Findings and Policy Recommendations

Part of the intent of the original social areas of Cincinnati study was to create base line data which could be used to measure change over time. A socioeconomic status index consisting of five variables was supplemented by fifteen other variables which together comprised the base line data. The authors believe the use of a multivariate approach is more beneficial than selecting a single variable such as income or poverty. The socioeconomic status index, in particular, is a powerful tool in keeping track of trends in the neighborhoods and in the city as a whole. Adding a metropolitan area component to the second and subsequent editions acknowledges that the central city contains an increasingly small component of the area's population base and economy.

Because the SES index is based on a census tract's ranking in the five SES variables (Table 1a) in comparison to other tracts it provides a measure of the tract or neighborhood's relative position and is not a fixed number such as income measure. With this in mind some overall conclusions can be stated:

City of Cincinnati

1. The social areas within Cincinnati have remained relatively constant over time. For example, the SES IV areas are, in 2005-2009, pretty much where they were in 1970. The SES IV area around Hyde Park has expanded. The SES IV area in Price Hill and Westwood has diminished but is still there. Mt. Adams, East Walnut Hills and other areas have been added but overall the high status and low status areas are pretty much where they were in 1970.

The social areas within Cincinnati have remained relatively constant over time.

2. SES I has shifted somewhat to the west and northwest across Mill Creek and somewhat to the east along the Reading Road and Montgomery Road corridors.

3. Despite the persistence of overall patterns, dramatic shifts in a neighborhood's SES position can occur. Six former SES I tracts in Over-the-Rhine and the West End are now SES II, III, or IV. Fairview-Clifton Heights was all SES II in 1970. In 1990 two tracts had moved up to SES III and one to SES IV. In 2000, two were in SES II, one in SES IV. In 2005-2009 one was SES II and two were SES III.

4. SES decline associated with shifts in the African American or Appalachian populations is not necessarily permanent and irreversible. The data in Chapter 4 show that some of the neighborhoods that have experienced a great decline in the 70s and 80s had begun to stabilize by 1990. Much population movement is associated with upward mobility on the part of minorities. The newcomers initially may have lower incomes or education levels and a different family composition than the previous ethnic groups had achieved. Over time their circumstances improve to come more in line with the new social area with its better housing and schools, etc. Several predominantly African American or Appalachian neighborhoods improved in SES during the past decade (Table 4c and Table 9).

Much population movement is associated with upward mobility on the part of minorities.

5. Some of the neighborhoods which have become home to significant segments of the African American middle class have begun to slow the pattern of declining SES. Avondale, East Walnut Hills and Pleasant Ridge, for example, fit this description. Bond Hill, Kennedy Heights and College Hill are still declining.

6. The tables in Chapter II show lists of neighborhoods which declined the most in various decades. In the 1970-1990 period, Bond Hill, Mt. Airy, Avondale, Kennedy Heights and East Price Hill topped the list. South Cum-

minsville-Millvale, Westwood, College Hill, Mt. Washington, and Fay Apartments were not far behind. In the 2000s the big losers on the SES Index (Figure 2g-2) were Riverside-Sayler Park (-38.4), West Price Hill (-22.2), Kennedy Heights (-21.4), Roselawn (20.2) and Mt. Airy (-15.7). Over the period of the study (1970-2005 to 2009), the greatest losses were Mt. Airy (-60.1), Bond Hill (47.7), Roselawn (42.0), Kennedy Heights (37.8) and Westwood (36.0). Neighborhoods with the greatest increases in SES score were East End (59.1), Mt. Adams (34.6), California (29.4), and Lower Price Hill (24.0). (Table 9).

7. By at least one measure Cincinnati made progress in racial integration between 1970 and 2005-2009. In 1970 76.4 percent of Cincinnati's African Americans lived in the two lower SES quartiles. In 2005-2009 the percentage was 58.2.

8. In the 2000s the two lowest SES quartiles in Cincinnati became less African American (Table 2b) and SES III more African American. SES IV lost over 4,000 African Americans and went from 13 percent to 10.6 percent on this indicator.

9. Cincinnati was poorer and included more African Americans in 2005-2009 than in 1970. During this period the poverty rate for families climbed from 12.8 percent to 20.1 percent in the City of Cincinnati. The percentage of African American families increased from 27.6 to 41.0 (Table 2d). Racial isolation continues. Hamilton County is 24.2 African American. The percentage African American in the six other counties range from .5% to 4.5% (Table 11f). Changes in these percentages in the seven counties were less than one percent in the past decade.

