

Call for Papers • Federal Reserve Community Affairs Research Conference

Crystal Gateway Marriott • Arlington, Virginia • April 28-29, 2011



COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
Supporting Community & Economic Development

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Linking Research with Policy and Practice in Low-Income Communities

The Community Affairs Officers of the Federal Reserve System invite paper submissions for the seventh Federal Reserve Community Affairs Research Conference, to be held April 28-29, 2011, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia.

On the heels of the deepest recession since the pre-War period, the challenges facing low-income communities are immense. Families are struggling with long unemployment spells, limited savings, large debt burdens, and shrinking social services. Neighborhoods have seen an increase in foreclosures and vacant houses and storefronts, and nonprofits and CDFIs are tightening their belts even as demand for their services soars. But, the current crisis also provides an opportunity to critically re-think community development. What is the right balance between ensuring sufficient access to credit and not burdening families with unsustainable debt? How do we support strong, healthy communities that connect families to high-quality housing, good schools, adequate health care, and stable employment? And which community development strategies and tools create value for low-income communities and the residents who live there?

The goal of the 2011 conference is to highlight new research that can directly inform community development policy and practice and that points the way to a more inclusive vision of sustainable economic recovery. The Program Committee welcomes research papers and policy studies broadly related to the following topics:

Understanding Community Change

Successful community development relies on an informed understanding of a community's needs and assets, as well as an ability to assess emerging issues and trends. The program committee seeks papers that highlight methodologies for community assessment (including rapid appraisal and original data collection), understanding consumer preferences and behavior, and program evaluation.

The Future of Consumer Credit

In the wake of the financial crisis, re-thinking access to credit has moved to the forefront of policy concerns. We seek papers that focus on all aspects of consumer credit, including credit scores, the impacts of counseling and financial education as they relate to consumer credit, mortgage market products and their regulation, and loan modifications.

Bridging the Divide between People and Place

Increasingly, the field is recognizing the need to integrate physical and human capital investments. Papers under this topic would explore issues related to the links between housing, education, health, workforce development, and resident outcomes, as well as help to untangle the neighborhood effects on individual and family well-being.

Papers outside of these specific topics that fit within the underlying theme also are welcomed, including research papers on small business, microenterprise, social enterprise and self-employment, economic development, economics and identity, green building and the green economy, and neighborhood stabilization.

Individuals interested in presenting their research at the conference should submit their completed paper (which will receive preference) or detailed abstract by **September 15, 2010**.

Please email submissions or questions to Carolina Reid, carolina.reid@sf.frb.org.

Measuring the Impact of Community Development

In order to compete for scarce public funding, the field will have to improve its ability to measure and analyze the impact of community development programs and investments. Papers under this topic might calculate the returns on investment of specific strategies, address the negative/positive spillover and multiplier effects of community development projects, or explore the impact of policies such as mixed-income housing, New Markets Tax Credits, empowerment and enterprise zones, or block grants.

Community Development Finance

The field of community development finance has undergone significant changes in the past two years, financing new projects and developing innovative tools (e.g., peer to peer lending, credit enhancement strategies) at the same time that some of the standard tools have become less reliable. How have these new tools, as well as new assets such as childcare facilities, charter schools, grocery stores, farmers' markets, and community health clinics, changed the nature of community development finance?