

Tracking Businesses and Employment for Economic Development

Friday morning 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

High quality housing and employment opportunities are two important elements needed to evaluate the quality of neighborhoods and communities. NNIP partners are generally skilled at measuring the former, but finding and using good data on businesses and employment can be more elusive.

One of the biggest challenges with regard to business data is knowing where you can get good data that won't cost a lot of money. There are many paid data services offering information on business locations and industries. For the most part, these are not intended to be used for research purposes, and understanding the nuances among these many data sources can be difficult. Expensive data is not always the best data.

The purpose of this session is to present a "menu of options" for data sources on business and employment. We have invited two guest panelists who work closely with these data and will present the pros and cons of each data source.

Rob Pitingolo from the Urban Institute will moderate this panel and the group discussion. He will introduce the topic and speak briefly about using Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) – a nationally available data source, as a starting point to working with this type of data.

Merissa Piazza from Cleveland State University will present on many of the commonly available proprietary data sources available for purchase, including:

- Hoover's (Dun & Bradstreet)
- LexisNexis
- NETS
- Reference USA/Info USA

She will also cover the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (formerly ES-202) which is an administrative dataset that requires special permission from the state government to access.

John Killeen from the City of Durham will describe his experience with state administrative data on businesses. These include business licenses and registered corporation data, as well as databases containing information about Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) and minority and women owned enterprises.

After the formal presentations, Rob Pitingolo will lead a group discussion with the panelists and audience members. The hope is that NNIP partners who are engaged with business data can chime in with their knowledge and experience. Questions of Merissa and John will be welcomed as well.

Questions for Discussion:

- What are ways for partners to get started with business data?
- Is the price tag on private data worth it? When should partners pay for this data?
- For partners who have worked with business data, what do you find to be the biggest challenges or limitations?
- Are there other sources of data or guidance on business and employment data that were not mentioned in the presentations?
- How can we link business data with other data sources to get a complete picture of employment opportunities in neighborhoods?

Resources:

LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES)

- <http://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/>

Local Employment Dynamics page on the NNIP website

- <http://www.neighborhoodindicators.org/data-source/7>

Zip Business Patterns data (in the "County Business Patterns" page for each year)

- <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cbp/data/datasets.html>

Zip Business Patterns page on the NNIP website

- <http://www.neighborhoodindicators.org/data-source/6>

Urban Institute Business Patterns Data Set: Technical Documentation

- <http://www.urban.org/research/publication/urban-institute-business-patterns-data-set-technical-documentation>

ICIC's A Roadmap for Inner City Business Data Collection

- http://www.icic.org/ee_uploads/publications/ICIC_DUEG_SmallBusinessRoadmap.pdf

Forward Cities Research Products (including from local research partners)

- <http://www.forwardcities.org/resources/>