings elsewhere, the vast majority of formal nonprofit social service providers in our sample—74 percent—self-identified as secular, compared to 26 percent that identified as religious organizations.[26] Reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of our study sites, about one-third of nonprofits we interviewed in each metropolitan area reported caseloads that were majority Hispanic.

Most nonprofit providers interviewed offered help with basic material or household needs. About 70 percent provide food assistance to low-income families, 48 percent offer some type of emergency cash or utility assistance, and 53 percent assist families with clothing needs or other household items. Roughly half of nonprofits interviewed work with low-income households to find affordable housing or make rent payments. One-third maintained temporary shelters or housing, often in conjunction with other services or types of assistance.

Nonprofits working with low-income populations in suburban areas also provide a range of more formal services that require professionally trained staff. Fifty-five percent of surveyed organizations provide job training, search, or placement assistance and 33 percent administer adult education programs in the form of ESL and GED or high school completion. About one-quarter of organizations offer out-patient mental health and/or substance abuse services. And nearly 60 percent deliver some type of family or individual counseling to low-income persons.

IRS Data

To complement these survey data, this study analyzes information from 2007 Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 990 filings of registered nonprofit social service organizations drawn from the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS). Data are excluded for registered nonprofits determined to be the national administrative headquarters of large nonprofit organizations, advocacy organizations, organizations that do not serve low-income populations, or organizations that only provide services to low-income populations abroad. Appendix Tables A-2 through A-4 report the number of suburban nonprofits serving local low-income populations operating in one of the following fields: substance abuse; mental health; employment assistance; food assistance; housing; human services; children and youth services; family services; personal social services; emergency assistance; ethnic and immigrant centers; and homeless centers (columns 1 and 2). These tables also report revenue data for registered nonprofit organizations that are classified in one of five key social service program areas (columns 3 through 7).[27]

Census Data

We use data from the 2000 Census and three-year data estimates from the 2006-08 American Community Survey (ACS) to provide the demographic context for our suburban study sites, including racial and ethnic profiles, poverty rates, and changes in the number of poor persons between 1999 and 2006–2008. Appendix Maps A-1 through A-3 show three-year estimates of municipal poverty rates from the ACS.[28]

Caveats

While they provide useful insight into the contours of the nonprofit social service sector, the data used in this report have some limitations. First, the survey of providers is drawn from a relatively small purposive sample and findings should be interpreted with that in mind. These survey data do, however, fill gaps in publicly available IRS data. For example, not all nonprofits registered under social service categories provide direct services. IRS data do not capture many of the smaller social service organizations that provide assistance to low-income populations in suburban communities.[29] IRS categorizations of nonprofit social service organizations are based on the primary substantive focus of programs and do not reflect the many other service or program areas in which a nonprofit might operate. Nonprofit data from the IRS only contain location information about an organization's administrative headquarters and not separate offices where services may be delivered. We removed entries for national administrative headquarters of large nonprofit organizations located in suburban areas to the best of our ability. Any nonprofit revenue data reported by the IRS, however, is tied to the location of headquarters, rather than where program funds may be spent. These IRS data, therefore, may miss many large social service nonprofits that operate programs in suburban communities, but maintain headquarters in a central city area. For all these reasons, IRS data may provide slightly imprecise estimates of the scope of services and program resources available in suburban areas. Finally, it is important to note that currently available ACS data do not capture the most recent demographic changes occurring in our study sites.

Even with these caveats in mind, we believe this unique combination of data accurately captures the challenges facing suburban safety nets nationwide. Not only are our findings consistent across the three selected study sites, but they also are consistent with the experiences of many suburban communities as they cope with the long-term impact of the Great Recession.

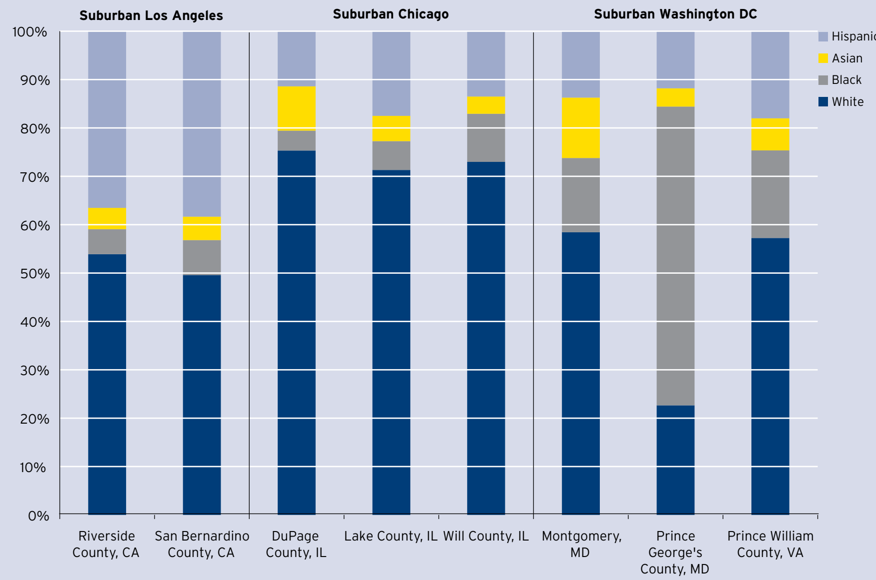
Findings

A. Suburban jurisdictions outside of Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. vary significantly in their levels of poverty, recent poverty trends, and racial/ethnic profiles, both among and within these metro areas.

The suburbs of these three metropolitan areas differ considerably in their demographic and economic profiles. For instance, Hispanics comprise more than 40 percent of the population in suburban Los Angeles (Figure 1). Several suburban municipalities in Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties are majority or near-majority Hispanic (see Table A-5 for detailed data). By contrast, most suburban communities outside of Chicago are predominantly white, although municipalities such as Cicero, Elgin, Aurora, and Waukegan have sizeable Hispanic populations (see Table A-6). Many suburban Washington, D.C. communities have substantial black and Asian populations. Prince George's County, MD is nearly two-thirds black, whereas about 20 percent of the population in Alexandria and Prince William County, VA is black. More than 15 percent of the population in suburban Fairfax, VA and parts of suburban Montgomery County, MD is Asian (see Table A-7).

These communities also exhibit diverse economic circumstances. County poverty rates range widely from 3.1 percent in Loudoun County, VA to 13.4 percent in San Bernardino County, CA, and to an even greater degree across suburban municipalities (Figure 2). Similarly, there is no one trend in poverty across time in these different suburban locations. Poverty rates declined during the middle part of

Figure 1. Race and Ethnicity in Selected Suburban Counties, 2006-2008



Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey

the decade for suburban counties in metropolitan Los Angeles and increased for each county located in suburban Chicago, while suburban Washington, D.C. showed more of a mixed, muted pattern. This variation in suburban poverty rates may reflect patterns of residential settlement, affordable housing, and segregation, as well as proximity to the central city and high-poverty neighborhoods within the urban core.

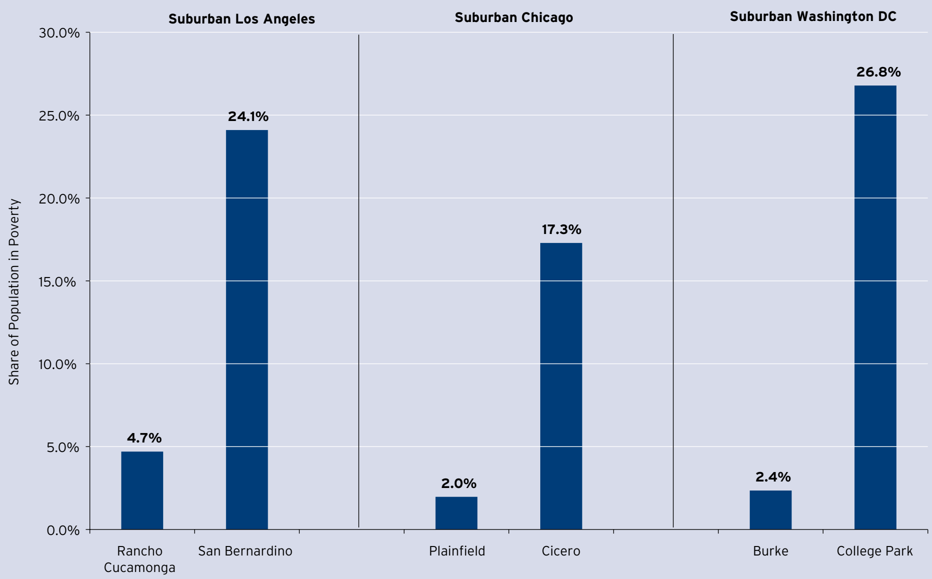
The recent acceleration in the suburbanization of poverty has also been uneven across and within these metro areas. Tables A-5 through A-7 flag those communities that have experienced more than a 25 percent increase or decrease in the number of poor persons between 2000 and 2008 to help identify suburban communities and their social service providers that experienced new stresses even before the onset of the Great Recession.[30]

In the Los Angeles region, the poverty rate is below 5 percent in the western San Bernardino County community of Rancho Cucamonga, but double that in nearby Ontario (10.1 percent), and more than four times as high in Victorville (19.6 percent) located in the mountains above San Bernardino (see Table A-5 for detailed data). Victorville saw a 71 percent increase in the number of residents below the poverty line between 2000 and 2008, while the poor population dropped by 19 percent in Rancho Cucamonga and 47 percent in Ontario.

Similar variation in poverty trends can be seen in Chicago. The poverty rate in Cicero, an older, predominantly Latino suburb west of the city of Chicago in Cook County, exceeds 17 percent. Poverty rates within other inner-tier suburbs of Chicago are less than half as high. Rates of poverty in Elgin, Joliet, Waukegan, and Aurora exceed 10 percent, while many of their neighboring municipalities have much lower poverty rates (Table A-6). Even though poverty rates remain well below 10 percent in most of suburban Chicago, every suburban county and nearly every one of the largest suburban municipalities saw dramatic increases in the number of poor in the 2000s. For instance, despite having poverty rates ranging from 5.0 percent to 8.4 percent, DuPage, Kane, McHenry, and Will counties all experienced more than 40 percent increases in the number of poor residents from 2000 to 2008.

Even in suburban Washington, D.C., home to some of the most affluent communities and lowest unemployment rates in the country, there are significant and growing pockets of poverty. Portions of Montgomery County and Prince George's County in Maryland, and Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William counties in Virginia, saw more than 40 percent increases in the number of poor from 2000 to 2008, with several municipalities experiencing more than a 50 percent increase (Table A-7).

Figure 2. Range in Poverty Rates Across Selected Suburban Municipalities, 2006-2008



Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey

These figures paint a brief but informative portrait of the growing diversity within and among suburbs in major metro areas like the three studied here. They suggest that, given the diverse starting points of these communities, recent increases in suburban poverty have likely occurred against a highly uneven backdrop of social service infrastructure. The next section examines the extent of that infrastructure and how it compares with shifting suburban economic realities.

B. Suburban safety nets rely on relatively few social services organizations, and tend to stretch operations across much larger service delivery areas than their urban counterparts.

Though many suburbs have experienced unprecedented increases in their poor populations over the course of this decade, social service program funding over the past 40 years has primarily targeted urban areas, where poverty has been most concentrated and persistent. Likewise, private philanthropic support for the nonprofit social service sector tends to target urban rather than suburban providers.[31] Thus, the capacity of suburban safety net and nonprofit service providers has likely lagged behind the dramatic demographic changes that have caught many of these communities by surprise.

Number of Providers

Consistent with these expectations and the lower population densities in suburbs compared to cities, suburban safety nets rely upon relatively few social service organizations. In the three metro areas studied, many of the suburban counties—which are quite large in terms of both land area and population—contain fewer than 100 social service nonprofits registered with the IRS. Most of the large suburban municipalities falling within these counties are home to fewer than a dozen registered nonprofit social service organizations (see column 1 in Tables A-2 through A-4).

However, unlike their urban counterparts that typically interact with one municipal government and one county government, many suburban social service providers stretch their operations over large service delivery areas that often cut across county or municipal lines. Thirty-four percent of nonprofit providers interviewed administered programs in more than one suburban county, and about 60 percent administered programs in more than one suburban municipality.

In such an environment, jurisdictional fragmentation poses significant challenges for suburban service providers. Such fragmentation makes it difficult to coordinate programs and services, potentially creating programmatic redundancies and inefficiencies. Moreover, the capacity and sophistication of municipal governments varies across suburban areas; not all have the size, resources, or administrative leadership necessary to be supportive partners for local nonprofit service organizations. Implementing programs across even a handful of county or municipal jurisdictions can be quite demanding, but the challenges are even more daunting for large suburban providers. For example, one regional service provider interviewed served the 13-county suburban ring of Chicago, which contained more than 600 cities, townships, and villages.[32]

Ultimately, our survey respondents often describe a thinness or fragility to the local nonprofit sector that makes it difficult to find partners or collaborators and better serve the changing needs of the community. An executive from an emergency shelter program in suburban Virginia noted the dilemma created when demand exceeds capacity and there are no programs for referrals. Her shelter is "turning away 300 people per month . . . [which is a big problem because] we're the only shelter in the area, so we have no one to refer them to." Another suburban Los Angeles nonprofit in our study receives several thousand calls inquiring about emergency cash assistance each month, leading an administrator to observe, "the problem is that there are only two other agencies in this area that provide utility or rental assistance—one of the major requests [from clients]." Thus, even with organizations working to fill gaps across multiple suburban jurisdictions, the relatively limited number of suburban providers means that the assistance available to low-income households may be determined simply by where they reside, with some suburban communities receiving a more generous or more balanced bundle of social service programs than others.

Ratio of Providers to Poor Residents

The ratio of poor persons to nonprofit service organizations, an admittedly crude measure of the availability of social service providers, underscores how nonprofit service sector capacity differs between and within suburban counties. For instance, the ratio of poor persons to nonprofits for counties in suburban Washington, D.C. ranges from 357 in Montgomery County, MD and 498 in Fairfax County, VA, to 729 in Prince George's County, MD and 1,338 in Prince William County, VA (see column 2 in Tables A-2 through A-4). Such variation also exists within suburban counties. For example, despite being located in Cook County and having comparable numbers of poor persons, the poor person-to-nonprofit ratio is much higher in Skokie (1,274) than in Evanston (311).