Cincinnati was poorer and included more African Americans in 2005-2009 than in 1970. During this period the poverty rate for families climbed from 12.8 percent to 20.1 percent in the City of Cincinnati.

10. Among blue-collar Appalachian areas Camp Washington, East End, Lower Price Hill, and Linwood saw improvement in SES during the 00s. East Price Hill continued a pattern of decline. Sedamsville-Riverside declined slightly. Carthage declined by over 10 points; Riverside-Sayler Park by 38.4 points.

11. Patterns in working class African American neighborhoods were also varied. Neighborhoods which gained more than 10 points on the SES Index in the 00s were Over-the-Rhine (24.6), North Fairmount-English Woods (19.4), West End (14.7), Winton Hills (11.6), and Mt. Auburn (8.5). Smaller increases occurred in Walnut Hills (1.3), Avondale (1.4) and Fay Apartments (1.4). Three neighborhoods saw declines on the SES Index. South Cumminsville-Millvale lost 3.8 points. Evanston declined 1.4 points and Bond Hill 7.7.

12. The decline in the population over 60 which we reported in the Fourth Edition has reversed itself in three social areas of the city of Cincinnati (Table 2b).

13. Family structure has changed fundamentally and radically since 1970 in the two lower SES areas (Table 2c).

Table 12a

Family Structure Indicator in Cincinnati, 1970 to 2005-2009

	1970	2000	2005-2009
SES I	71.4	17.0	22.9
SES II	73.5	34.7	32.5
SES III	80.3	50.3	48.9
SES IV	83.1	75.4	69.0

The Family Structure Indicator is the percent of children under 18 living in two parent families.

Data are for the City of Cincinnati.

The change in SES III is also dramatic. Less than half the children under 18 now live in two parent homes. The "traditional" family structure is holding up only in the highest SES area. Although we believe this is the most important finding of this forty-year study we are not quite sure of all its implications. We are certain that

it is not just associated with an increase in the African American population in these areas. It has affected some poor white areas and recently the FSI is declining given in SES III and IV. It appears that, at least in Cincinnati, there is a correlation between family structure and SES that was not as apparent forty years ago. We are certain that community organizers, social workers, school officials, health workers and others concerned about the inner city need to assess how practice and policy need to adapt to the new reality that the two parent family is rapidly disappearing.

The Seven County (1970) Metro Area*

14. In the 7-county metropolitan area both African Americans and the poor are concentrated. Sixty-two percent of metropolitan area African Americans and 40.5 percent of metropolitan area poor live in Cincinnati (Table 11d). These percentages compare to, respectively, from 67 and 46.6 in 2000.

Socioeconomic integration is also sorely lacking at the metropolitan area level. Most of the metropolitan area's poor families live in Hamilton County (Table 11e), primarily in SES I and II.

15. Socioeconomic integration is also sorely lacking at the metropolitan area level. Most of the metropolitan area's poor families live in Hamilton County (Table 11e), primarily in SES I and II.

16. Campbell and Kenton Counties' poverty rates of 7.5 and 8.7 are closest to Hamilton County's rate of 10.4 (Table 11e).

* In 1970, the metropolitan area included Hamilton, Warren and Clermont Counties in Ohio, Kenton, Campbell and Boone in Kentucky and Dearborn County in Indiana.

The New Metro Area and the 20-County Health Foundation Service Area

17. This Fifth Edition includes a narrative (Chapter 11, Sections II and III) on the 15-county Cincinnati Metropolitan Area and the 20-county region served by the Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati. Appendix VI provides the five socioeconomic status variables for the 15-county area and Appendix VII provides the same data for the 20-county area. Both tables are at the census tract level. These data provide rich material which planners, administrators and proposal writers can use for needs assessment and resource allocation. The base maps, Figures 14 and 15, can be used to plot epidemiological, crime, food availability, and other data to see how they vary by socioeconomic status.

18. The 7-county (Figure 13), 15-county (Figure 14), and 20-county (Figure 15) maps allow us to see at a glance the socioeconomic picture of our region in its various configurations. The two lowest quartiles or social areas (SES I and II) should be given high priority for certain education, health, and social service programs. The two higher SES areas (SES III and IV) can also be used for targeting programs such as serving the dispersed poor or preventing neighborhood decline.

