

FACTSHEET: SUBURBAN WASHINGTON, D.C.

This report examines data from the Census Bureau, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and a new survey of social services providers in suburban communities surrounding three major metropolitan areas (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. Consistent with what metropolitan areas nationwide have experienced as they cope with the long-term impact of the Great Recession, it finds in metropolitan Washington, D.C. that:

- Poverty rates remained low in most suburban jurisdictions outside of the District of Columbia, yet many communities saw significant increases in the number of poor people at the end of the decade. Many suburban communities in Loudoun, Fairfax, and Prince William counties in Virginia and Prince George's County in Maryland experienced more than 25 percent increases in the number of poor residents from 2000 to 2008. At the same time the number of poor persons fell in Alexandria, Arlington, and many suburban areas of Montgomery County.
- Many suburban communities in metropolitan Washington, D.C. rely on relatively few social services organizations that must stretch operations across much larger service delivery areas than their urban counterparts. Consistent with findings in other metropolitan areas, more than 30 percent of suburban D.C. nonprofits surveyed reported operating in more than one suburban county, and nearly 60 percent offered services in more than one suburban municipality. The size and capacity of the nonprofit social service sector varies widely across suburbs, from 357 poor residents per nonprofit provider in Montgomery County, MD to 1,159 in Prince William County, VA. Where one lives in

the suburbs, therefore, 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 two-thirds (65 percent) of suburban D.C. nonprofits interviewed 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 more than 60 percent reporting more frequent requests for help with mortgage or rent payments. Most nonprofits reported referring clients to other providers as a way to cope with rising demand for assistance.
- More than two of every five suburban Washington, D.C. nonprofits surveyed (44 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, one in four suburban nonprofits has reduced services available since the start of the recession. About 25 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 a social services infrastructure in place to address the challenges of increasing poverty. 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 but 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 economic and social 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.

LOCAL CONTACTS

The following local contacts are available to discuss suburban poverty and challenges facing suburban safety nets. Each has received the report in advance.