There is also evidence that low-income residents of some higher-poverty suburbs may have less access to nonprofit social service providers than those in more affluent suburban communities. The ratio of poor persons to nonprofit service organizations is much larger in the central city areas of Los Angeles (1,981) and Chicago (1,240) and in higher-poverty suburban municipalities like Glendale, CA (1,426), Joliet, IL (1,174) and Cicero, IL (3,648), compared to lower-poverty suburban communities such as Rancho Cucamonga, CA (813), Naperville, IL (369), Alexandria, VA (303), and Bethesda, MD (79).[33]

Nonprofit Revenue per Poor Resident

Nonprofit revenue data from the IRS provide another indicator of the availability of social service programs across the suburban counties and municipalities studied. Table 1 charts nonprofit revenue per poor person across five key social service program areas (substance abuse; mental health; employment services; food assistance; and human services) in selected counties.[34] When looking at these data, it is important to keep in mind that the presence of only one or two large nonprofit service organizations can be enough to create significant variation in revenues per poor person between suburban counties and municipalities. More detailed data are presented in columns 3 through 7 of Tables A-2 through A-4.

Several suburban counties in these metro areas, particularly those where poverty rates were very low for many years, exhibit a relatively modest mix of programs (Table 1). For example, per-poor-person revenue data suggest that human service nonprofits have a prominent presence in Will County, IL ($717) and Prince William County, VA ($580), but food assistance and employment service nonprofits report only modest revenues per poor person in these counties.

Nonprofit program resources also vary significantly within metropolitan areas and across neighboring suburban counties. Despite very similar demographic profiles, nonprofit revenues per poor person

Table 1. Nonprofit Revenues Per Poor Person in Selected Suburban Counties

	Nonprofit Service Revenue Per Poor Person				
	Substance Abuse	Mental Health	Employment Services	Food Assistance	Human Services
San Bernardino County, CA	$127	$111	$4	$11	$164
Riverside County, CA	$265	$15	$13	$171	$143
Lake County, IL	$117	$0	$47	$11	$323
DuPage County, IL	$773	$279	$43	$11	$895
Kane County, IL	$60	$258	$40	$739	$262
Will County, IL	$2	$2	$0	$3	$717
Prince George's County, MD	$52	$10	$645	$16	$189
Montgomery County, MD	$54	$414	$101	$101	$627
Fairfax County, VA	$49	$2	$293	$8	$652
Prince William County, VA	$0	$5	$0	$6	$580

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics 2007

Note: Figures reported are rounded to the nearest dollar. Values of zero indicate no reported revenues. Service categories reflect the following National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes for registered nonprofits: Substance Abuse (F20, F21, F22);Mental Health Treatment (F30, F32); Employment Services (J20, J21, J22); Food Assistance (K30, K31, K35, K36); and, Human Services (P20, P22, P24, P26, P27, P28, P29).

Table 2. Nonprofit Revenues Per Poor Person in Selected Suburban Municipalities

	Nonprofit Service Revenue Per Poor Person				
	Substance Abuse	Mental Health	Employment Services	Food Assistance	Human Services
Ontario, CA	$107	$96	$0	<$1	$14
Rancho Cucamonga, CA	$0	$0	$0	$33	$1,185
Elgin, IL	$187	$874	$0	$5	$367
Aurora, IL	$0	$0	$51	$9	$199

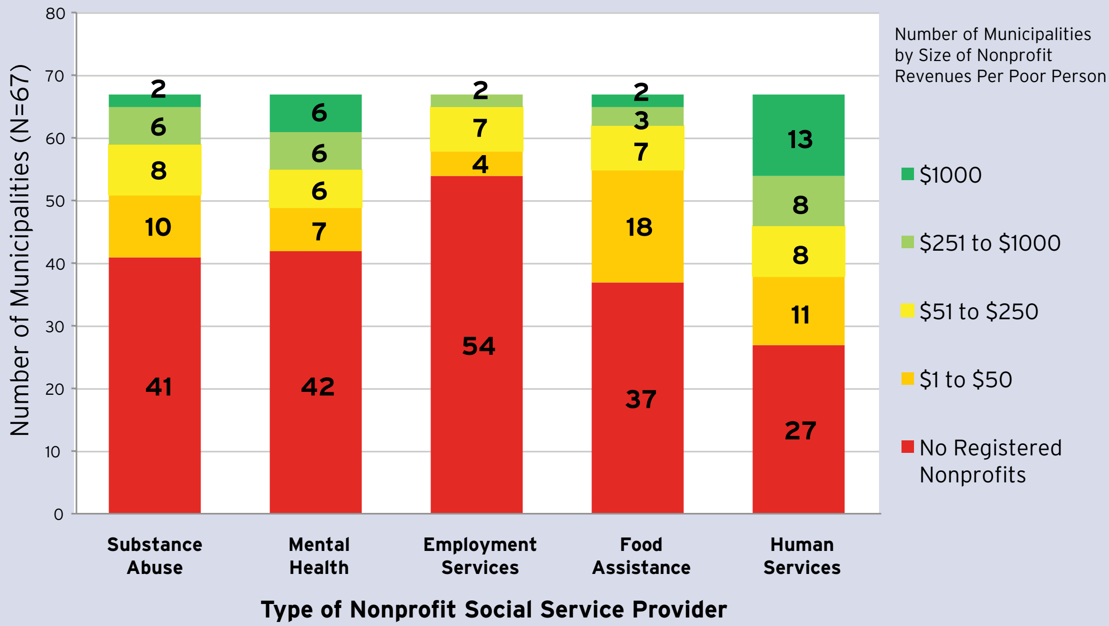
Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics 2007

Note: Figures reported are rounded to the nearest dollar. Values of zero indicate no reported revenues. Service categories reflect the following National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes for registered nonprofits: Substance Abuse (F20, F21, F22); Mental Health Treatment (F30, F32); Employment Services (J20, J21, J22); Food Assistance (K30, K31, K35, K36); and, Human Services (P20, P22, P24, P26, P27, P28, P29).

are much higher for substance abuse and food assistance services in Riverside County ($265 and $171 respectively) than in San Bernardino County ($127 and $11 respectively). Yet nonprofits in San Bernardino report more revenue per poor person in mental health services than those in Riverside. We find comparable contrasts in suburban Chicago, where DuPage County reports much higher per capita revenues across substance abuse and human service nonprofits compared to Kane and Lake counties. Similarly, Prince George's County, MD is home to only a few nonprofits with modest per capita program revenues, while Montgomery County, MD maintains a more robust nonprofit service sector.

Even more variation in per capita nonprofit revenue exists within suburban counties, with many lower-poverty suburban municipalities reporting higher nonprofit social service revenues per poor person than higher-poverty suburban areas (Table 2). For instance, in San Bernardino County, Rancho

Figure 3. Number of Registered Nonprofits in Selected Suburban Municipalities, by Type of Service Provider and Size of Per-Poor-Person Revenues



Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics 2007

Note: Figures reported are rounded to the nearest dollar. Values of zero indicate no reported revenues. Service categories reflect the following National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes for registered nonprofits: Substance Abuse (F20, F21, F22); Mental Health Treatment (F30, F32); Employment Services (J20, J21, J22); Food Assistance (K30, K31, K35, K36); and, Human Services (P20, P22, P24, P26, P27, P28, P297).

Cucamonga maintains much higher human service nonprofit spending per poor person than neighboring Ontario ($1,185 versus $14) where the poverty rate is twice as high. Likewise, some suburban municipalities with comparable poverty rates maintain very different nonprofit communities. Both Elgin and Aurora in Kane County have poverty rates of about 11 percent, but the registered social service nonprofits in Elgin report much higher per capita revenues across most service categories.

Most striking is the apparent absence of nonprofit service providers across a number of program areas in suburban municipalities. Figure 3 charts per-poor-person revenue of substance abuse, mental health, employment service, food assistance, and general human service nonprofits across 67 of the largest municipalities in our suburban study sites. Reflected in red is the number of municipalities without registered nonprofits. The remaining segments sort municipalities by the size of nonprofit revenues per poor person in a particular area (see Tables A-2 though A-4 for detailed revenue data by municipality).

It is striking that in each key program area, the bulk of municipalities studied have no registered nonprofit service providers, or they are home to providers with relatively modest resources given the number of poor persons in the community. For example, there were no substance abuse or mental health nonprofit service providers registered in almost two-thirds of the suburban municipalities examined (41 and 42 of 67, respectively). Similarly, 55 percent of the suburban municipalities did not have a food assistance nonprofit registered with the IRS. Even though there were more well-funded human service nonprofits headquartered in these 67 suburban municipalities, 38 municipalities either did not have a registered human service nonprofit or had nonprofit human service revenues under $50 per poor person.

Particularly notable given the current employment crisis, 80 percent of municipalities did not have a nonprofit employment service provider (54 of 67). Where providers did exist, they often reported revenues under $250 per poor person in the municipality.

While IRS data do not reflect accurately the extent to which providers in one county or municipality reach into others, these findings are consistent with survey interviews and suggest that many suburbs do not have the nonprofit social service infrastructure necessary to address changing need and rising poverty.

Sources of Revenue

Survey data indicate that suburban nonprofit service providers—like those in central city areas—piece together program funds from a few primary sources. More than eight of every 10 nonprofits received funding from government grants or contracts (Table 3). In addition, over 90 percent of nonprofits reported funding from either charitable philanthropic organizations or from private individual giving (cash or in-kind). Fewer than 15 percent of nonprofits interviewed received Medicaid reimbursements for services and Medicaid composed only a small share of funding for most of those providers.[35] For the typical nonprofit service provider surveyed, government grants or contracts account for roughly half of its operating budget, while charitable philanthropy and private giving contribute fairly evenly to make up the other half.

Gaps in suburban social services may arise in part due to the challenges some face in securing sufficient public and philanthropic dollars given their large service areas. One administrator from an emergency assistance provider in suburban Maryland shared her efforts to raise support from county government in light of the fact that many clients came from far outside the organization's immediate community: "Our county [and catchment area] extends to the fringe of DC. We had people driving all the way from there . . . we asked if county councilpersons are willing to help their constituents. They haven't been willing to pitch in, however. . . I give new clients outside of [our catchment area] the number of their county councilperson and tell them to call."

An executive director of a large faith-based nonprofit operating in suburban Los Angeles explained the difficulty organizations that operate inland from the city of Los Angeles face when trying to access philanthropic support: "…the inland counties received one-tenth of the charitable giving

Table 3. Revenue Sources for Nonprofit Suburban Social Service Providers Surveyed in Metropolitan Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C.

Receive Funding through Government Grants or Contracts	**81.8%**
0 to 25% of Revenue from Government Grants or Contracts	29.0%
26 to 50% of Revenue from Government Grants or Contracts	30.7%
51 to 75% of Revenue from Government Grants or Contracts	25.8%
>75% of Revenue from Government Grants or Contracts	14.5%
Receive Funding through Charitable Philanthropy	**92.0%**
0 to 25% of Revenue from Charitable Philanthropy	53.0%
26 to 50% of Revenue from Charitable Philanthropy	33.3%
51 to 75% of Revenue from Charitable Philanthropy	6.1%
>75% of Revenue from Charitable Philanthropy	7.6%
Receive Funding through Private Giving	**96.0%**
0 to 25% of Revenue from Private Giving	67.1%
26 to 50% of Revenue from Private Giving	20.0%
51 to 75% of Revenue from Private Giving	5.7%
>75% of Revenue from Private Giving	7.1%

N = 77

Source: Survey of Suburban Social Service Providers, 2010 relative to other areas in southern California. The point is that we have tremendous needs, but we don't have the economic base to meet the need. We don't have a coast. In Los Angeles, where there's a coast there's money—that's where CEOs want to live. Foundations, particularly local foundations, get their money from the local community."

Many nonprofit service organizations stated that being located in suburban communities with corporate partners and philanthropy was critical to sustainability and revenue diversification. Yet, many of the nonprofits studied are located in suburban communities with few potential corporate partners and few networks through which to connect to private philanthropy. As one nonprofit director in a high-poverty suburb of Chicago stated, "…the level of begging and groveling you have to do is just different [here] because you don't go to church with those people or you're not in school with them. . . . We put a lot more time and effort into it, and the fruit is just not there."

Suburban safety nets face a number of structural challenges when seeking to address the consequences of poverty and unemployment. The capacity of suburban safety net providers to address shifting need varies significantly from place to place. Many suburban communities have few nonprofit organizations to reach those in need and those in place must cover large geographic areas, which can often force clients to travel long distances to get help. Where one lives in the suburbs may therefore dictate one's access to certain types of help. The data show that few suburban communities offer a broad range of support services at a level commensurate to local need or comparable to what might be found in urban centers. Such structural features of suburban safety nets are particularly salient during economic downturns, but are likely to persist even after economic recovery.

C. In the wake of the Great Recession, demand is up significantly for the typical suburban provider, and almost three-quarters (73 percent) of suburban nonprofits are seeing more clients with no previous connection to safety net programs.

On the heels of longer-running poverty growth over the decade, the Great Recession has further increased need across a wide range of suburban communities. Nine out of 10 suburban nonprofits interviewed reported increases in the number of persons seeking assistance in the previous 12 months. About eight in 10 providers reported serving larger numbers of clients than a year ago. The typical nonprofit reporting increases in demand for assistance has seen demand rise about 30 percent between 2008 and 2009. However, nearly one-fifth of nonprofits reporting an increase in help-seeking indicated that they had experienced more than a 50 percent increase in the number of clients seeking assistance during that time.