19. Future American Community Survey or equivalent census data can be used to measure change in the different census tracts and larger jurisdictions in our region using this study as baseline data.

The maps and charts provided in this report provide a new tool for regional needs assessment.

20. The maps and charts provided in this report provide a new tool for regional needs assessment. Figure 15, for example, could be used to review the location of food pantries, GED or job training programs, or emergency services. SES I and SES II areas would be high priority. Appendix VII provides more detail on education levels, family structure, me-

dian family income, occupation, and housing. In Adams County, for example, Tracts 9904 and 9906 are in SES I. These two tracts have a Family Structure Indicator of 48.3 and 54.9, respectively. This means that only approximately half of the children under 18 live in two parent homes. The Education Indicator is 25.4 and 26.0, respectively. Median Family Income is in the $35,000-$40,000 range. Programs to assist single parents might include ready access to GED programs, day care, and job training.

Public Policy Implications of the Continuing Urban Crisis

Numerous studies have examined the nature of our inner cities. They are often described as inhabited by an urban underclass which experiences a combination of poverty, social problems, unemployment, and dependence on public assistance. Explanations for this concentrated poverty vary, but most causes include: changing employment opportunities, declines in marriage rates, selective outmigration (movement of the middle-class from the urban core), and race discrimination in marginalizing low-skilled minorities in our society.[1]

A review of poverty research over the past four decades provides some indications of our priorities and needed directions. Robert Haverman identifies trends: 1) the nation has experienced growing inequality in earnings, with particular hardships on young workers and those with little education; 2) as a nation, our policies are directed more at symptoms and lacks investment in education policies and support of our youth, 3) most of the growth in social welfare spending has been in the form of social insurance benefits to elderly and disabled people, and in-kind benefits such as Medicare and Medicaid. 2

Rebecca Blank examined the past two decades of changes in welfare policies and found that changes focused more on increasing work effort of recipients and less on improving their earnings potential. She examined the effects of on-the-job training, job search assistance, and work experience programs on female Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients and found that although these programs lead to modest employment and income gains there was no evidence that these programs moved families out of poverty. [3]

Urban specialists agree that one single policy cannot be effective with the complicated problems of urban poverty. A framework of policies is recommended that recognizes psychological factors, social structure factors and cultural variables. The framework must include: employment access, appropriate education, and family support policies. Additionally the policies must address the relationship between cities and suburbs and both public and private sectors. Whatever framework of policies is developed, the outcomes wouldn't be immediate. Several years of these policies would be necessary to achieve notable results. One example of a framework of multiple policies in an urban area is the New Hope Program in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This framework provides the purchase of child care services, governmentally enforced child support, job training and job-finding services, a guaranteed income floor, and wage subsidies to able bodied adults and possible long-term public employment. Other examples of a comprehensive approach to neighborhood revitalization include the Dudley Street neighborhood project in Boston's Roxbury neighborhood[4] and the Harlem Children's Zone.[5] The former uses the comprehensive community development model and began with a community organization effort to insure citizen input. The Harlem project, led by a reformer named Geoffrey Canada, includes educational, social, and medical services. Both of these efforts are backed by a major local foundation.

The framework must include: employment access, appropriate education, and family support policies.

Inner City Employment

Many Americans view the high rates of inner city unemployment as the most fundamental problem afflicting the urban poor. It is recognized as both a personal problem and source of social distress associated with crime, drug trafficking, and family break-ups. Employment is not simply a way to support one's family, but a structure for daily behavior and activities.

Employment policy recommendations abound, but all have a special caveat — they cannot stand alone. Policies of macroeconomic stimulation, human capital development, health care, and income support are necessary foundations. Specific recommended policies vary in details, but essentials include: family support policies, expanded transportation systems, job information centers and enforcing antidiscrimination laws, and guaranteed public works jobs. Other recommended policies include: a system of national performance standards in public schools; a school-to-work transition program; city-suburban integration and cooperation; and expanding housing vouchers.

The mismatch between residence in the inner city and the location of jobs in the suburbs is a major problem for many cities. Public transportation systems which link the metropolitan areas with the city are recommended as a fundamental component to solving unemployment problems (although not the only solution). Policies that achieve city-suburban cooperation are also proposed. Cooperation could range from creation of metropolitan governments to metropolitan tax-based sharing, collaborative metropolitan planning and regional authorities.

