Session 4: Thursday 5/7/2015, 4pm-5pm

Location: Philadelphia

Session Title: Job Access data

Organizer: Max

Primary Notetaker: Rob Pitingolo

Participants: Keithley, Spencer Cowan, Colbert, Wheeling, Kim, Cho, Young, Hochleitner, LeBlanc, Nelson, Merrick, Gee, Iyer, Ramos, Buchanan, Coffin

Notes:

Weselcouch: Jobs access is on my mind because it’s getting attention but I haven’t found one that I’m happy with. We created one for subsidized housing that we knew was imperfect to see number of jobs within a mile of each property. NYC goal is that people live near 200k jobs. That number was just made up, mostly. Now it’s getting a lot of play even though it’s not a great indicator. Maybe we should work together to make something better.

Iyer: My favorite (non favorite) indicator is travel time to work. Means you already have a job. If you look at Baltimore, all the people who live near downtown don’t work downtown or have access to those jobs. People work outside the city, are taking some bizarre bus route to get there. So not just are they close to jobs, what are they actually doing.

Cowan: LEHD is good for this. What % of the block group is going where for the jobs. I like the 45 minute thing. Could also do distance or what kind of jobs are they taking. People in this tract are commuting a long distance to certain jobs not nearby.

Keithley: Need to know whether people have a vehicle. Parts of cbus you can’t even get to without car. Family has 2 jobs, 1 car - still an issue. Has to be a multi-layered thing.

Buchanan: On the map has living wage. In New Haven, most jobs are held by people who don’t live in the neighborhood.

Gee: Working with labor and commerce to do a combined resource. Pulling data from Monster, Indeed to create a measure of jobs and skills matching. Can then use a street map to calculate how they would travel for a job they are actually qualified for. That starts to enrich the distance/time question. What jobs are open now and can I access.

Ramos: I think it would be better with the skills access question.

Iyer: Opportunity Collaborate study, can find something along those lines there.

Wheeling: What about network analyst?

Weselcouch: Used it for walking distances to Subway. It can’t do transit.

Iyer: NY is wacky. Manhattan is where jobs are, but not much poverty, right? So most poor live outside the city? Totally opposite in Baltimore.

Weselcouch: Other ideas?

Iyer: You have to factor in race.

Ramos: Criminal history, background checks - that plays in too.

Coffin: The big thing now is police pullovers. Also not just housing affordability but housing quality. Where is the decent housing? What about school quality?

Keithly: A police officer can’t afford to live in the city where they are paid to work. You might have to live really far away if you have a civic job.

Cowan: Big corporate HQ (McDonald's) aren’t in the city, bad bus access.

Coffin: Jobs in rich suburbs can’t get employees, people don’t want to go all the way out there. There was a mall way in the burbs with no transit access and then retailers couldn’t get any workers.

Cowan: Hub and spoke transit model doesn’t work. Need suburb to suburb. Doesn’t address suburbanization of poverty.

Keithley: Saw a story about a woman who got killed crossing a highway getting to her job. Having transit “close” wasn’t enough.

Merrick: Transit agency thinks it’s doing a good job with equity. Reports out frequency of service by line. But lines don’t always run the full route. Some people work late, can’t get back home at night. Sleep outside until buses start the next morning.

Iyer: Any database of employer assisted transportation? At BWI some employers run shuttles for employees. Workers come from pretty concentrated area.

Weselcouch: It’s like the Google bus. Well, not swanky.

Gee: Center for N’hood Technology does H+T (housing + transportation)

Weselcouch: Seen some models (national) that doesn’t really work well locally.

Merrick: In portland that data was weird. Gotta vet this stuff locally. DIdn’t make sense for us. Made us worried about putting it out there.

Weselcouch: Maybe this is more of a metro indicator, not national.

Iyer: Is the issue to access space, skills, transportation?

Gee: If NY has some goal of 90% within some distance, how do you do it?

Weselcouch: Maybe express bus line in an underserved neighborhood. Incentivize residential and jobs near hubs.

Cowan: I like to look at where people from various neighborhoods are going. Are these people working in retail? Agriculture? To what extent is there a mismatch between jobs and skills for where they work.

Ramos: I live in Statan Island - cool place. Transit reliability is something to consider. The bus that goes to the ferry get so busy that the buses just stop picking people up. That might not show up on the metrics. The ferry is more reliable than the train. Every 15 minutes, 24 hours. I know when it will leave and arrive. The train is random. People coming from the Bronx might get stuck or something.

Keithley: Census transportation planning package is the ACS but reversed. Commute data based on place of work. We used it to see what modes downtown workers are using.

Cowan: Primary mode is flawed. I walk and take a bus.

Iyer: If you want a job access indicator you need to define access or accept that it’s not about access. We do % of population under supervision (probation) - huge correlation with unemployment. That’s an access issue.

Cowan: People have long commutes because they can’t afford rents.

Gee: The main source we keep hitting on in LEHD.

Weselcouch: Public transportation data. Google probably the best source on this right now.