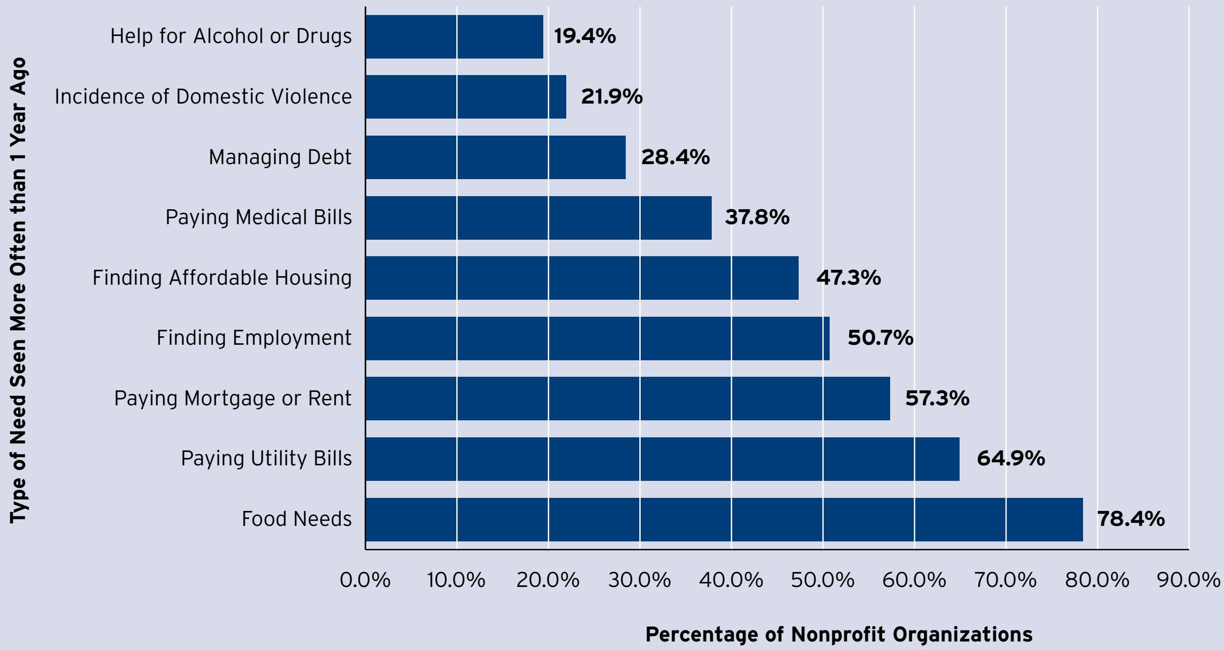
Not all increases in demand experienced by suburban safety net providers were the direct result of layoffs and rising unemployment. Thirty-one percent of nonprofits interviewed indicated that they had experienced increased demand for help due to program cutbacks or agency closures elsewhere in their community. Many nonprofit service providers recognize that inquiries for assistance are driven in part by caseload management choices made in other organizations. As one provider put it, "…most of our programs get clients through referrals. We're at the end of the chain of a series of decision makers. We see things that are happening [in the community], but someone else is sending us the clients."

Client Needs

Not only is need increasing in suburban communities, but nearly all suburban nonprofit service providers interviewed report that the needs of their client base have shifted in response to the prolonged economic downturn. Figures 4 and 5 chart the changing mix of needs and clients facing suburban nonprofit service providers. More than three-quarters of suburban nonprofits report seeing families with food needs more often than a year ago. The incidence of other types of needs has risen as well, with more working poor families seeking help with medical bills and instances of domestic violence.

Specific issues related to unemployment are more apparent now at many suburban providers. Fifty-one percent of nonprofits interviewed reported seeing more clients seeking help finding employment compared to a year ago. Nearly 80 percent of providers also indicate that more and more clients are seeking help after having exhausted their unemployment insurance (Figure 5). One workforce development organization in suburban Chicago reported that the number of clients seeking assistance in the past year increased ten-fold from 50 per month to 500 per month. As challenging, however, has been the change in the type of client seeking help—a shift from lower-skilled individuals to "…mid-to-upper

Figure 4. Share of Nonprofits Reporting Increases in Client Needs Compared to Prior Year, by Type of Need Requested



Source: Survey of Suburban Social Service Providers, 2010

skill level, looking for funds to retrain and some networking opportunities.... The lower-skilled individuals are not seeking services to the degree they had before, because service centers are saturated with dislocated workers collecting unemployment, [while] low-skilled workers may have exhausted unemployment and are going to other social service organizations for help with basic needs."

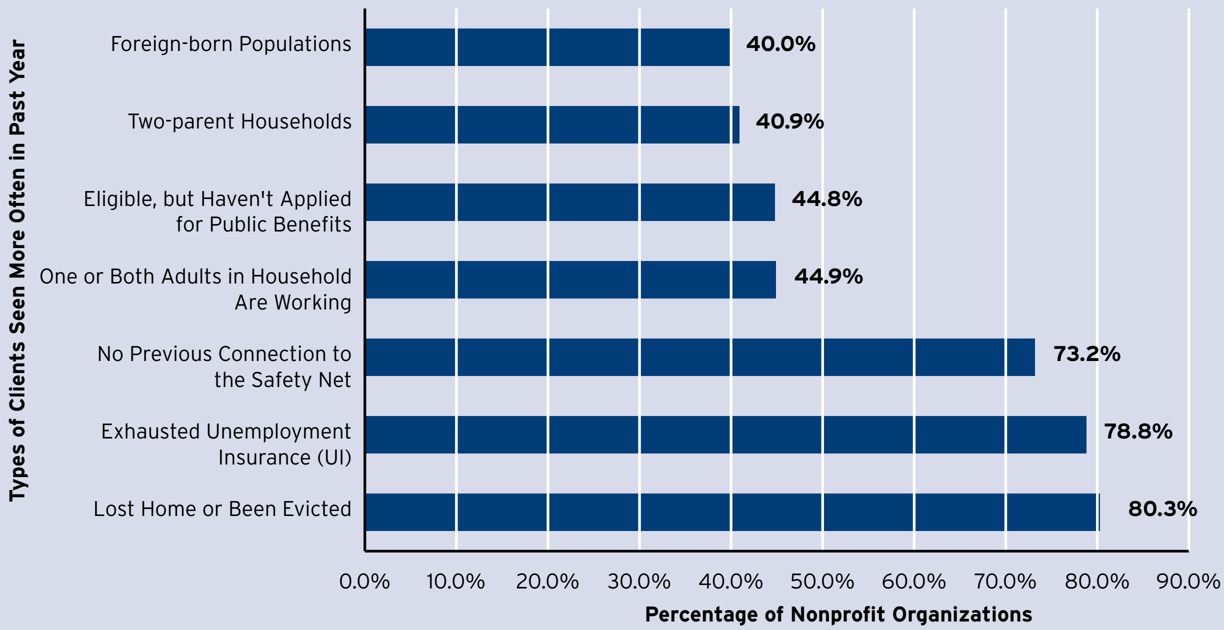
Job loss and the collapse of the housing market also have made it difficult for many suburban families to maintain their homes. Sixty-five percent of nonprofits report more frequent requests for assistance paying utility bills and nearly 60 percent report more frequent requests for help with mortgage or rent payments (Figure 4). Eighty (80) percent of providers report seeing more clients who have been evicted as homeowners or as renters in a foreclosed property (Figure 5). Yet according to providers in most suburban communities studied, there were few affordable housing options for low-income households.

Client Profile

The types of persons or households seeking help have changed in the wake of the recession as well. Seventy-three percent of nonprofits surveyed indicated that they are seeing many more clients with no previous connection to safety net programs compared to the prior year (Figure 5). A suburban food bank manager noted that the organization was "...seeing different clients this year—people who had been working 10 to 20 years that now don't have work." Such sentiments were echoed by an administrator from a small community-based organization outside of Washington, D.C. that provides emergency assistance and domestic violence services: "...we're seeing middle-class clients who are not used to seeking services. We're seeing people who used to be donors who are no longer able to give and are now seeking help."

Just as striking, 45 percent of providers report that many clients come from households where one or both adults are working, but cannot work enough to make ends meet. Another 41 percent indicated that more two-parent households were coming for help compared to previous years. One executive from a suburban office of a large faith-based service provider in Chicago reflected on the near-doubling of clients served in the past year: "...the face of the poor has changed, it is working families, people that are working and somebody is working two jobs or more—and they still can't make ends meet."

Figure 5. Share of Nonprofits Reporting Changes in Type of Client Served Compared to Prior Year, by Client Characteristic



Source: Survey of Suburban Social Service Providers, 2010

Few families seeking help for the first time know much about government assistance or community-based nonprofit sources of support. Forty-five (45) percent of nonprofits indicate that they are seeing more clients who are eligible for government assistance such as SNAP or Medicaid, but have not applied for such help due to lack of awareness or concern about stigma. A survey respondent in suburban Chicago observed that, "...there is a new group of people who don't know where to go for help, they are newly poor and don't know what to do."

Eventually, however, many such families do find their way to local nonprofit organizations. A suburban Los Angeles provider noted that they were serving more families that hesitate to "...seek help right away; they don't know where to start. We're getting referrals from churches and schools, trying to get individuals who've been laid off into the office sooner rather than later to get help with food and gas vouchers, so they can pay the rent or mortgage." An executive from another suburban nonprofit organization described the uptick in client caseloads in the second half of 2009: "...demand has really increased in the last month and a half. The people not accustomed... [to] these services are becoming familiar with the fact that there are services available; they are going to county [human service] agencies and they are getting referred to us." Delays in getting help, however, can exacerbate the economic hardships faced by low-income families.

Immigration

A growing share of needy individuals and families in these communities are foreign-born immigrants or refugees. Forty (40) percent of nonprofit organizations studied provide services for foreign-born populations more often than one year ago. Such trends are not surprising given recent increases in foreign-born residents across suburban Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.[36]

The growing diversity of suburban communities poses a number of challenges for local safety nets. While there are many providers serving immigrants, some suburban nonprofits see few local service organizations able to provide relevant services in a culturally sensitive manner. The director of a suburban nonprofit focused on Hispanic immigrant populations stated, "We are the only agency of our kind in the suburbs with a bilingual, bicultural staff tailored to the Hispanic community. We have people coming to us from [throughout the suburban metropolitan area]. For our immigration services they come in from Wisconsin and Indiana . . . There are no inter-agency coalitions among Latino-serving or immigrant-serving organizations in the suburbs." A director from another suburban organization stated "There are no other organizations with cultural/language delivery for Korean population [in this region]."

Such perceptions are manifest in the IRS nonprofit data for our study sites. IRS revenue data for nonprofits registering as ethnic and immigrant service centers indicate that 11 of the 14 counties studied have per-poor-person revenues of less than $50 for ethnic and immigrant service nonprofits. Moreover, nearly three-quarters of the largest suburban municipalities in our study sites have no nonprofits registered as ethnic and immigrant service organizations. While many nonprofit organizations may work with immigrant communities and not register primarily as immigrant service organizations, these data highlight the lack of resources specifically targeted at one of the most rapidly growing components of the population.

A few nonprofits working with Latino immigrants also described concern about the potential impact of anti-immigrant sentiment in suburban communities. One director referred to an agency in a neighboring suburb, "...whose main problem is that they have an organized anti-immigrant group [in their community]. I don't know how [the agency] can work when there is a rally outside their door saying they shouldn't help undocumented immigrants —that they should all be deported— and blocking funding, going to the city council...Thank God that's not happening here." Even if it is not overt, anti-immigrant sentiment sometimes lies just beneath the surface. Upon completing a large fund-raising event in the community, this same director noticed a series of anti-immigrant comments posted on-line in response to news coverage of the event. "People were saying 'these undocumented should all go back' and 'they like everything for free because they're parasites,'" she said, "It's scary. We know the sentiment is there."

Combined with the small number of organizations working with expanding immigrant communities, the "chilling effect" that anti-immigrant sentiment can have on suburban social service organizations is cause for concern. In addition to making it difficult for nonprofits to provide direct services to working poor families who are legal residents and citizens, it also makes it difficult for nonprofits to conduct outreach and serve as advocates—important components of their service missions to strengthen immigrant communities and neighborhoods.

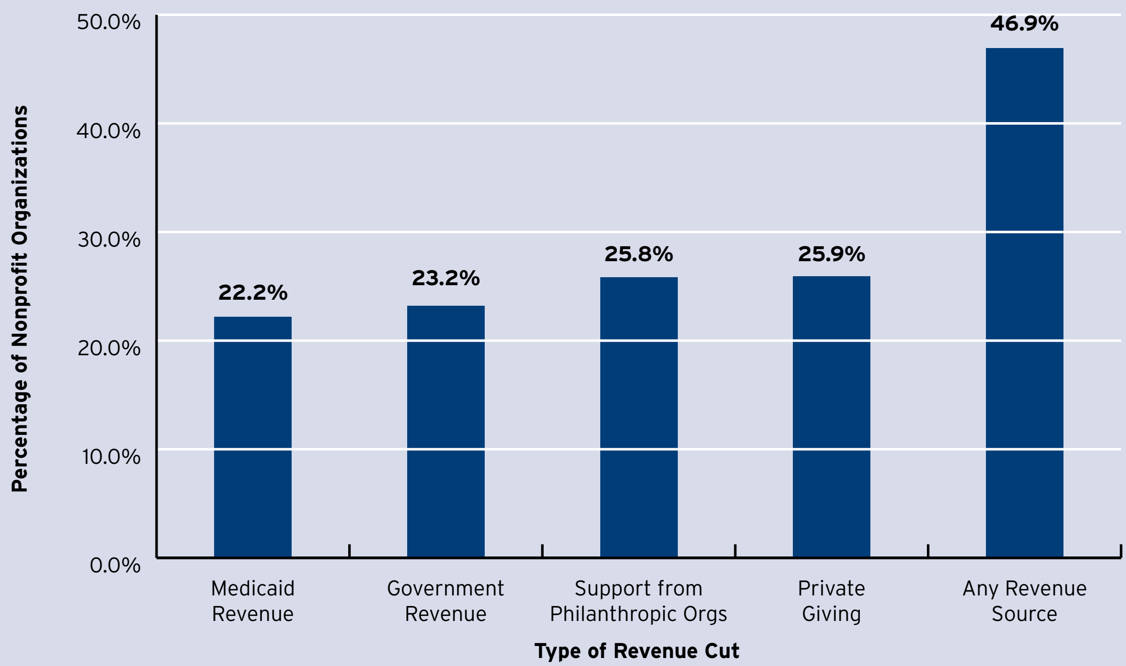
Provider Response

Suburban nonprofits have adopted a number of different responses to cope with increased need amid stretched program resources. For instance, 58 percent of nonprofit providers have been referring a larger number of clients to other organizations in the community. In addition to actively referring clients elsewhere, nonprofits have juggled rising demand by turning away clients and limiting hours when client intake can occur. A nonprofit service organization in San Bernardino County that has experienced significant increases in adult clients seeking help with employment, food, and housing, described the challenge of rising caseloads: "...we've had to turn away more clients than ever before. With the number of people calling for help, the only way to be really fair is to set up a day of the week when people can call in."