Lehman and Wilson advocate for job information and placement centers. These centers would provide awareness of the availability of employment opportunities in the metropolitan area and refer workers to employers. Just as importantly, they would provide training for individuals needing employment skills.

Mickey Kaus proposes a public works employment policy similar to the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) initiated by Roosevelt and in progress for eight years. This program would provide employment for every American who wanted it. The jobs would be public construction work such as highway construction, housing and ground clean-up. Wages would be slightly below the minimum wage. Workers could be promoted to higher paying public work or move to the private sector as they increased their skills. Kaus proposes that all welfare recipients, after a certain time on welfare, must enroll in this work program or forfeit their welfare payments. (He also recognizes the necessity for government financed day care with this policy.)[6]

Jeffrey Lehman recommends urban policies that recognize the limited impact of legal regulations to alter discrimination in businesses and labor market opportunities. He recommends tools of public education and advertising to educate citizens about statistical discrimination, public transportation and job information centers. Further, Lehman addresses residential segregation and argues that American housing markets are profoundly segregated on the basis of race and he relies on the spatial mismatch hypothesis to suggest policies. [7]

Policies of macroeconomic stimulation, human capital development, health care, and income support are necessary foundations.

The spatial mismatch hypothesis suggests that inner city residents have fewer earnings opportunities than they would have if they lived in the suburbs and that this is a significant factor in explaining poverty among urban residents (Some urban researchers are unconvinced of this). While transportation and information centers may address some of the problems with employment, housing vouchers are recommended to address the employment problem of personal acquaintanceship isolation. Anthony Downs suggest policies or programs to respond to overt forms of residential segregation. Examples are to expand HUD enforcement staff and HUD-sponsored tester based activities. Lehman recommends policies that duplicate the experiment for Housing Allowance (EHAP)

and provide housing vouchers to inner city residents. He refers to the Gautreaux program in Chicago's public housing. It gave applicants a choice among three homes in either the city or the suburbs and found that those who left the city were 14 percent more likely to have a job.

While transportation and information centers may address some of the problems with employment, housing vouchers are recommended to address the employment problem of personal acquaintanceship isolation.

Educational Policies

Since the 1970s the relative wages of both high school graduates and dropouts have steadily fallen. For male dropouts, 1991 wages were 26 percent lower than in 1973 and for female dropouts wages were 11 percent lower. High school graduates wages fell 21 percent and 6 percent for males and females, respectively. Also, the differential wage rates between college graduates and high school graduates have increased significantly. In 1991 the wage difference was 56 percent. Besides low wages, employment instability is a problem. Thirty two percent of high school graduates near thirty years of age had their job for less than one year and 49 percent of high school dropouts had their jobs less than one year in 1991. In 1999, among persons 25 to 34 years of age, 43 percent of high school graduates and only 29 percent of dropouts worked year-round full-time. In this age group the unemployment rate for dropouts was 44 percent compared to 23 percent for graduates.

In the sixties, national attention was drawn to persistent differences in academic achievement. Low-income areas produced disproportionate numbers of delinquents and school dropouts. The President and Congress responded with enactment of new educational support and provided federal funds to poor local school districts. Slowly changes were brought into schools and scores seemed to rise. However, several reports in the eighties revealed these efforts were very unevenly distributed.

Henry M. Levin, a Stanford University educational economist, found that most of the reforms had relatively little to offer students with parents who have low incomes and little education. He identified that about 30 percent of the public school population was educationally disadvantaged. Levin feared that in the absence of explicit efforts to improve education for these youth some of the current reforms, such as stiffer graduation requirements, may actually increase dropout rates, contributing in turn to an increased permanent underclass.[8]

Terrel H. Bell, Secretary of Education in the 1980s, said, "The school reform movement has had no significant impact on the 30 percent of our students who are the low-income minority students. We are still not effectively educating them." [9] And Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, said "Urban schools with students largely from minority groups were getting worse even as 'advantaged schools are getting better.' The first wave of educational reform, declared the Committee for Economic Development in its 1987 report, "has either ignored or underplayed the plight of the disadvantaged." [10]

According to the America's Promise website (see Dropout Prevention) in 2011 only 53% of youth in America's 50 top cities graduate on time. In 2009 68% of 4th graders scored below proficient on the NAEP reading test. In Hamilton County (2001-2009) 50.2% of 4th graders were below proficiency in reading. From 2003 to 2009 the number of children in poverty increased from 32,751 to 42,305. The poverty rate for children increased from 16.0% to 21.4%.[11]

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A critical challenge for urban local schools is to ameliorate the disadvantages that children

from poor families face. Primary recommendations based on these reports include: expansion of preschool programs for disadvantaged children, integration of vocational skills with academic training, monitoring the quality of education provided to poor children and preparation-for-work programs.

