Economic Information, Research, and Technical Assistance Program

Focus Sessions|Spring 2015
Multi-Agency Convening

SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK
Primary Takeaways

• Use scalable data
  – “Core” and suburban locations are both vital, but should have different metrics to better understand locational advantages
  – Be as fine-grained as possible

• Consider timeliness of data
  – Be as current as possible
  – Where possible, show trends over time
  – Project into the future
    • Provide some detail
    • But not helpful to tell locals “what they’ll get”
Primary Takeaways

• Add value to data that is already widely available

• “Dig deeper”
  – For example, Show clusters of employees within specific business/industry types
  – Foster better understanding of the link between place of residence and workplace → how to use that in comp planning
  – Fill gaps between existing situation and future/opportunities, and how comp planning can use that analysis
“Key Industry Clusters” Feedback

• More valuable: Why key clusters have emerged, and how that has implications for the future

• More valuable: Site information/what kinds of sites are in demand; are there particular “catalysts” that draw clusters (e.g., hospitals)

• More valuable: Regional/local long-range vision for key industry clusters, and what’s needed to achieve it
“Key Industry Clusters” Feedback

• Data Issues*
  – Help with interpreting the data
  – Current data is more valuable - with updates to illustrate change over time
  – Scaling the data to counties/localities would be useful
  – More granular data
  – Raw number of jobs may be preferable to jobs per acre

• Are there “emerging” clusters?
  – What data indicates
  – Where they locate

* Note that Met Council’s data sharing agreement with DEED requires suppression to accommodate non-disclosure of sensitive business information.
“Key Industry Clusters” Feedback

• Consistency with GMSP’s clusters
  – Met Council clusters add Freight and Logistics
  – Met Council clusters divide “Advanced Manufacturing and Technology” into “Advanced Manufacturing” and “Information Technology”

• Clusters are just one layer – many other layers influence/impact

• Locals (not region) should play prominent role in interpreting regional data for local issues
“Key Industry Clusters” Feedback

• A good baseline – suggestions for follow-up
  – Overlay cluster information on other maps
  – Overlay and/or translate to comp plans
  – Integrate into economic strategy/strategic plan → connect employers to workers
  – Survey and qualitative research
“Occupations” Feedback

• More valuable: Occupations categorized by specific industry (rather than aggregated for all clusters)

• More valuable: Including transportation realities – such as commute times – on workplace and place of residence maps

• More valuable: Range of skills needed for leading occupations → GMSP is leading
“Occupations” Feedback

• Data Issues*
  – Regional data is nice; need local data for comp plans
  – Lower the threshold to show more areas, suburban areas generally do not show well
  – Consider a different measurement, rather than fraction of jobs per acre
  – Current data would be more useful than 2012
  – Expand timeframe to include short-term, long-term trends as well as projections – illustrate change and spectrum
  – Questionable sync between reality and what’s displayed – e.g., 3M doesn’t show on “Engineers” map

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“Occupations” Feedback

• As a baseline, this is useful – but application is key
  – What does knowing what and where leading occupations do to improve comp planning?
  – Will this information influence regional policy decisions?
  – Refine data to better understand level of robustness of occupations
  – Direct implications on affordable housing and its relation to workplaces – Spatial Mismatch issues are illustrated but no solution is presented
  – Bigger question: where are the workers 5 to 10 years from now?

• A mapping tool with job projections would be helpful