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Demographic Data for Select Counties and Municipalities in Metropolitan Washington, D.C., 2000 and 2006-08																			
County/Municipality	Population Data (2000)				Population Data (2006-08)				Number of Poor			Poverty Rate		Number of Unemployed			Unemployment Rate		
	Population	White	Black	Hispanic	Population	White	Black	Hispanic	2000	2006-08	%Change	2000	2006-08	2000	2006-08	%Change	2000	2006-08	
Washington, D.C.	572,059	30.8%	60.0%	7.9%	588,373	36.1%	54.4%	8.5%	109,500	99,243	-9.4%	20.2%	17.8%	31,844	26,151	-17.9%	6.8%	5.4%	
Montgomery County, MD	873,341	64.7%	15.0%	11.5%	942,747	61.3%	16.1%	14.4%	47,024	48,188	2.5%	5.4%	5.2%	15,027	23,148	54.0%	2.2%	3.1%	
Silver Spring CDP	76,540	46.6%	28.1%	22.2%	75,383	47.3%	25.7%	26.6%	7,072	5,955	-15.8%	9.3%	8.0%	1,726	2,170	25.7%	2.8%	3.6%	
Germantown CDP	55,419	62.2%	19.1%	10.2%	60,630	54.6%	21.0%	20.5%	2,511	3,720	48.1%	4.6%	6.2%	1,037	2,560	146.9%	2.6%	5.4%	
Bethesda CDP	55,277	85.9%	2.7%	5.4%	58,936	85.0%	2.7%	5.5%	1,828	1,585	-13.3%	3.3%	2.7%	629	870	38.3%	1.4%	1.9%	
Rockville city	47,388	67.8%	9.1%	11.7%	56,243	66.7%	7.4%	13.3%	3,555	2,157	-39.3%	7.8%	3.9%	790	1,021	29.2%	2.1%	2.3%	
Gaithersburg city	52,613	58.2%	14.6%	19.8%	55,320	61.2%	13.4%	20.2%	3,718	3,064	-17.6%	7.1%	5.6%	1,327	1,597	20.3%	3.3%	3.7%	
Alexandria city	128,283	59.8%	22.5%	14.7%	140,657	65.9%	20.6%	13.1%	11,279	9,391	-16.7%	8.9%	6.7%	2,504	2,878	14.9%	2.3%	2.5%	
Arlington CDP	189,453	68.9%	9.3%	18.6%	204,889	70.5%	8.1%	15.9%	14,371	13,679	-4.8%	7.8%	6.8%	3,288	3,060	-6.9%	2.0%	1.8%	
Fairfax County, VA	969,749	69.7%	8.4%	11.0%	1,005,980	67.0%	9.4%	13.5%	43,396	50,268	15.8%	4.5%	5.0%	13,962	19,342	38.5%	1.9%	4.9%	
Burke CDP	57,737	74.4%	5.0%	7.4%	57,937	69.6%	7.2%	13.3%	1,306	1,353	3.6%	2.3%	2.4%	690	1,386	100.9%	1.6%	3.0%	
Annandale CDP	54,994	64.5%	5.9%	14.5%	52,497	67.6%	8.1%	17.2%	3,833	2,347	-38.8%	7.0%	4.5%	884	872	-1.4%	2.0%	2.1%	
Centreville CDP	48,661	69.5%	8.9%	9.2%	50,996	55.4%	10.9%	9.8%	1,452	2,749	89.3%	3.0%	5.4%	692	1,508	117.9%	1.9%	3.8%	
Chantilly CDP	41,041	73.3%	5.0%	6.9%	44,254	67.1%	6.4%	10.4%	944	1,472	55.9%	2.3%	3.3%	628	629	0.2%	2.0%	1.8%	
McLean CDP	38,929	84.6%	1.6%	4.0%	38,480	82.9%	1.4%	5.2%	753	903	19.9%	1.9%	2.4%	315	267	-15.2%	1.0%	0.9%	
Fairfax city	21,498	72.9%	5.1%	13.6%	23,281	74.2%	5.4%	13.2%	1,205	788	-34.6%	5.7%	3.5%	289	457	58.1%	1.6%	2.4%	
Loudoun County, VA	169,599	82.5%	6.8%	5.9%	277,433	72.8%	7.8%	10.1%	4,637	8,686	87.3%	2.8%	3.1%	1,926	5,061	162.8%	1.6%	2.5%	
Leesburg town	28,311	83.3%	9.2%	5.9%	36,981	74.1%	9.6%	12.9%	1,002	2,338	133.3%	3.6%	6.4%	335	809	141.5%	1.6%	3.0%	
Prince George's County, MD	801,515	27.0%	62.6%	7.1%	825,924	23.4%	63.8%	12.2%	60,196	59,806	-0.6%	7.7%	7.4%	25,067	31,733	26.6%	4.1%	2.5%	
Bowie city	50,269	62.6%	30.8%	2.9%	57,538	47.1%	44.8%	5.4%	805	2,036	152.9%	1.6%	3.6%	637	1,033	62.2%	1.7%	2.4%	
Laurel city	19,960	52.2%	34.5%	6.2%	23,251	37.2%	46.7%	10.2%	1,273	1,603	25.9%	6.4%	6.9%	422	628	48.8%	2.6%	3.3%	
Greenbelt city	21,456	39.7%	41.3%	6.4%	20,293	36.0%	47.7%	7.0%	2,177	1,218	-44.1%	10.2%	6.0%	523	NA	NA	3.0%	NA	
College Park city	24,657	68.8%	15.9%	5.5%	27,455	68.2%	11.7%	11.1%	3,154	7,358	133.3%	19.9%	26.8%	2,468	960	-61.1%	11.1%	3.8%	
Prince William County, VA	280,813	68.8%	18.8%	9.7%	358,719	60.4%	19.1%	19.0%	12,182	17,390	42.8%	4.4%	4.9%	4,460	7,572	69.8%	2.2%	2.9%	
Dale City CDP	55,971	56.8%	28.8%	9.9%	62,567	45.1%	27.1%	25.5%	2,452	3,242	32.2%	4.4%	5.2%	1,047	1,604	53.2%	2.6%	3.5%	
Woodbridge CDP	31,941	56.3%	23.4%	19.1%	33,936	50.0%	21.1%	32.6%	1,741	2,546	46.2%	5.5%	7.5%	638	789	23.7%	2.7%	3.1%	
Lake Ridge CDP	30,404	74.4%	16.0%	7.1%	30,242	63.5%	22.0%	11.3%	710	707	-0.4%	2.3%	2.4%	387	868	124.3%	1.7%	3.7%	
Linton Hall CDP	8,620	87.6%	6.7%	4.0%	23,115	70.7%	8.7%	16.7%	248	658	161.0%	2.8%	2.8%	93	NA	-100.0%	1.6%	NA	

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

Note: Unemployment statistics are based on the civilian noninstitutionalized population age 16 and over in the labor force