The 1960s saw the development of preschool and Head Start programs for children of poor families. The primary Head Start model included education, health, nutrition, social services and parent support to 3 to 5 year old children. Children were provided hot meals, social services, health evaluation and care, and their families became partners in their children's learning experiences. The long-term effects of these programs are well documented.

The Perry Preschool program is perhaps the most well-known preschool program with evaluation studies. Children who attended this quality program developed social and academic competencies later manifested in increased school success. For example, students had lower rates of high school dropouts, lower placement in special education classes, lower teenage pregnancy, unemployment and criminal involvement, enhanced college attendance and post-high school training programs.

The Perry Preschool and other successful preschools provide full-time, year round services by highly trained staff. Most Head Start programs, however, do not provide such interventions. They provide three to four hours of services for a typical school year and often with minimally trained staff. The National Head Start association in 1989 provided five recommendations to increase the quality of these programs. First, increased staff training, better compensation and upgraded facilities are needed. Second, increase the program day to five or six hours as these are the hours of programs that had successful outcomes mentioned above. Third, combine the program day with child care hours -- typically ten hours a day so family members can work. Fourth, include two generation approaches by helping parents to develop the skills to help their children. Fifth, make program available to more of the eligible children not currently being served.

Research suggests that mastery of reading and math skills taught no later than junior high school is increasingly significant in determining access to high paying jobs for high school graduates. This is important as many school districts have found it easier to offer excellent instruction in advanced material to a subset of motivated students preparing for colleges than to help all students acquire threshold levels of literacy and mathematical problem solving skills. Murnane is afraid state testing programs influence what is emphasized in the classroom and policies designed to improve cognitive and testing ability rather than practical skills are emphasized.

Many industrialized countries have policies that require their young people to meet high performance standards before they can graduate from high schools. National standards are set and high schools are held responsible for meeting these standards. These standards prepare young people for either immediate employment or training in technical areas. Currently the United States has no mandatory standards and high school graduates that are not preparing for college have severely limited options after high school.

Murnane recommends three principles for high schools in preparing their graduates for the workforce. First, integrate vocational training with instruction in traditional academic subjects such as language arts and mathematics. This is based on a study that showed that many students learn academic material most successfully when it is taught in the context of preparation for real jobs. Second, learning should be integrated with experience in real workplaces. This aids in helping students understand the importance of regular attendance and punctu-

These principles require different institutions — high schools, colleges and private industries — to coordinate their efforts for successful outcomes.

ality that employers demand. The third principle is that high school education should be integrated with postsecondary education. These principles require different institutions — high schools, colleges, and private industries — to coordinate their efforts for successful outcomes. [12]

The federal government has tried to support these efforts through the 1990 Perkins Act, which mandates that vocational education programs integrate academic and occupational training. One example of this is the career academy. Each academy has a particular theme and curricula are designed to blend academics and vocational material to capture students' interests. Local employers provide mentoring for students and internships in the academy's industrial field.

Another model receiving funding from the Perkins Act is the Tech Prep or Two plus Two programs. These programs coordinate the curriculum of the last two years of high school and two years of community college related to one particular occupation. Youth apprenticeships programs provide work-based mentoring and academic instruction. Long-term evaluations regarding the employment and wages of participants of these programs have not been done.

Wilson recommends a four prong policy framework that involves the educational system and family support policies. The first important step in this area is targeting schools in disadvantaged neighborhoods with local and national performance standards. Second, state and local governments would have to support these efforts by creating equity in local funding that attracts high quality teachers, curriculum development and assessment and teaching development and material resources, especially computers. [13]

Third, the private sector should be encouraged to work with these schools to improve computer competency training. Federal support started in 1994 and 1995 when schools could apply for a grant to develop clear and high standards regarding instruction, curriculum technology, professional development and parental and community involvement. State governments are expected to create more equity in local school funding by supporting these programs as well as attracting high quality teachers and computers for the classrooms.