Gee: Open transit planner stack can be installed, comes with a tool that does distance calculations as a batch. It does a bunch of calculations and averages them for an area.

Iyer: Would be awesome to have a positive indicator instead of the standard negative ones. How many people got a job? Got a better job?

Gee: UI records might have something?

Cowan: On the map has percent of workforce employed. Consistent at the block level.

Iyer: Maybe it goes from 60 to 70 percent employed. Could say it went up 10 points. Would be a sign of change

Cowan: Could do that at tract level.

Gee: Block level is annual?

Cowan: Yes.

Keithley: It’s admin data. It has some problems. Military is a problem. Can’t compare numbers from LEHD can’t compare to ACS or whatever.

Cowan: Easy Analytics - gotta buy it but I figure they put some work into it. It has tract level.

Coffin: What about Info USA?

Iyer: We don’t even bother doing year-over-year change - it’s off the wall. The placement of businesses is pretty accurate. Number of employees is useless. Zoo goes from 5 employees to 500 employees.

Merrick: Info USA put numbers and string in same column. Very annoying.

Iyer: Info USA better than D&B.

Long: We debate this all the time.

Coffin: IUSA trying to sell a historic file. It’s a lot of money. Can’t decide if it’s worth it.

Gee: Mexican job survey we’ve looked at. They’ve been sending people an iphone and if you employ more than 3 people, go geotag it and get basic info. Been doing it for 4 years. Not sure if there is anything here.

Coffin: IUSA claims they do this - call every business all the time.

Long: Person answering the phone doesn't know the right info.

Iyer: Unverified data is more data, lower quality.

Coffin: I want to verified stuff.

Iyer: Ever just tried one year of data? We did a walkscore analysis. Actual walkscore doesn’t seem quite right. Used a different source and got a better walkscore than the official one.

Gee: Company sells cell phone location data. What you can do is tell when they entered businesses. Anyone worked with a product like that?

Iyer: We looked at getting business licenses. It’s a nightmare. Have to aggregate across agencies. Technically if you did it you would get an accurate picture.

Gee: Chicago does this on open data portal.

Iyer: Some businesses are state, some city, some health.

Gee: Makes for nice registry and if you are on the list, you exist.

Coffin: Link licensing data with occupancy permitting that identifies something.

Iyer: Not sure, we didn’t explore it.

Keithley: Would only cover 1 per business. McDonald's wouldn’t be captured for every store?

Gee: Each building is its own licence. For inspections. Some cities are doing benchmarking ordinances. It’s energy benchmarking. Each building has to report their total energy use but also who uses the building and occupancy. You can imagine combining the energy data with things like licence data and get a sense for what it is.

Coffin: Would also be cool to get utility data.

Cowan: Not going to happen.

Gee: UCLA has gotten utility data for every account in LA county. CA energy atlas. Community energy use. Taken the person running it 5 years to negotiate. It’s gotten attention and now CA wants to do for the whole state. Down the account level.

Iyer: We get it for a specific project, people have to consent.

Long: It would be a local utility. Rolling out smart meters and now data gets collected by blocks and reported back. It’s perfect, anonymous and everything.

Wheeling: Anything interesting with public transit?

Gee: Got CTA data, but for a project for them. Only got it once. Had enter/exits, buses, stations. We have to approach them and show how it benefits them.

Weselcouch: NY made their swipe data public. I find it useless.

Cowan: Tells you when they get on.

Gee: NYC taxi data public.

Weselcouch: Not open data. Someone FOIA’d and then made it public.

Gee: Uber and Lyft are talking with cities about this. Have run prices at community level. Can get it through their API. Community entities can access this. Talking to people at Uber and Lyft, the dominant ride is at the end of transit lines.

Wheeling: Census has when you leave for work. Is that useful?

Coffin: Really?

Wheeling: Yeah, but not sure if it’s useful.

Keithley: Match with transit hours and stuff.

Merrick: How does it get reported out?

Weselcouch: Half hourly buckets, I think.

Cowan: What about the evenings? Hourly?

Wheeling: Lumps it together. Interesting to see.

Nelson: What about side trips? Daycare?

Iyer: There are a lot of people who do this job skills mismatch stuff. We really care about neighborhood environment that makes you life hard. Those are the things you want to get.

Buchanan: Completely changing tracks, anyone used school districts to see where you graduated and are you employed?

Nelson: You can do that. The IDS tracks kids, if you have that.

Ramos: Strive sites are tracking that. Limitation is when kids go out of state, go off grid. Once they age out they disappear from the system.

Buchanan: In CT the education department tracks 6 years after graduation then it’s done. Did you get a job? Go to military? Would like to know if you got a degree, did you get a job with that degree?

Iyer: This is workforce investment act. All local jurisdictions should be doing this, but probably not at n’hood scale.

Gee: Iowa and Florida are doing this well. What happens when people leave the state? Some work on the college side to see where they went and the outcomes.

Iyer: Network of states that work together to do joint matching.

Weselcouch: OK it’s 5. Time for happy hour. Thank you all.

[end of session]