Another common strategy used to manage rising demand for help is to expand client waiting lists. Half of all suburban nonprofits interviewed reported placing larger numbers of clients on waitlists and increasing the length of time clients must wait before getting help. In such an environment it is not surprising that nonprofit service providers feel compelled to make determinations about the severity of need across applicants for assistance. About two in five nonprofits indicated they had to "triage" clients in the past twelve months, prioritizing those with more severe or acute needs. One respondent explained, "This is why our client numbers remain the same—more people are seeking services, but we can only help a certain number." A nonprofit operating emergency assistance and employment-related programs in northern Virginia explained, "We have not turned anyone away—but there are waitlists for certain programs." This same provider later noted that "anyone who has emergency needs is seen, but other programs—like our self-sufficiency program—have lengthening wait times."

D. Almost half of suburban nonprofits surveyed (47 percent) reported a loss in a key

Figure 6. Share of Suburban Nonprofits Reporting Revenue Cuts in the Past Year, by Type of Revenue



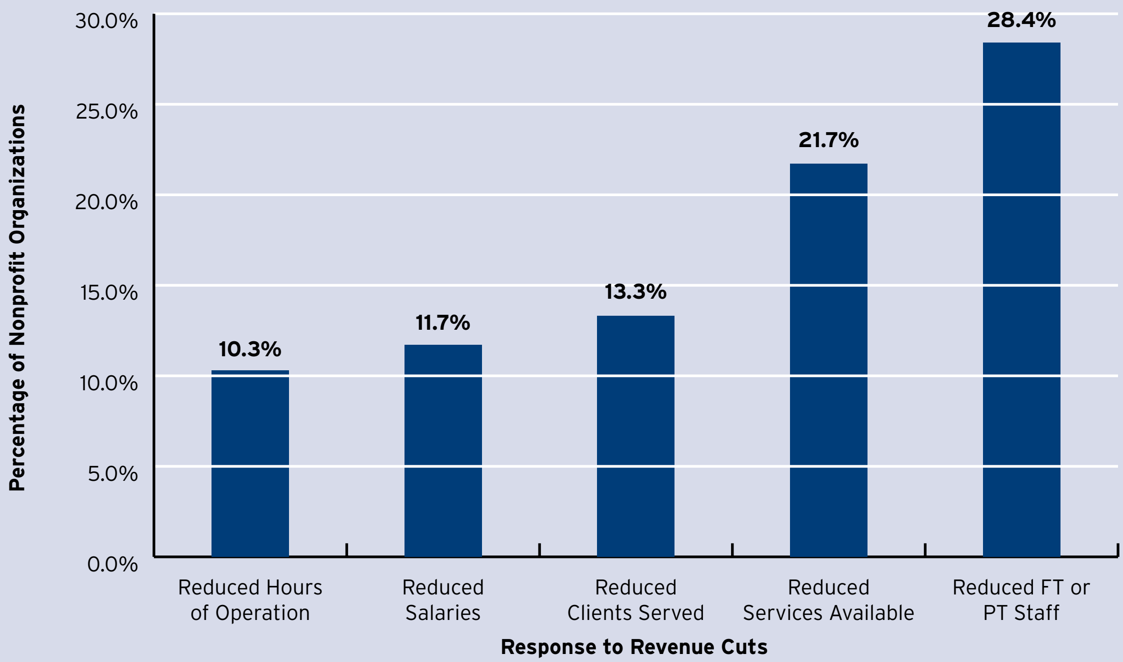
Source: Survey of Suburban Social Service Providers, 2010

revenue source last year, with more funding cuts anticipated in the year to come. The Great Recession has weakened both public and philanthropic sources of revenue, as well as individual donations, depressing funding for many nonprofit organizations right as demand for services increased. Most state governments, critical sources of funding for social service programs, are facing historically unprecedented budget deficits. For example, Illinois faces an estimated $14 billion deficit, while California is grappling with an $18 billion deficit. Each state has cut social service program funding by several billion dollars in the past year and more significant cuts are expected in the coming year. Although substantial, deficits in Maryland ($2.8 billion) and Virginia ($3.6 billion) are smaller by comparison, but will likely lead to cuts in social service program funding.[37]

Since the start of the recession, many suburban nonprofits have experienced annual cuts to their program funding. As Figure 6 shows, no one source of funding is more durable than another. About one-quarter of suburban nonprofits reported decreases in Medicaid reimbursements; government grants and contracts; grants from charitable nonprofit organizations and foundations; and private giving in the past year. Because nonprofit service providers typically draw on multiple sources of funding, the accumulated impact of cuts across funding areas is significant. Nearly half of survey respondents—47 percent—reported a drop in funding from any one of these four key revenue sources in the last fiscal year.

Such figures are consistent with other recent studies of the nonprofit sector. For example, foundation funding to human service nonprofits fell by nearly 13 percent in 2008 and overall giving by foundations declined by about 8 percent from 2008 to 2009.[38] One national survey of education, arts, culture, and health and human service nonprofit organizations found that about 60 percent expected government revenue to decline in 2010, and 55 percent expected funds from charitable foundations to decline.[39] In another survey of the nonprofit sector in metropolitan Chicago, 62 percent of respondents reported cuts in public funding, frequently due to delayed payments by the State of Illinois. Sixty-eight

Figure 7. Share of Nonprofits Undertaking Selected Responses to Revenue Cuts in the Past Year



Source: Survey of Suburban Social Service Providers, 2010

percent (68) reported reductions in charitable philanthropy and 53 percent decreases in individual giving.[40]

Although a handful of providers in our surveys reported substantial cuts in funding, most of the reductions in program funding reported were less than 10 to 15 percent in the current year. In many instances, however, lost funding has been difficult for suburban social service nonprofits to replace. Less than 40 percent of providers who reported cuts in one source of funding were able to find additional funding from another source. Moreover, many nonprofits indicated that decreased funding had become an annual event. Even annual cuts of 10 to 15 percent add up quickly over the span of two to three years.

Responding to Current Funding Cuts

Lower levels of funding have forced many nonprofits to curtail programs or scale back operations in the face of falling revenues and rising demand (Figure 7). Almost 22 percent have reduced services available since the start of the recession and 13 percent have actively cut caseloads. One suburban emergency assistance provider described how—when one of the five or six providers offering help with food or bills has no funds to disburse—the county government coordinates referrals for services: "They periodically put out a map to indicate which safety net organizations are responsible for which part of the county. We had a run on our services last November. We cut back on emergency assistance we gave to each client, but didn't cut back on number of clients served."

Another provider located in northern Virginia, exhausted by the stress the recession has placed on their organization, confided, "The question keeping me up at night is how much longer we can keep increasing our services at [the] expense of our staff. Our caseloads have doubled—and tripled—and we're doing more with less. I do a lot of begging to get donations for our food pantry, for example. And donations have increased, but not to match demand.... I feel like we're teetering."

Twenty-eight (28) percent of nonprofits have laid off full-time and part-time staff as a result of lost program grants or to reduce operating costs. Such strategies are often part of broader cost-cutting measures that nonprofit service providers pursue in times of severe fiscal austerity. A director of a suburban youth and family nonprofit discussed efforts to reduce overhead: "[We] closed one site to save money on facility costs and brought that staff down and merged them into the administrative offices. We closed another site because of transportation and facility costs, so we cut services. But, we tried to match those kids into other programs. Haven't filled open positions. Staff took a 10-percent salary cut in late 2008 to make it through fiscal year."

A nonprofit executive noted that the organization "…froze some wages at two points last year. All executives took a cut in pay, 15 percent. We elected to do that. In some of our programs we cut out a phone line, or eliminated a high-speed internet line, trimmed down on janitorial staff, et cetera." Underscoring the tone of many discussions we had with nonprofit providers, a senior administrator from a suburban office of a well-funded national network of faith-based service providers admitted, "We have a waiting list for utility assistance and we closed our child care office. We have no money for rent or water bills. We're reallocating resources away from social services to pay for building upkeep, salaries, overhead costs."

"The question keeping me up at night is how much longer we can keep increasing our services at [the] expense of our staff. Our case-loads have doubled—and tripled—and we're doing more with less."

Lost program funding does not reflect a lack of fundraising effort for most suburban nonprofit service providers. They appear to be working harder than ever to identify potential program resources. A faith-based service provider serving multiple suburban counties explained, "…we've never been so aggressive as we have been this year [sending out letters of inquiry to foundations], and have hit almost nothing. Our problem is not our accountability, longevity, or reputation, but so many of the responses say we can't fund your request because we don't have enough money. The rule of thumb was that you get one hit for every 10 attempts. Now it's one in 20. Many of them are saying because of hit on interest income they're not taking on new projects or agencies. That's really painful. Foundation and corporate money is really different… foundation or corporate dollars give nonprofits room for creativity and ingenuity. When that goes away, we might become mini-government offices dispensing government funds. We lose our identity as an organization." Not only do funding losses jeopardize programming and the availability of assistance to low-income populations, they also can compromise the integrity and mission of nonprofit organizations.

Impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Some nonprofit service organizations have been able to access funding from the federal stimulus package, or American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), but the degree to which nonprofits receive such support has depended on whether they were familiar with federal funding applications and whether they offered services that stimulus funds targeted.

In some instances, ARRA created new lines of funding and new opportunities to serve low-income populations. Several providers mentioned the importance of stimulus funds for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Programs (HPRP). A large suburban faith-based service provider in suburban Los Angeles explained that the organization "…had been able to obtain some stimulus money and additional Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) funds, so we have been able to help more people than ever." Another suburban southern California service provider working with Latino youth noted the importance of ARRA funds: "Because of federal stimulus money we were able to provide additional programming this past year for job-seeking youth. We expect to see more money earmarked for workforce development and green jobs [in the coming year]."

For other suburban providers, ARRA dollars have helped to soften the blow of other government program cuts. A nonprofit executive working in the southwest suburbs of Chicago noted that "funding from ARRA…replaced other sources of funding. Amounts have decreased but not as severely as would have occurred [without ARRA funds]." A suburban Washington nonprofit that offers a range of services for low-income children and families noted that it received ARRA funds that exceeded other program funding cuts by nearly two-to-one. Yet ARRA funds are not fungible and must be targeted to specific program areas. In the case of this suburban provider, ARRA funds to expand Early Head Start were welcomed, but left the organization searching for ways to adjust to across-the-board cuts in its other core programs.

In the end, ARRA may have only temporarily delayed important shifts in the landscape of social service funding. A provider located in metropolitan Los Angeles noted that, "I anticipate at the end of the fiscal year that we'll have more federal money than we've ever had, and less state money than we've ever had. That will be our government funding reality. We'll pick up funding from local government as pass-through money from the federal government." Since ARRA funds expire in the coming year, however, social service agencies that have received stimulus dollars will be forced to find replacement funding from public or private sources, or again face tough decisions about program cuts.

Opportunities, Diversification, and Strategic Planning

Even though many suburban safety net providers appear to be struggling to meet need and maintain operations, not all providers have experienced the recession similarly. Many nonprofits have seen the recession as an opportunity to expand their mission or tap into greater local interest in philanthropy for the poor.

Revenue diversity, planning, and proximity to wealth in the immediate area have helped some organizations weather tough economic times. Indeed, about one-quarter of the nonprofits interviewed reported a net increase in public funding or charitable giving in the previous year. As one food bank in an affluent Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C. put it, "More money, more clients, more food." A nonprofit in a neighboring suburban community echoed this experience, "Any time the economy tanks, our funding drops and demand goes sky-high. But, we're sort of insulated because we get so many in-kind donations. We had budgeted $250,000 for last year [in private giving], but got $290,000." Another nearby suburban organization working with immigrant youth anticipated that the recession would improve its access to public funding: "We expect an increase in government funding in the coming year because smaller nonprofit organizations are dying off and making us more competitive for grants."

Thoughtful strategic planning has allowed some suburban nonprofits to better adjust when the recession hit. One executive explained, "We were trying to be proactive [when the recession hit], so we did a 5 percent reduction across all programs. We froze positions and closed an anticipated $200,000 deficit by holding positions vacant." Such strategic planning also came with cuts to programs and staff benefits, as the organization "…cut direct assistance to clients, [and] cut some employee benefits. We have a $50,000 surplus now as a result. We drew up scenarios for 10 percent and 20 percent cuts, which helped us to position for the unknown."

Some nonprofits that did not rely upon public funding have weathered budget cuts, particularly in suburban Los Angeles where one provider stated that, "…during the mid-year county [budget] reduction, many providers who were counting on funding had to close doors or reduce client loads. We're picking up whatever we can. We're in an interesting spot because we had not used [government funds]…. We've expanded hours, hired new staff, increased salaries."

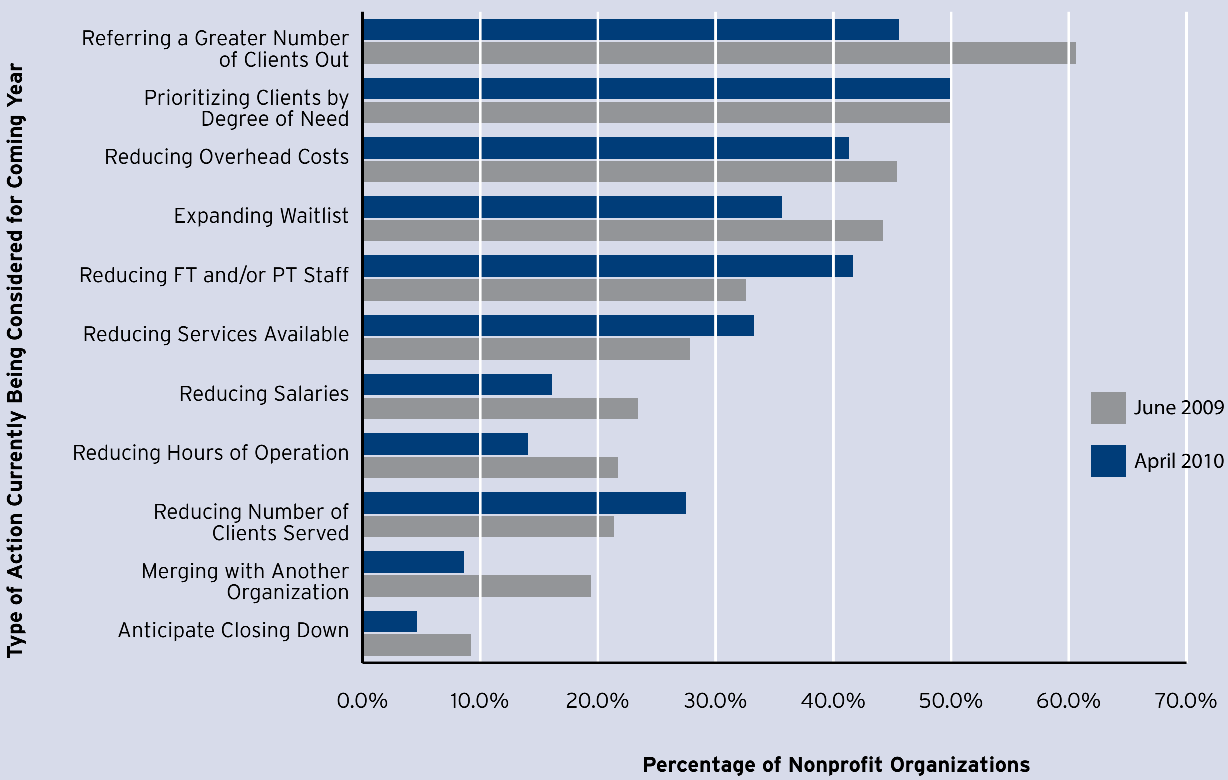
Responding to Future Funding Cuts

Despite signs of economic recovery, many suburban nonprofit providers anticipate difficult times in the year ahead. Apart from the immediate crises created by the recession, nonprofit service organizations are operating in an uncertain fiscal environment, particularly with regard to state funding and persistent budget deficits. In April 2010, 66 percent of nonprofits indicated they were anticipating reductions in government funding. Forty-seven percent expected revenue from charitable nonprofits and foundations to fall in the coming fiscal year and almost one-third expected individual donations to decline.