Fourth, Wilson advocates that data on school performance be compared to the national performance standards and be widely disseminated. He advocates for a voucher system for the selection of public schools that parents should be able to select for their child's attendance. He bases this recommendation on empirical data that suggests that increased competition among public schools improves average student performance and restrains levels of spending. [14]

The K-12 reform program advocated by the George Lucas Foundation (2011) includes comprehensive assessment, integrated studies, project-based learning, social and emotional learning, teacher development and technology integration. The ENA's Priority Schools Program emphasizes partnerships between schools, business and community organizations.[15]

Family Support Policies

Education policies have been looked at primarily as a solution to urban unemployment and low skill levels of labor force entrants. However, we cannot rely only on improvements in the educational system. The quality of the lives children lead outside the school are critical. Family life factors have often been found as a stronger predictor of cognitive skill levels than are school variables.

Children who live in single parent families are often exposed to high levels of economic and social insecurity. About half of these children live in families with below poverty incomes. On average the post-divorce income of a single mother is about 60 percent of her pre-divorce income. With this loss in income, changes in employment happen often, either through new jobs or expanded hours. One study found that mothers who worked one thousand hours or more increased from 51 percent to 73 percent after a divorce. Clearly these children are exposed to risks of more than economic insecurity.

Garfinkel and McLanahan recommend ways the government can reduce the economic insecurity of these families through examples from other industrialized countries and empirical studies. Providing benefits to all single mothers, regard-

less of income, reduces heavy dependence on public assistance, but increases the prevalence of single parenthood only slightly. Further recommendations include providing benefits to both one and two parent families.[16] Admittedly this requires a greater commitment of public funds than Americans have been willing to provide.

Family support, as witnessed in other industrialized countries, is recommended by nearly all urban specialists. The French system includes three programs -- child care, income support and medical care. The child care programs include infant care and high quality pre-schools that prepare children for kindergarten. The income support program includes child-support enforcement from the absent parent, child allowances and welfare payments for low-income parents.

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The Status of Children

A report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation[17] and the Population Reference Bureau[18] focuses attention on the growing number of children in severely distressed neighborhoods. The criteria for "severely distressed" fit several if not most of the neighborhoods in SES I in this study. On a national basis, 28% of black children and 13% of Hispanic children live in such neighborhoods while only 1 percent of non-Hispanic whites live in these areas. In Cincinnati, Covington, and Newport, because of the low income Appalachian population, the percentage of white children in distressed areas is likely to be higher. The Cincinnati-Middletown, OH-KY-IN CMSA has 33,339 children living in severely distressed neighborhoods. This is 6.3% of all children, a rate somewhere in the middle of the 100 cities surveyed.

The implications of this concentration of children is described as follows:

The increase of children living in severely distressed communities during the 1990s is a cause for concern because neighborhoods influence many outcomes for children. The high concentration of black and Hispanic children in disadvantaged neighborhoods indicate that a significant segment of our most vulnerable children are not likely to get the kind of support they need to thrive[19] (www.aecf.org)

Those supports include the two parent family and the elderly (grandparents and other elders) which, as we have noted in this report, are becoming scarce in inner city neighborhoods.

The importance of public education and other facets of child welfare to community health is illustrated by the listserv publication following from the Child Welfare Policy Research Center (May 20, 2004):

Census counts from 1990 and 2000 provide ample evidence that Hamilton County is a county in distress. The county not only lost population for the third consecutive decade, but its 1990-2000 loss of 20,925 people was the largest among all of Ohio's 88 counties. Annual estimates issued by the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that Hamilton County's population decline has accelerated even further since 2000. According to the latest estimates, Hamilton County's population fell by 21,831 from April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2003. In only 3 ¼ years, the county experienced a loss surpassing that of the entire preceding decade, when Hamilton County was Ohio's population loss leader.

Tabulations from the 1990 or 2000 census don't include specific information on the composition of population change between natural increase (the balance of births over deaths) and net migration (the balance of people moving into and out of an area). But simple cohort analysis,

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tracking a group of people across the two census years, can provide some valuable insights into the size of the net migration component.

Hamilton County was home to 67,593 children ages 0 to 4 in 1990, but 10 years later there were 3,771 fewer children who were 10 years older, in the 10-14 age group. Aside from the first year of life, the risk of mortality is very low for children at these ages, so the only conclusion is that out-migration of families with young children is responsible for the decline. Presumably dissatisfied with conditions in Hamilton County, many of these families chose to leave. The same cohort analysis reveals that the seven tri-state suburban counties collectively gained nearly 11,000 children in this age cohort between 1990 and 2000.

