

## “Suburban Housing Collaboratives: A Case for Interjurisdictional Collaboration”

**Presenter:** Susan Longworth, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago

Susan Longworth joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago in 2011 as a business economist in the community development and policy studies division. Longworth has over 20 years of community development experience, with a special emphasis on CDFIs, community banks, and small business. She holds an undergraduate degree in English from the University of Michigan, a master’s in public service management from DePaul University, and an international MBA from the University of Chicago.

**Summary and Findings:** My poster explores four examples of interjurisdictional collaboration (IJC) from the Chicago metropolitan area. These examples involve more than 35 suburban communities and demonstrate the changing ways that diverse metropolitan suburbs address housing issues and one another in order to increase their resiliency in challenging times. Using extensive interviews, a review of associated literature, as well as documentation provided by the agencies and communities involved, this paper documents these four models, their impacts and challenges, in a manner that would allow for their application in other communities. The paper also attempts to illustrate the various roles of regional players—planning organizations, funders, employers, developers, as well as financial institutions—in supporting and in some cases catalyzing the collaboratives. The paper concludes that the strategy of IJC, while demonstrating some success in leveraging resources and capturing efficiencies, is still in its early stages but is not without potential for applicability to other cross-border planning initiatives, such as workforce or transit-oriented development. However, a remaining impediment to the application of this innovative strategy remains funders—federal, state, local, as well as private—that struggle to administer collaborative programs, as much as they may encourage them.

**Implications for Policy and Practice:** IJCs could conceivably provide a single point of entry for developers and other partners (“vertical integration”), economies of scale, an approach that is “greater than the sum of its parts,” the ability to access opportunities and resources that couldn’t be managed alone, knowledge sharing, and an adaptable/flexible housing strategy. There remain challenges, however, including strategies to balancing “push” and “pull;” the model is potentially time intensive and consuming, and not everyone derives benefits equally; there are difficulties achieving scale and maintaining momentum when a “crisis” ebbs; communities of greatest need are often hardest to get to the table; allowing for evolution while creating a structure; aligning the collaboration with funding streams; and quantifying impacts and results.