The impact of funding cuts and future fiscal uncertainty is clear from the survey data. Providers were asked about measures they are considering for the coming year at two different points in time—once in June 2009 and again nearly a year later in April 2010 (Figure 8). Whereas 28 percent of nonprofits interviewed in June 2009 reported considering cutting back on services offered, 33 percent indicated they were considering doing so in April 2010. Similarly, 21 percent were weighing reducing client caseloads in June 2009, compared to 28 percent in April 2010. The biggest difference was in the share of nonprofits expecting staff layoffs, which rose from 33 to 42 percent.

Perhaps partly due to a decline in the number of places to send clients, a smaller percentage of nonprofits anticipated referring clients elsewhere because of a lack of capacity in the coming year (61 percent in June 2009 versus 46 percent in April 2010). The percentage of organizations indicating they were considering expanding client waitlists fell from 44 percent in June 2009 to 36 percent in

Figure 8. Changes in the Share of Nonprofits Considering Selected Measures to Respond to Revenue Cuts and Recession, June 2009 versus April 2010



Source: Survey of Suburban Social Service Providers, 2010

April 2010, one small indicator that nonprofit service providers may be beginning to see a drop-off in demand.

In addition, compared to a year ago a much smaller share of suburban nonprofit organizations are contemplating more drastic measures. While nearly 20 percent of organizations interviewed in June 2009 indicated they were considering opportunities to merge with other organizations, only 9 percent reported weighing such options today. The percentage of nonprofits indicating it was possible that the organization would close altogether in the coming fiscal year fell from 9 percent in June 2009 to less than 5 percent in April 2010. Moreover, only a small percentage of nonprofits in our study currently are considering the possibility of reducing salaries (16 percent) or reducing hours of operation (14 percent). Such findings reflect the deep cuts already made and the limits to what can be done to trim overhead moving forward. According to one director working in the suburbs of Chicago, "the only thing we can cut this year is salaries . . . all non-salary overhead and operating costs have been stripped to the bone."

Conclusion

Our examination of suburban communities outside of Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. reveals suburbs to be quite diverse in terms of poverty, racial and ethnic composition, and safety net characteristics. Over the course of the last decade, many suburbs have experienced unprecedented increases in their poor populations, yet the nonprofit social service sector—so critical to providing help to the poor—has often lacked the capacity to keep up with these demographic shifts.

This analysis underscores the fact that few suburban communities offer a broad range of support services at a level commensurate to local need or comparable to what might be found in urban centers. Several suburbs exhibit quite high poor person-to-provider ratios and low per capita funding, and more than half the municipalities in our study did not have any registered nonprofit service providers in many key service areas. In addition, the Great Recession has exacerbated demands on an already strained suburban social service infrastructure. All suburban nonprofit service organizations interviewed reported increased demand for help and expanded client caseloads from a year or two ago, and for a significant share of these nonprofits, rising demand for services has coincided with program funding decreases, which have led to staff cuts and the reduced availability of services.

The absence of nonprofit service providers or the presence of inadequately resourced nonprofits will make it difficult for communities to respond to rising need and continued changes within suburban labor markets, even after local economies recover from the recent downturn. To the extent that nonprofit organizations cannot sustain funding or replace lost funds, many may be forced to close programs and doors. Suburban families in need will have a harder time finding help, possibly leading many to experience more serious economic hardship. Not only is there the prospect of less safety net help for low-income populations in the near term, but also there may be fewer sources of support in future years.

The composition of already strained suburban safety nets may change significantly in the coming years, particularly if there are not efforts to strengthen revenue flows, improve delivery of social services, and cultivate shared, regional approaches to service delivery. Overall, suburban safety nets run the risk of becoming reliant on fewer organizations that will continue to be under-resourced even as they take on responsibility for assisting more low-income families. To strengthen suburban safety nets, therefore, communities will be challenged to overcome problems of both resources and perception.

Perception

One critical step toward strengthening suburban safety nets is for local leaders to be more proactive in defining community needs and in educating residents about the work of local nonprofit service providers. Such efforts not only build support for maintaining or increasing public commitments to social service programs, but also may help attract private philanthropy. As one suburban Washington nonprofit described its efforts to increase private funding, "…it depends on how we market ourselves and the services we provide—and how we realistically tell the story of what's going on…. We try to be as compelling as possible." A respondent in suburban Chicago referred to the process of "defining an independent brand," which involves convincing suburban residents of the need in their own communities in order to capture funding that otherwise might be directed to more traditionally impoverished areas in central cities.

Collaboration

Several suburban safety net providers described building collaboration as one strategy to develop new and more sustainable program resources. A large nonprofit organization in suburban Los Angeles has worked to cultivate collaborative relationships with other local organizations as a way to provide better quality services to clients. In doing so, this organization "has strengthened partnerships with other businesses and organizations to maximize delivery of services and assistance to clients." Similarly, a large number of suburban Chicago agencies are participating in a call center that connects low-income suburban families to rent and utility assistance. The call center "…has dramatically streamlined the process for distributing financial resources to those in need," which has allowed program dollars to stretch farther than before.

"The only thing we can cut this year is salaries… all non-salary overhead and operating costs have been stripped to the bone."

Other suburban organizations are attempting to co-locate services to make it easier for clients to access a range of supports and reach more people within existing program resource levels. A relatively large agency in Maryland states: "We partner with a large number of other non-profits, and work to attract complementary services into our office complex. We currently have ten other NGOs [non-governmental organizations] here either full- or part-time. Clients are able to access mental health, primary care, emergency assistance, food, clothing, and transitional housing from the providers here."

Many of the agencies in our study spoke of building ties to local and non-local institutions in order to recruit or dispatch volunteer workers. For example, an agency providing services to families in Montgomery County, MD collaborates with community colleges and graduate programs to recruit interns. Other organizations we interviewed are relying more heavily on Americorps volunteers for what one director termed "non-professional program delivery." One employment-related agency in suburban Chicago reported that they "...set up a volunteer network for the unemployed individuals to keep them engaged and gaining skills while they are looking for new employment opportunities."

Inclusion

Fostering a more inclusive environment for working poor immigrant families is another particular challenge and imperative for suburban nonprofit leaders. Building alliances and coalitions with local law enforcement, politicians, community-based organizations, and immigrant-serving organizations are all potential steps toward creating such an environment. One provider in suburban Chicago described a new initiative meant to link organizations to provide a broader range of services for immigrants. Nonprofits also can work to change perception by building leadership capacity within immigrant and minority communities. Another suburban nonprofit executive described "...a Latino coalition in the community—there are banks and libraries and other agencies like churches, and attorneys. We meet once a month [to discuss emergent issues concerning the Latino immigrant community.]" One suburban provider points out that in her community, "...there are no Latino trustees, no Latinos on the school board, there's no Latino leadership." As a result she has begun to heavily recruit Latinos from her community to serve on the board of her organization and get involved as volunteers.

Problems of perception are key, but difficult to address in the case of immigration and safety net assistance. One suburban Chicago provider discussed ways to communicate what services for immigrants mean for the community and society: "It helps for people to see what we're doing [for local immigrants] and that it makes a difference. . . . So we try to feature those success stories, like the person who got her GED and now has a better job and can better help her family. We try to market our efforts to show that they make a difference in the community."

Social Enterprise

Although the Great Recession has exposed the vulnerabilities of suburban safety nets, for some service organizations there may be growth opportunities in emerging program or business areas. Several nonprofits reported pursuing social ventures that would fill unmet community needs and generate new revenue streams. For some this meant starting a new social enterprise or a fee-based program, such as a market-rate daycare center. A suburban Los Angeles nonprofit noted that there were many opportunities to develop social enterprise ventures outside of cities because there were not many entrepreneurial nonprofits. This particular organization was operating "catering for a cause" and was exploring social enterprise opportunities in real estate.

A Regional Approach

To reduce fragmentation across the local safety nets in metropolitan areas, federal and state government could support efforts to build and strengthen the capacity of regional institutions. One way to do so would be to develop a "Promise Regions" competitive grants process comparable to the education innovations emerging from the Promise Neighborhood grants competition. A Promise Regions initiative could provide planning grants to local intermediary organizations charged with fostering the development of regional strategic plans to better coordinate social service programs across metropolitan space. Promise Regions could motivate state and local government to reduce the jurisdictional silos in social service provision, while cultivating new service models and organizations better able to work across the metropolitan geography. Such an initiative could encourage new models for funding service programs that would create efficiency and reduced overhead, remove jurisdictional hoops that nonprofits must pass through to receive support, and minimize inter-jurisdictional competition.

Metropolitan leaders should also encourage charitable foundations to reach beyond the central city and establish a stronger presence in suburban areas. Not only would greater involvement of charitable foundations inject needed resources into suburban safety nets, but it could pave the way for stronger private fundraising efforts among suburban nonprofit organizations. Moreover, charitable foundations can play an important role in strengthening suburban safety nets beyond the allocation of program dollars. Locally-based foundations have significant convening power and are able to bring together diverse groups of community leaders to address pressing issues. Foundations also can help cultivate new leadership within the suburban social service sector and support development of social innovations that can reduce poverty.

Continued discussion of suburban poverty and stronger suburban safety nets should not occur in isolation from consideration of the durable, persistent high rates of poverty in central cities and the challenges facing urban social service organizations. No solution to strengthening suburban safety nets should diminish the needs of cities or drain resources away from deeply impoverished inner-city neighborhoods. Given the ease with which populations and employment opportunities move across urban and suburban jurisdictional boundaries, we should consider how to craft service delivery in line with the ever-shifting metropolitan geography of opportunity and poverty in metropolitan America. Moreover, since urban centers have developed fairly sophisticated social service delivery networks over the past four decades, lessons from cities can aid communities as they seek to better support suburban social service providers.

Regardless of their location within metropolitan America, many safety net providers face uncertain futures. The relatively small numbers of nonprofit providers that operate in suburban communities have faced the daunting challenge of serving new safety net clientele amidst unpredictable funding streams and persistently high rates of unemployment. Even as economic recovery emerges, many suburban providers interviewed here remain concerned that levels of need will persist and possibly continue to grow. Sturdy suburban safety nets and nonprofit social service sectors will be critical, however, to help communities alleviate the worst social and economic effects of this downturn and to meet the ongoing needs of a poor population that is increasingly suburban.

"It helps for people to see what we're doing [for local immigrants] and that it makes a difference.... We try to market our efforts to show that they make a difference in the community."

Appendix Table A-1. Characteristics of Nonprofit Suburban Social Service Providers Surveyed in Metropolitan Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C.

Median Adult Monthly Caseload	310
Median Child Monthly Caseload	200
Religious Nonprofit (%)	26.0
Secular Nonprofit (%)	74.0
Services Offered	%
Food Assistance or Meals	68.4
Family or Individual Counseling	57.1
Job Training, Search, or Placement	54.6
Youth Programs	54.1
Clothing or Household Items	53.1
Assistance Finding Affordable Housing	49.0
Emergency Cash or Utility Assistance	48.0
Assistance Paying Rent	43.9
GED, ESL, or High School Completion	32.7
Temporary Shelter or Housing	31.6
Senior Programs	30.6
Out-patient Mental health	27.6
Programs for Ex-offenders	21.4
Out-patient Substance Abuse	19.4
Physical and/or Developmental Disability	14.3
Offer 2-5 different services (%)	28.6
Offer 6 or more different services (%)	50.0
Annual Budget	%
More than $1 million	45.7
$1 million to $200,000	28.7
$200,000 to $50,000	20.2
Less than $50,000	5.3
Location	%
Metropolitan Chicago	33.7
Metropolitan Los Angeles	29.6
Metropolitan Washington, D.C.	36.7