In 2011, 18% of U.S. children were living in poverty. In 2009, the percentages for Hamilton County and Butler County were 21.4 and 17.5 respectively (up from 13% and 12% respectively in 2005).

Population gain and loss within this cohort of children is even more dramatic at the neighborhood level. Sixty-eight of 217 census tracts experienced a staggering loss of 25% of more in the cohort of children who were preschool-aged in 1990. Almost all of these tracts are served by Cincinnati Public Schools, perhaps reflecting a strong consumer preference for suburban school districts. [20]

The Child Policy Research Center serves as a community resource for evidence-based, policy relevant information on the well-being of children in the 29-county region in southern Ohio, northern Kentucky and eastern Indiana.

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Health Status

The Ohio Family Health Status Survey found that there are significant disparities between Ohio's central cities and suburbs on the three key variables (overall health, physical health, and mental health) among adults. The city-suburban differences on these variables for the elderly were not statistically significant. Most of the difference between cities and suburbs can be explained by differences in socioeconomic status and demographics. [21] The socioeconomic status index used was similar to the one used in this study except that poverty was substituted for the housing variable.

SES was less important as a predictor of physical health than of self-reported health and mental health. Racial composition of a neighborhood is a marginally significant factor in predicting physical health. Age is the most important factor in predicting physical health and mental health but is less important in determining mental health. "After age, poverty and income level are the most important predictors on all three health status measures." [22]

Several important local studies have been completed in the past several years on the health status of individuals and various sub groups of the population including children, African Americans, and Appalachians. For information consult the web sites of the Institute for Health Policy and Health Services Research, the Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati (www.healthfoundation.org), the Child Policy Research Center (www.cprc_chmc.uc.edu) and the Urban Appalachian Council (www.uacvoice.org). Local health research is available on these sites. See Chapter 10 for a more extensive treatment of socioeconomic status and health.

Deconcentrating the Poor

The concentration of the poor and minorities in the central city of the region ought to be a matter of great concern to policy makers. Since 1992, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has used the HOPE VI Program, vouchers, and other strategies to replace public housing concentrations with dispersed affordable units. In a recent Journal of the American

Planning Association article[12] Edward G. Goetz assesses the results of efforts brought about by desegregation lawsuits. The bibliography makes reference to a variety of recent efforts, the most famous of which took place in Chicago, Minneapolis and Columbus, Ohio. The Minneapolis experience is examined in detail.

Goetz points out the limited success of these programs. Dispersal was mostly to nearby neighborhoods already heavily impacted. There was little dispersal to suburbia in most cases. The reasons include resistance of suburban communities to affordable housing, especially for non-residents, affordability, transportation issues, and the reluctance of public housing residents to leave supportive networks and services in the city. The effects of restrictive zoning were not examined. The Chicago experience shows that when public housing conditions are bad enough there is more demand in favor of relocation on the part of residents of public housing. Supportive services must be provided to relocating families over an extended period of time.

A broader design for deconcentrating poverty from the central cities and the creation of low and moderate income housing in suburbia should go beyond lawsuits and public housing project demolition. A regional effort involving foundations, corporations, and private developers as well as governments needs to be developed. A regional non-profit developer could play a role. The benefits to cooperating suburban communities need to be great enough to help overcome resistance.

Current Antipoverty Thinking – The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2009) in its Kid's Count Indicator Brief (www.aecf.org) recommends five strategies for lifting children and families out of poverty:

- Build political will to reduce child poverty.
- Make work pay
- Help low-income families keep more of what they earn.
- Strengthen the safety net.
- Help low-income families build up savings and assets.

Poverty experts have learned that work is not enough. Working a part-time job with no benefits or working only part of a year will not lift one's family out of poverty. And, even if it does, the commonly used poverty levels represent only about 1/3 of what it would cost to live at an adequate level. Society needs to find a way to increase the minimum wage and to provide jobs with a living wage and benefits.

Poverty experts have learned that work is not enough.

Building the political will to eliminate or seriously reduce poverty will require reframing the issue. Most Americans believe people in poverty are there because of some moral failure. The Inclusion Network of the Center for Economic Policy Research (www. Inclusionist. org) suggests an economic framework in which the problem is not poverty but our dependence on low wage jobs. Many of these low wage jobs are also part time and have limited or no benefits. Under these circumstances people are unable to "work their way out of poverty" in the way that welfare reform policies assumed.

Rural and Small Town Areas

Most of the discussion in this chapter has focused on inner city poverty. Needs in suburban and exurban areas are sometimes similar but required solutions may be different. The availability of transportation to distant jobs is an example. Mass transit might be appropriate in the city but carpooling or employer-provided vans might be more appropriate for exurbia. Cultural differences may also affect solutions. The availability of strong kinship networks is one such cultural factor. Where they exist, services should be supportive, not try to replace them. In both urban and exurban communities, a "survey" of community assets is appropriate. We need to know, for example, how people are currently getting to work or to the health clinic before developing a new service. It might make more sense to subsidize existing providers than to expand public transit. Rural needs are changing. Changes in kinship networks mean more single parents and more isolated rural elderly in some counties. The data

provided in Chapter 11 provides an additional tool for rural needs assessment.

The Need for Regional Approaches

For over a decade, urbanologists such as David Rusk and Myron Orfield have examined cities and their regions while advocating regional approaches for managing the trends that are shaping these metro areas. While deploring trends such as central city population loss, the geographic concentration of poverty, and suburban sprawl, these researchers also point to existing reforms such as regional tax sharing and policies that encourage the dispersal of affordable housing units throughout urban regions. In 2001, Myron Orfield completed a report that includes both an analysis of the Cincinnati region and a series of regional policy recommendations (Cincinnati Metropatterns, Citizens for Civic Renewal).

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Up to now, Greater Cincinnati and most U.S. urban regions have made no more than token gestures toward applying regional approaches to their long term problems. Recent events in the Cincinnati area, however, reveal some evidence that regionalism is germinating in the grassroots. What has caused this change in attitude?

First of all, problems that used to be associated with central city decline have taken root in the suburbs. Many of the older incorporated suburbs (often referred to as the "first ring suburbs") have suffered dramatic economic and social decline that place them at greater fiscal risk than Cincinnati. Meanwhile, the relatively unplanned growth of the outer suburbs creates escalating infrastructure cost, traffic gridlock, and air and lead pollution.

In reacting to these trends, citizens, civic groups, and certain public officials have taken steps to promote several regional responses. Citizens for Civic Renewal, a regional citizens' organization that was formed in the late 1990s, sponsored Myron Orfield's study. It currently builds supports for a regional tax sharing policy, an improved area-wide mass transit system and citizen involvement in priority setting.

The Smart Growth Coalition represents another initiative of citizens from Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. The Coalition formed for the purpose of advocating alternatives to sprawling, unplanned growth. It published a report in 2001 that emphasized preserving green space and farmland, redeveloping brownfields, revitalizing urban neighborhoods, and promoting mass transit. Other regional cooperation efforts include Agenda 360 and Vision 2015. Through its funding and research, the Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati serves a broad 20-County region (Figure 15). United Way provides a regional structure for human services funding as well as for cooperation on broad planning and service initiatives. The Free Store Food Bank serves a 20-county region to coordinate food distribution.

In terms of dealing with affordable housing issues on a regional basis, officials from Hamilton County, the City of Cincinnati, and the Metropolitan Housing Authority met with other interested parties from 2003 - 2004 with the purpose of coming up with some common housing goals. This group, "The Housing Advisory Committee," issued its report with a series of recommendations that link housing strategies with the deconcentration of poverty.

These and other initiatives do show some movement toward grappling with issues on a regional basis. Plenty of inertia, however, still exists that prevents regional cooperation. Nevertheless, more and more citizens are recognizing that urban regions have become our geographic, social, and economic realities, and that such realities require public responses that are regional in scope.

Conclusion

Many progressive policies and programs have been discussed here. Whatever path Cincinnati area leaders take we emphasize the importance of using a multi-dimensional framework. Cincinnati and the region have neighborhoods with various social, economic, and educational needs and a solitary program could not create lasting changes. Programs that support each other and the many demands on families are needed. As stated by Alex Kotlowitz in *There Are No Children Here*:

Programs that support each other and the many demands on families are needed.

Many interventions may fail because we change only one thing at a time. We provide school counseling for children who are acting out, but do little to change the social and family environments that shape these children's behavior. We offer welfare recipients job training, but do nothing to increase demand for the skills they are acquiring or to assure that completion of training and successful employment will bring added income. In short, some interventions show up as ineffective because we have changed only one factor when we need to change many to succeed. [23]