N = 98

Source: Survey of Suburban Social Service Providers, 2010

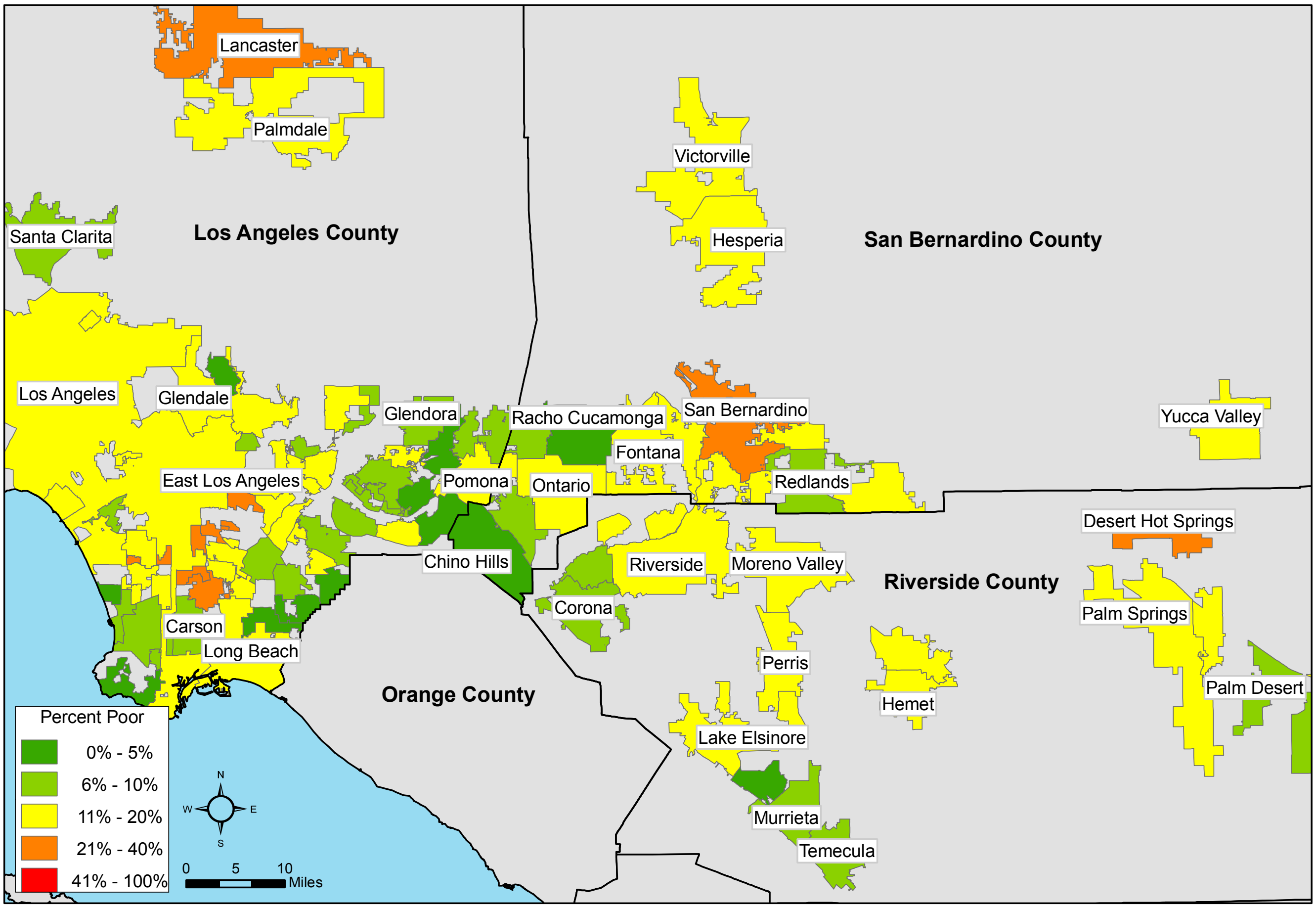
Appendix Table A-2. Characteristics of Nonprofit Safety Net in Suburban Los Angeles

County/Municipality	Number of Registered Nonprofit Social Service Organizations (1)	Number of Poor Persons Per Social Service Nonprofit (2)	Nonprofit Substance Abuse Revenue Per Poor Person (3)	Nonprofit Mental Health Revenue Per Poor Person (4)	Nonprofit Employment Service Revenue Per Poor Person (5)	Nonprofit Food Assistance Revenue Per Poor Person (6)	Nonmprofit Human Service Revenue Per Poor Person (7)
Los Angeles County	**1,037**	**1,406**	**$120**	**$245**	**$103**	**$78**	**$408**
City of Los Angeles	352	1,981	$99	$176	$76	$74	$520
Long Beach	71	1,222	$3	$230	$87	$638	$483
Glendale	18	1,426	$2	$333	--	--	$233
Santa Clarita*	12	1,017	$110	$754	--	--	$41
Lancaster*	10	2,984	$22	$57	--	--	--
Pomona	14	1,723	$35	$23	$38	$2	$96
Riverside County	**152**	**1,627**	**$265**	**$15**	**$13**	**$171**	**$143**
Riverside	35	1,095	$509	$7	$59	$788	$526
Moreno Valley*	12	2,408	$49	--	$2	--	$97
Corona	13	973	$11	$37	--	$5	$199
Murrieta*	5	1,116	--	--	--	$15	--
Temecula*	8	732	--	--	--	--	$17
San Bernardino County	**174**	**1,504**	**$127**	**$111**	**$4**	**$11**	**$164**
San Bernardino	32	1,531	$242	--	--	$17	$348
Fontana	8	2,471	$16	$23	$7	--	--
Ontario**	10	1,634	$107	$96	--	<$1	$14
Rancho Cucamonga	9	813	--	--	--	$33	$1,185
Victorville*	7	2,907	$113	$6	--	$41	--

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics 2007; 2006-2008 American Community Survey
**More than 25% increase in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*
***More than 25% decrease in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*

Note: Municipalities listed in each county are the largest based on 2006-08 population estimates. Columns 1 and 2 reflect nonprofit organizations categorized as one of the following National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes: Substance Abuse Dependency, Prevention, & Treatment (F20, F21, F22); Mental Health Treatment (F30, F32); Employment Preparation & Procurement (J20, J21, J22); Food Assistance Programs (K30, K31, K35, K36); Temporary Housing (L40, L41); Human Services (P20, P22, P24, P26, P27,P28, P29); Children & Youth Services (P30, P31, P32, P33); Family Services (P40, P42, P43, P45, P46); Personal Social Services (P50, P51, P52, P58); Emergency Assistance (P60, P61, P62); Ethnic & Immigrant Centers (P84); and, Homeless Centers (P85). Revenue figures are rounded to the nearest dollar. "--" indicates no registered nonprofit organizations or revenues.

Appendix Map A-2



Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey

Appendix Table A-3. Characteristics of Nonprofit Safety Net in Suburban Chicago

County/Municipality	Number of Registered Nonprofit Social Service Organizations (1)	Number of Poor Persons Per Social Service Nonprofit (2)	Nonprofit Substance Abuse Revenue Per Poor Person (3)	Nonprofit Mental Health Revenue Per Poor Person (4)	Nonprofit Employment Service Revenue Per Poor Person (5)	Nonprofit Food Assistance Revenue Per Poor Person (6)	Nonmprofit Human Service Revenue Per Poor Person (7)
Cook County	**671**	**1,140**	**$212**	**$196**	**$124**	**$97**	**$865**
City of Chicago	444	1,240	$272	$113	$134	$133	$957
Cicero	4	3,648	--	$78	--	$5	$31
Arlington Heights*	6	554	--	$1,351	$548	--	--
Evanston	20	311	$298	$383	$85	--	$1,962
Hoffman Estates	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Skokie*	4	1,274	--	$480	--	--	--
Schaumburg*	5	726	--	$20	--	--	$800
DuPage County*	**98**	**469**	**$773**	**$279**	**$43**	**$11**	**$895**
Naperville*	13	369	$22	$7,429	--	--	$4,218
Wheaton*	14	165	--	$4,853	--	$43	$2,072
Downers Grove*	11	133	--	--	--	--	$2,768
Lombard	4	312	--	--	--	--	$446
Elmhurst*	2	839	--	--	--	--	$33
Kane County*	**50**	**820**	**$60**	**$258**	**$40**	**$739**	**$262**
Elgin*	15	765	$187	$874	--	$5	$367
Aurora*	15	1,299	--	--	$51	$9	$199
Carpentersville	1	3,013	--	--	--	$33	--
St. Charles*	3	655	$154	--	--	$15,159	$1,203
Batavia*	2	694	--	--	--	$66	$26
Lake County	**63**	**702**	**$117**	**--**	**$47**	**$11**	**$323**
Waukegan	9	1,167	--	--	$49	--	$1,121
Buffalo Grove	2	446	--	--	--	--	--
Wheeling*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Gurnee*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mundelein	1	1,311	--	--	--	--	--
McHenry County*	**25**	**704**	**$66**	**$394**	**$4**	**$34**	**$135**
Crystal Lake*	7	304	$464	--	--	$140	$1,090
Lake in the Hills*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
McHenry*	4	664	$37	$2,615	--	--	--
Woodstock*	6	373	$31	--	--	$35	--
Will County*	**36**	**1,104**	**$2**	**$2**	**--**	**$3**	**$717**
Joliet*	13	1,174	--	--	--	--	$1,848
Romeoville*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Plainfield*	3	231	--	--	--	$160	--
Park Forest*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
New Lenox*	1	773	--	--	--	--	--

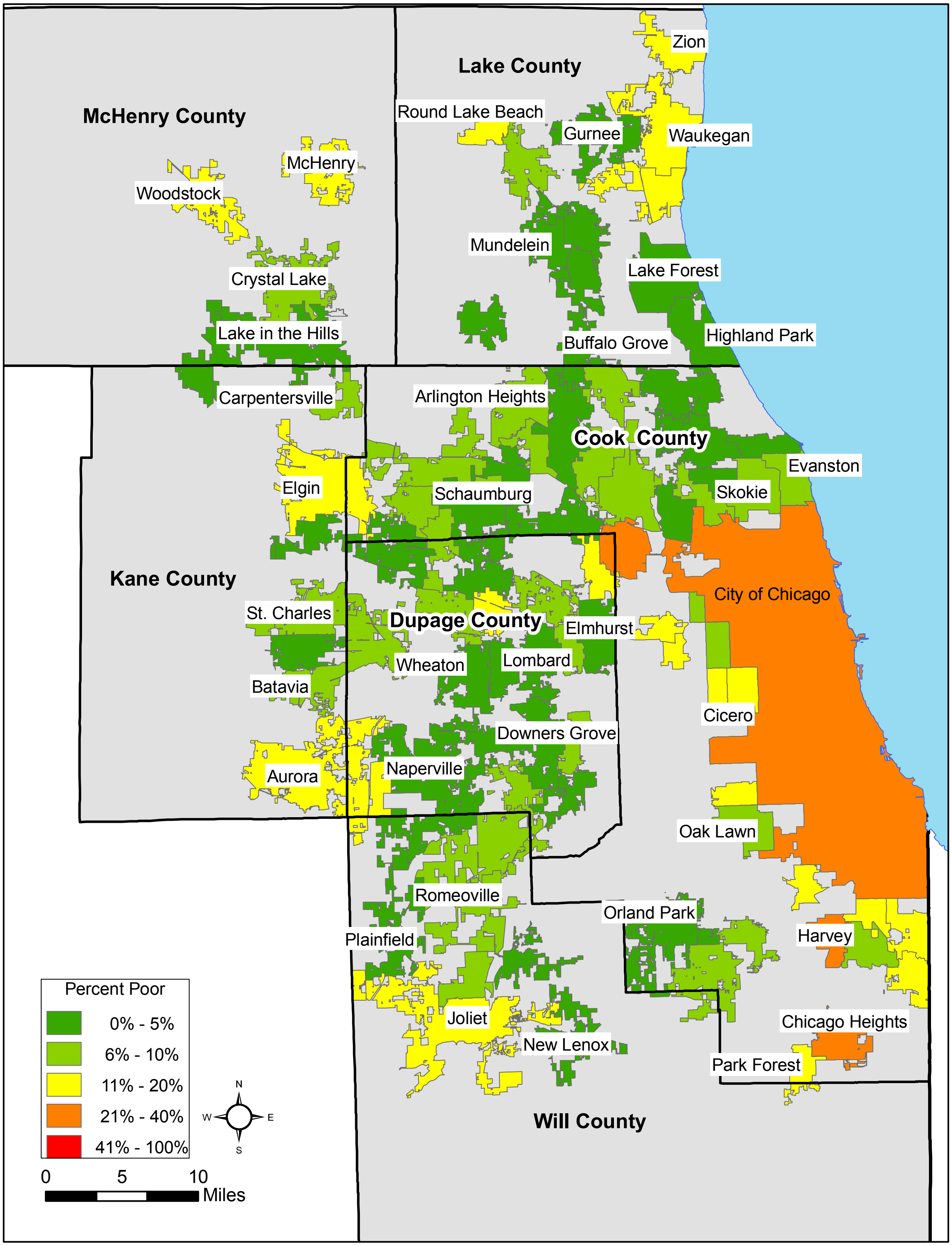
Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics 2007; 2006-2008 American Community Survey

**More than 25% increase in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*

***More than 25% decrease in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*

Note: Municipalities listed in each county are the largest based on 2006-08 population estimates. Columns 1 and 2 reflect nonprofit organizations categorized as one of the following National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes: Substance Abuse Dependency, Prevention, & Treatment (F20, F21, F22); Mental Health Treatment (F30, F32); Employment Preparation & Procurement (J20, J21, J22); Food Assistance Programs (K30, K31, K35, K36); Temporary Housing (L40, L41); Human Services (P20, P22, P24, P26, P27,P28, P29); Children & Youth Services (P30, P31, P32, P33); Family Services (P40, P42, P43, P45, P46); Personal Social Services (P50, P51, P52, P58); Emergency Assistance (P60, P61, P62); Ethnic & Immigrant Centers (P84); and, Homeless Centers (P85). Revenue figures are rounded to the nearest dollar. "--" indicates no registered nonprofit organizations or revenues.

Appendix Map A-3



Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey

Appendix Table A-4. Characteristics of Nonprofit Safety Net in Suburban Washington, D.C.

County/Municipality	Number of Registered Nonprofit Social Service Organizations (1)	Number of Poor Persons Per Social Service Nonprofit (2)	Nonprofit Substance Abuse Revenue Per Poor Person (3)	Nonprofit Mental Health Revenue Per Poor Person (4)	Nonprofit Employment Service Revenue Per Poor Person (5)	Nonprofit Food Assistance Revenue Per Poor Person (6)	Nonmprofit Human Service Revenue Per Poor Person (7)
Washington, D.C.	**277**	**358**	**$101**	**$463**	**$603**	**$627**	**$1,834**
Montgomery County, MD	**135**	**357**	**$54**	**$414**	**$101**	**$101**	**$627**
Silver Spring	34	175	$54	$72	$407	$16	$610
Germantown*	3	1240	--	$608	--	$27	--
Bethesda	20	79	$1,085	$5,737	--	$51	$49
Rockville**	26	83	$80	$107	--	$1,938	$12,129
Gaithersburg	14	219	--	--	--	$60	$8
Alexandria	31	303	$680	$912	$232	$363	$299
Arlington	18	760	$492	--	$160	$177	$6
Fairfax County, VA	**101**	**498**	**$49**	**$2**	**$293**	**$8**	**$652**
Burke	--		--	--	--	--	--
Annandale**	10	235	--	--	--	--	$2,041
Centreville*	--		--	--	--	--	--
Chantilly*	5	294	--	--	--	--	$4,171
McLean	22	41	$2,461	--	--	--	$66
Fairfax**	7	113	--	--	--	--	$2,531
Loudoun County, VA	**14**	**620**	**--**	**--**	**$34**	**--**	**$33**
Leesburg*	6	390	--	--	$127	--	$84
Prince George's County, MD	**82**	**729**	**$42**	**$10**	**$280**	**$16**	**$189**
Bowie*	7	291	--	--	--	$100	$336
Laurel*	4	401	$893	--	--	$26	$16
Greenbelt**	2	609	--	--	--	--	--
College Park*	2	3679	--	--	--	$1	$8
Prince William County, VA*	**15**	**1159**	**--**	**$5**	**--**	**$6**	**$580**
Dale City*	--		--	--	--	--	--
Woodbridge*	3	849	--	$36	--	$41	--
Lake Ridge	--		--	--	--	--	--
Linton Hall*	--		--	--	--	--	--

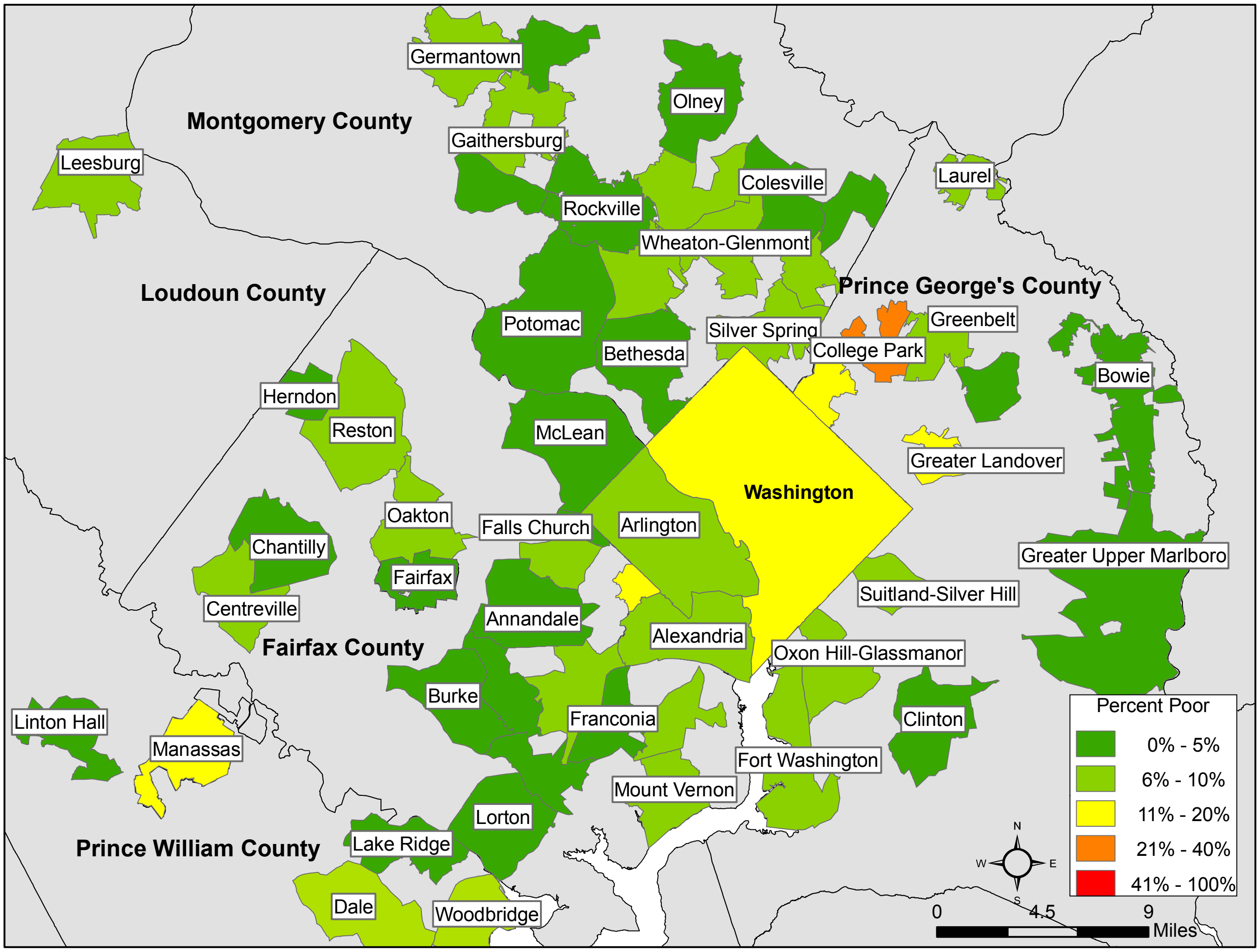
Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics 2007; 2006-2008 American Community Survey

**More than 25% increase in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*

***More than 25% decrease in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*

Note: Municipalities listed in each county are the largest based on 2006-08 population estimates. Columns 1 and 2 reflect nonprofit organizations categorized as one of the following National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes: Substance Abuse Dependency, Prevention, & Treatment (F20, F21, F22); Mental Health Treatment (F30, F32); Employment Preparation & Procurement (J20, J21, J22); Food Assistance Programs (K30, K31, K35, K36); Temporary Housing (L40, L41); Human Services (P20, P22, P24, P26, P27,P28, P29); Children & Youth Services (P30, P31, P32, P33); Family Services (P40, P42, P43, P45, P46); Personal Social Services (P50, P51, P52, P58); Emergency Assistance (P60, P61, P62); Ethnic & Immigrant Centers (P84); and, Homeless Centers (P85). Revenue figures are rounded to the nearest dollar. "--" indicates no registered nonprofit organizations or revenues.

Appendix Map A-4



Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey

Appendix Table A-5. Demographic Characteristics of Suburban Los Angeles

	Share of Population by Race and Ethnicity				Population Below Federal Poverty Line (FPL)			
County/Municipality	*White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Hispanic*	*Number of Poor in 2000*	*Number of Poor in 2006-2008*	*Percentage Change in Number of Poor*	*Share in Poverty 2006-2008*
Los Angeles County	**49.9**	**8.8**	**12.9**	**47.3**	**1,674,599**	**1,457,562**	**-13.0**	**15.1**
City of Los Angeles	49.5	9.9	10.4	48.4	801,050	697,232	-13.0	18.9
Long Beach	44.0	13.4	13.2	40.2	103,434	86,739	-16.1	19.1
Glendale	71.6	1.8	15.9	17.4	29,927	25,675	-14.2	13.2
Santa Clarita*	71.3	2.5	6.9	28.8	9,552	12,205	27.8	7.0
Lancaster*	56.5	19.2	4.3	36.5	18,239	29,837	63.6	20.4
Pomona	40.8	7.3	6.8	71.3	31,149	24,123	-22.6	16.2
Riverside County	**63.6**	**6.1**	**5.2**	**43.1**	**214,084**	**247,260**	**15.5**	**12.2**
Riverside	59.9	6.5	6.3	47.8	39,060	38,333	-1.9	13.0
Moreno Valley*	35.9	17.1	6.0	52.5	20,141	28,900	43.5	15.5
Corona	64.0	5.8	8.5	40.9	10,244	12,650	23.5	8.1
Murrieta*	68.5	4.9	8.0	26.4	1,915	5,580	191.4	5.8
Temecula*	71.9	4.4	8.2	22.3	3,864	5,858	51.6	6.3
San Bernardino County	**60.4**	**8.8**	**5.9**	**46.7**	**263,412**	**261,620**	**-0.7**	**13.4**
San Bernardino	48.8	16.2	4.4	56.6	49,691	48,989	-1.4	24.1
Fontana	59.2	10.2	6.5	63.1	18,676	19,766	5.8	10.7
Ontario**	39.3	7.6	5.2	64.3	24,133	16,342	-32.3	10.1
Rancho Cucamonga	62.3	8.9	9.1	32.5	8,955	7,316	-18.3	4.7
Victorville*	63.2	15.3	3.6	45.7	11,885	20,349	71.2	19.6

Source: 2000 Census, SF1 & SF3; 2006-2008 American Community Survey

**More than 25% increase in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*
***More than 25% decrease in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*

Note: Municipalities listed in each county are the five largest based on 2006-08 population estimates. Data on race and ethnicity come from the 2006-2008 American Community Survey.

Appendix Table A-6. Demographic Characteristics of Suburban Chicago

	Share of Population by Race and Ethnicity				Population Below Federal Poverty Line (FPL)			
County/Municipality	***White***	***Black***	***Asian***	***Hispanic***	***Number of Poor in 2000***	***Number of Poor in 2006-2008***	***Percentage Change in Number of Poor***	***Share in Poverty 2006-2008***
Cook County	**52.9**	**25.4**	**5.7**	**22.8**	**713,040**	**766,010**	**7.4**	**14.8**
City of Chicago	39.9	34.6	4.9	27.8	556,791	551,610	-0.9	20.7
Cicero	27.4	3.4	0.7	84.1	13,187	14,590	10.6	17.3
Arlington Heights*	87.3	1.6	7.1	4.9	1,878	3,325	77.1	4.3
Evanston	66.2	19.2	7.3	8.9	7,518	6,224	-17.2	9.4
Hoffman Estates	64.3	4.4	21.1	14.4	2,204	2,662	20.8	5.2
Skokie*	65.3	7.8	23.0	6.9	3,380	5,095	50.7	7.6
Schaumburg*	73.7	3.1	15.6	8.6	2,209	3,630	64.3	5.0
DuPage County*	**80.6**	**4.4**	**9.8**	**12.2**	**32,163**	**45,915**	**42.8**	**5.0**
Naperville*	79.5	4.2	13.4	6.0	2,809	4,794	70.7	3.4
Wheaton*	89.7	3.6	3.8	4.2	1,847	2,305	24.8	4.7
Downers Grove*	88.3	2.5	5.8	5.1	1,096	1,468	33.9	3.1
Lombard	80.0	5.7	10.2	8.9	1,560	1,247	-20.1	2.9
Elmhurst*	90.4	1.1	4.9	6.3	1,041	1,678	61.2	4.0
Kane County*	**76.5**	**5.5**	**3.1**	**28.1**	**26,587**	**41,003**	**54.2**	**8.4**
Elgin*	64.8	7.3	4.8	42.9	7,414	11,482	54.9	10.9
Aurora*	61.5	11.1	5.8	36.9	12,034	19,479	61.9	11.3
Carpentersville	66.3	3.6	6.0	48.6	2,578	3,013	16.9	8.1
St. Charles*	91.2	1.5	3.0	9.5	925	1,966	112.5	6.0
Batavia*	90.0	5.0	1.5	5.0	836	1,388	66.0	5.2
Lake County	**77.8**	**6.5**	**5.7**	**19.1**	**35,714**	**44,216**	**23.8**	**6.4**
Waukegan	49.5	18.3	4.0	52.2	12,058	10,501	-12.9	12.5
Buffalo Grove	84.2	0.6	12.2	4.7	960	892	-7.1	2.1
Wheeling*	70.3	2.7	11.0	30.0	1,803	3,342	85.4	9.3
Gurnee*	72.0	7.4	12.2	11.0	867	1,500	73.0	4.7
Mundelein	73.0	1.9	7.1	29.9	1,395	1,311	-6.0	4.2
McHenry County*	**90.1**	**1.1**	**2.6**	**10.9**	**9,446**	**17,602**	**86.3**	**5.6**
Crystal Lake*	90.8	1.7	1.8	11.2	1,324	2,126	60.6	5.1
Lake in the Hills*	88.6	0.6	5.1	10.2	503	795	58.1	2.8
McHenry*	84.4	1.0	1.7	--	975	2,655	172.3	10.3
Woodstock*	85.2	1.9	1.2	21.5	1,431	2,238	56.4	10.0
Will County*	**77.8**	**10.6**	**3.8**	**14.4**	**24,225**	**39,744**	**64.1**	**6.0**
Joliet*	68.9	16.2	1.6	26.4	10,946	15,266	39.5	10.8
Romeoville*	71.6	10.6	3.6	29.9	387	2,348	506.7	6.3
Plainfield*	84.2	4.9	6.1	11.1	229	694	203.1	2.0
Park Forest*	37.7	55.1	2.0	6.0	1,514	2,997	98.0	12.1
New Lenox*	--	--	--	--	424	773	82.3	3.1

Source: 2000 Census, SF1 & SF3; 2006-2008 American Community Survey

**More than 25% increase in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*
***More than 25% decrease in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*

Note: Municipalities listed in each county are the five largest based on 2006-08 population estimates. Data on race and ethnicity come from the 2006-2008 American Community Survey.

Appendix Table A-7. Demographic Characteristics of Suburban Washington, D.C.

	Share of Population by Race and Ethnicity				Population Below Federal Poverty Line (FPL)			
County/Municipality	***White***	***Black***	***Asian***	***Hispanic***	***Number of Poor in 2000***	***Number of Poor in 2006-2008***	***Percentage Change in Number of Poor***	***Share in Poverty 2006-2008***
Washington, D.C.	**36.1**	**54.4**	**3.2**	**8.5**	**109,500**	**99,243**	**-9.4**	**17.8**
Montgomery, MD	**61.3**	**16.1**	**13.1**	**14.4**	**47,024**	**48,188**	**2.5**	**5.2**
Silver Spring	47.3	25.7	7.0	26.6	7,072	5,955	-15.8	8.0
Germantown*	54.6	21.0	13.1	20.5	2,511	3,720	48.1	6.2
Bethesda	85.0	2.7	9.1	5.5	1,828	1,585	-13.3	2.7
Rockville**	66.7	7.4	19.5	13.3	3,555	2,157	-39.3	3.9
Gaithersburg	61.2	13.4	17.0	20.2	3,718	3,064	-17.6	5.6
Alexandria	65.9	20.6	5.6	13.1	11,279	9,391	-16.7	6.7
Arlington	70.5	8.1	8.9	15.9	14,371	13,679	-4.8	6.8
Fairfax County, VA	**67.0**	**9.4**	**15.8**	**13.5**	**43,396**	**50,268**	**15.8**	**5.0**
Burke	69.6	7.2	14.4	13.3	1,306	1,353	3.6	2.4
Annandale**	67.6	8.1	19.5	17.2	3,833	2,347	-38.8	4.5
Centreville*	55.4	10.9	26.4	9.8	1,452	2,749	89.3	5.4
Chantilly*	67.1	6.4	21.3	10.4	944	1,472	55.9	3.3
McLean	82.9	1.4	12.6	5.2	753	903	19.9	2.4
Fairfax**	74.2	5.4	15.6	13.2	1,205	788	-34.6	3.5
Loudoun County, VA*	**72.8**	**7.8**	**12.3**	**10.1**	**4,637**	**8,686**	**87.3**	**3.1**
Leesburg*	74.1	9.6	5.8	12.9	1,002	2,338	133.3	6.4
Prince George's County, MD	**23.4**	**63.8**	**3.9**	**12.2**	**60,196**	**59,806**	**-0.6**	**7.4**
Bowie*	47.1	44.8	3.5	5.4	805	2,036	152.9	3.6
Laurel*	37.2	46.7	7.6	10.2	1,273	1,603	25.9	6.9
Greenbelt**	36.0	47.7	9.7	7.0	2,177	1,218	-44.1	6.0
College Park*	68.2	11.7	10.6	11.1	3,154	7,358	133.3	26.8
Prince William County, VA*	**60.4**	**19.1**	**7.0**	**19.0**	**12,182**	**17,390**	**42.8**	**4.9**
Dale*	45.1	27.1	7.8	25.5	2,452	3,242	32.2	5.2
Woodbridge*	50.0	21.1	5.8	32.6	1,741	2,546	46.2	7.5
Lake Ridge	63.5	22.0	8.0	11.3	710	707	-0.4	2.4
Linton Hall*	70.7	8.7	10.8	16.7	248	647	161.0	2.8

Source: 2000 Census, SF1 & SF3; 2006-2008 American Community Survey

**More than 25% increase in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*
***More than 25% decrease in the number of poor from 2000 to 2006-08*

Note: Municipalities listed in each county are the five largest based on 2006-08 population estimates. Data on race and ethnicity come from the 2006-2008 American Community Survey.

Endnotes

1. Scott Allard is an associate professor at the University of Chicago's School of Social Science Administration; Benjamin Roth is a Ph.D. candidate at the School of Social Service Administration.
2. Stefanie DeLuca and James E. Rosenbaum, "If Low-income Blacks Are Given a Chance to Live in White Neighborhoods, Will They Stay? Examining Mobility Patterns in a Quasi-Experimental Program with Administrative Data" *Housing Policy Debate* 14(3)(2003): 305–45; Michael P. Johnson, Helen F. Ladd, and Jens Ludwig, "The Benefits and Costs of Residential Mobility Programmes for the Poor" *Housing Studies* 17(1)(2002): 125–38; Lawrence Katz, Jeff Kling, and Jeffrey Liebman, "Moving to Opportunity in Boston: Early Results of a Randomized Mobility Experiment" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 116(2)(2001): 607–51; Micere Keels et al., "Fifteen Years Later: Can Residential Mobility Programs Provide a Long-term Escape from Neighborhood Segregation, Crime, and Poverty?" *Demography* 42(1)(2005): 51–73; Jeffrey R. Kling, Jeffrey B. Liebman, and Lawrence F. Katz, "Experimental Analysis of Neighborhood Effects" *Econometrica* 75(1)(2006): 83–119; James E. Rosenbaum and Susan J. Popkin, "Employment and Earnings of Low-Income Blacks Who Move to Middle-Class Suburbs" In Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson, eds., *The Urban Underclass* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1991).
3. Elizabeth Kneebone and Emily Garr, "The Suburbanization of Poverty: Trends in Metropolitan America, 2000 to 2008" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2010).
4. Elizabeth Kneebone and Emily Garr, "The Landscape of Recession: Unemployment and Safety Net Services Across Urban and Suburban America" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2010).
5. Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, "The State of Metropolitan America: On the Front Lines of Demographic Transformation" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2010).
6. This estimate does not separate out UI benefits received by low-income households, which compose just 22 percent of all households receiving UI. Also, this estimate only includes the refundable portion of the CTC, which tends to target low-income tax filers. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "Policy Basics: Introduction to the Food Stamp Program" (Washington, 2010); Elizabeth Kneebone, "Economic Recovery and the EITC: Expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit to Benefit Families and Places" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009); U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "TANF Financial Data," (2010); U.S. House of Representatives, House Committee on Ways and Means, 2004 Green Book; Julia B. Isaacs et al., "Kids' Share: An Analysis of Federal Expenditures through 2008" (Washington: Urban Institute and Brookings Institution, 2009); Tax Policy Center, Urban Institute and Brookings Institution, "Spending on the EITC, Child Tax Credit, and AFDC/TANF, 1976–2010," online at **www.taxpolicycenter.org** [accessed August 2010]; Margaret C. Simms, "Weathering Job Loss: Unemployment Insurance" (Washington: Urban Institute, 2008).
7. Elizabeth Kneebone, "Bridging the Gap: Refundable Tax Credits in Metropolitan and Rural America" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2008).
8. Kneebone and Garr, "The Landscape of Recession."
9. Scott W. Allard, *Out of Reach: Place, Poverty, and the New American Welfare State* (Yale University Press, 2009).
10. James Mabli et al., "Hunger in America 2010: National Report Prepared for Feeding America" (Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., 2010); U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development, "The 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress" (2010).
11. Allard, *Out of Reach*.
12. Ibid; Scott W. Allard, "State Dollars, Nonstate Support: The Complexity of Local Nonprofit Welfare Provision in the United States." (Paper presented at the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, Harvard University, May 8–9, 2009); Scott W. Allard, "Mismatches and Unmet Needs: Access to Social Services in Urban and Rural America." in James P. Ziliak, ed., *Welfare Reform and its Long-Term Consequence for America's Poor*, James P. Ziliak (ed.), (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
13. One study of suburban townships and municipalities in metropolitan Chicago found evidence of uneven provision of publicly funded social service programs and mismatched provision of services with the location of populations in need, see Rebecca Hendrick and Karen Mossberger, "Uneven Capacity and Delivery of Human Services in the Chicago Suburbs: The Role of Townships and Municipalities" (Chicago: Chicago Community Trust, 2009). Another study examining data from the 2000 County Business Patterns (CBP) concludes that suburban poor neighborhoods are more likely to lack emergency assistance, employment, and education service organizations than urban poor neighborhoods, see Alexandra K. Murphy and Danielle Wallace, "Opportunities for Making Ends Meet & Upward Mobility: Differences in Organizational Deprivation across Urban & Suburban Poor Neighborhoods." *Social Science Quarterly*, Forthcoming 2010.
14. United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB), "Standards for Defining Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas" (2000).
15. Riverside and San Bernardino counties technically comprise a separate metropolitan area (Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA), but in practice contain many bedroom communities for workers in Los Angeles County. In 2000, roughly 150,000 workers in these counties regularly commuted to Los Angeles County.
16. We also chose these three study sites because they varied in population size and density.
17. Kneebone and Garr, "The Suburbanization of Poverty." Alan Berube and Elizabeth Kneebone, "Two Steps Back: City and Suburban Poverty Trends, 1999–2005" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2006).
18. Allard, *Out of Reach*; Scott W. Allard, "Access to Social Services: The Changing Urban Geography of Poverty and Service Provision" (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 2004).
19. We drew upon IRS 990 tax-exempt filings for nonprofit social service organizations, community directories, referral guides, and internet searches to construct our survey sample.
20. The sampling frame also contained nonprofit providers that may be headquartered in the central city, but deliver services in surrounding suburbs.
21. The initial database contained 3,998 organizations (949 in metropolitan Chicago, 2,264 in metropolitan Los Angeles, and 785 in metropolitan Washington, D.C.). Organizations were selected for the survey sample only if they dedicated significant program resources to serving low-income populations. Those that maintained programs of very modest size or that served only a handful of low-income persons per month were excluded. We did not include nonprofit organizations that provided programs or relief abroad. Providers and programs that limited services to a specific target population (e.g. individuals with disabilities, HIV/AIDS, ex-offenders) were not included in the sample. Verification calls were completed between June 3, 2009 and June 16, 2009.

22. Telephone surveys were completed between June 2009 and August 2009.
23. We contacted organizations at least four times by phone to complete the interview. Six nonprofits completing the verification call refused to participate in the telephone survey. Nine organizations were removed from the survey sample during the course of the study, as six proved to be located outside the study area and three were no longer operational.
24. For each web survey, we send at least three email reminders and made at least two follow-up telephone calls to respondents.
25. Following the first round of telephone interviews, we identified a subset of organizations from our sample in each city that varied in size and type. Nonprofit organizations selected for site visits ranged from large organizations offering a menu of social services, to regional food banks, to storefront neighborhood agencies with only one or two full-time staff. In September and October of 2009 we made site visits to five organizations in Chicago in three different counties. In December 2009 we traveled to five entities in the D.C. area, and in January 2010 we interviewed executive directors from seven organizations in metropolitan Los Angeles. The interviews were audio recorded and typically lasted 60 to 90 minutes.
26. Allard, *Out of Reach*.
27. Data were drawn from NCCS 2007 Core data files. These categories are drawn from the following National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes used by the IRS. Registered nonprofits with the following codes were included in the study: F20, F21, F22 – Substance Abuse Dependency, Prevention, & Treatment; F30, F32 – Mental Health Treatment; J20,J21, J22 – Employment Preparation & Procurement; K30, K31, K35, K36 – Food Programs; L40, L41 – Temporary Housing; P20, P22, P24, P26, P27, P28, P29 – Human Services; P30, P31, P32, P33 – Children & Youth Services; P40, P42, P43, P45, P46 – Family Services; P50, P51, P52, P58 – Personal Social Services; P60, P61, P62 – Emergency Assistance; P84 – Ethnic & Immigrant Centers; P85 – Homeless Centers. As was the case for the telephone survey component of the study, we omitted nonprofit organizations from our IRS data analysis that did not serve low-income populations or only provided programs or relief abroad. See National Center for Charitable Statistics, "NTEE Core Codes (NTEE-CC) Overview." (2009).
28. The Census warns that there are limitations to comparing 2000 decennial and 2006-2008 ACS three-year combined data. This caution is applicable to certain items, such as poverty. The Census Bureau explains that the ACS collects data throughout the year on an on-going, monthly basis and asks for a respondent's income over the "past 12 months." The 2000 Census, however, collected the income data for a fixed period of time—"during 1999" (the last calendar year). See U.S. Census Bureau, "How to Use the Data: Detailed Information on 2006-2008 ACS Data Comparisons," (2010), and Kirby G. Posey, Edward Welniak, and Charles Nelson, "Income in the American Community Survey: Comparisons to Census 2000." (2003).
29. IRS 990 data exclude nonprofits with budgets under $25,000 and small church-based programs that are not required to file tax-exempt status. IRS data also are tied to the address of an organization's administrative headquarters, even though many services may be provided elsewhere.
30. Differences in number of poor persons are calculated from 2000 Census and 2006–2008 three-year American Community Survey (ACS) estimates. Three-year ACS estimates could mute some of more recent increases in poverty given the recession started near the end of the data collection window and there are recession years grouped together with years characterized more by growth.
31. Sarah Reckhow and Margaret Weir, "Building a Resilient Social Safety Net" (Paper presented to MacArthur Network on Building Resilient Regions, May 20–21, 2010).
32. In this 13-county area there are 81 city, 212 township, and 321 village governments.
33. Such findings are consistent with a recent report analyzing access to social service in the suburban municipalities and counties to the east of Los Angeles, which noted "vast regions with high need underserved." See Carol Silverman, Arleda Martinez, and Jamie Rogers, "The Inland Empire Nonprofit Sector: A Growing Region Faces the Challenges of Capacity" (San Francisco: The James Irvine Foundation, 2009).
34. Nonprofit organizations with a "human services" NTEE activity code classfication typically provide a broad array of social services, rather than specializing in one particular program area. See National Center for Charitable Statistics. "NCCS Web Tools." (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Charitable Statistics), online at **http://nccsdataweb.urban.org/nccsTools.php** [accessed September 2010].
35. Consistent with evidence of the rising importance of Medicaid as a source of social service funding, however, a few providers we interviewed indicated they were exploring ways to begin providing services for Medicaid eligible clients. As state governments continue to resolve budget deficits, Medicaid may become increasingly seen as the most stable or predictable source of government funding for social services. See Scott W. Allard and Steven Rathgeb Smith, "Medicaid and the Funding of Nonprofit Service Organizations. (Paper presented at the 2009 American Political Science Association Meetings, September 3-6, 2009 in Toronto, ON).
36. The number of foreign-born persons increased by 31 percent in metropolitan Los Angeles from 2000 to 2008. Metropolitan Chicago saw a 48 percent and metropolitan Washington, D.C. experienced a 49 percent increase over the same period. Growth of the foreign-born population within these suburban areas varied considerably. For instance, the foreign-born population jumped by 58 percent in Riverside County, by 114 percent in Will County, and by 183 percent in Loudoun County from 2000 to 2008. At the other extreme, the share of the population that was foreign-born dipped by 7 percent in Arlington, VA and increased by only 2 percent in Alexandria City, VA during the 2000s.
37. Elizabeth McNichol, Phil Oliff, and Nicholas Johnson, "Recession Continues to Batter State Budgets; State Responses Could Slow Recovery" (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2010).
38. Foundation Center, "Foundation Support Declined in 2008 for Half of Major Funding Areas" (New York: Foundation Center, 2010); Steven Lawrence and Reina Mukai, "Foundation Growth and Giving Estimates" (New York: Foundation Center, 2010).
39. Nonprofit Finance Fund, "2010 State of the Nonprofit Sector Survey" (New York: Nonprofit Finance Fund, 2010).
40. Half of nonprofits reporting cuts in public funding identified delayed payments for services rendered as the source of the cut. Donors Forum, "Economic Outlook 2010: Illinois Nonprofits and Grantmakers Still Reeling After Rough Year" (Chicago: Donors Forum, 2010). A survey of metropolitan Chicago nonprofits conducted before the recession indicates that nearly two-thirds reported decreased or static government program funding in the previous three years; United Way Metropolitan Chicago and Chicago Community Trust, "A Report on the Chicago Region's Health and Human Services Sector" (Chicago, 2007).

Acknowledgments

The authors thank Alan Berube, Elizabeth Kneebone, Emily Garr, Steven Rathgeb Smith, and Margaret Weir for comments on previous drafts. The authors also thank the nonprofit executives who gave hundreds of hours of their time to complete the surveys and interviews presented in this report. In addition to support from the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution, this report received support from the Population Research Center at the University of Chicago, the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago, and the National Poverty Center at the University of Michigan.

The Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings thanks the Ford Foundation for its generous support of the program's research on city and suburban poverty, the Annie E. Casey Foundation for its support of the program's research on low-income working families, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, and the Heinz Endowments for their general support of the program, as well as members of the Metropolitan Leadership Council.

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