

Updating the War on Poverty for a Suburban Age

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DRAFT: March 8, 2014

Introduction

The fiftieth anniversary of the dawn of the War on Poverty is a good time to consider the relationship between place and poverty in America, and how public policy should confront it. While President Johnson's anti-poverty achievements included major entitlement milestones such as the creation of the Medicare, Medicaid and Food Stamp programs, as well as a significant expansion of the Social Security program, they also laid the foundation for many of the United States' contemporary place-based anti-poverty policies. Present-day programs such as community health centers, Job Corps, federal aid to disadvantaged schools, and community action agencies all trace their origins to the War on Poverty.

But it's not just a round-number anniversary that should cause us to re-think poverty and place. Within a relatively short amount of time, the local context for poverty in America has changed fairly dramatically. Public resources for anti-poverty strategies are under mounting pressure. And we have learned a great deal from recent research, experiments, and experience in combating poverty that our current strategies have yet to fully embrace.

Place matters for poverty. After all, people still live in places. Places have different resources and assets. Things that help people deal with and overcome poverty—like education, health care, and transportation—are still delivered in places. The question isn't *whether* public policies must engage place in order to reduce poverty; it's *how* best to do that.

This paper proceeds in two parts. First, it examines the changing relationship between poverty and place in America, where the signature dynamics are continued concentration of poverty in some inner cities alongside rapid suburbanization of poverty in most metropolitan areas. Second, it suggests directions for anti-poverty policies given these spatial dynamics, political and fiscal considerations, and evidence on models of what works in confronting the evolving links between poverty and place.

The Changing Relationship Between Poverty and Place

For decades, experts have framed the debate around the intersection of poverty and place largely with regard to inner cities and remote rural areas. Michael Harrington's seminal 1962 work, *The Other America*, widely credited with motivating Kennedy and Johnson to mount the War on Poverty, argued that poverty had become invisible to many Americans as it concentrated in crowded inner-city slums and isolated rural hamlets. In the same vein, ethnographer Elliott Liebow (*Tally's Corner*), anthropologist Oscar Lewis (*La Vida; A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty*), and policy maker Daniel Patrick Moynihan (*The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*) published influential works in the mid-1960s chronicling the problems of inner cities and their impact on the poor.

More than anecdote, these portrayals reflected the socioeconomic realities of the day. Near the dawn of the War on Poverty, in 1970, 57 percent of poor Americans lived in big cities and rural, non-metropolitan areas. And 15 percent of city residents and 21 percent of rural residents lived in poverty, compared to a national average of 14 percent.

Innovating to End Urban Poverty March 27 & 28, 2014

As major American cities confronted falling population, middle-class flight, and rising crime during the 1970s and 1980s, they also experienced dramatic increases in concentrated poverty. Paul Jargowsky showed that the number of Americans living in metropolitan neighborhoods where at least 40 percent of individuals were below the poverty line rose from 4.5 million in 1970 to nearly 9 million in 1990. Journalists like Ken Auletta (*The Underclass*) and Nicholas Lemann ("The Origins of the Underclass") offered portraits of urban communities in the 1980s marked by violent crime, out-of-wedlock childbearing, and eventually the crack cocaine epidemic. The work of scholars such as William Julius Wilson (*The Truly Disadvantaged*) and Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton (*American Apartheid*) influenced policy makers to "deconcentrate" inner-city poverty through public housing redevelopment and experiments like Moving to Opportunity, in hopes that exposing the poor to better neighborhoods would help break the cycle of poverty.

Five decades on from the War on Poverty's launch, poverty remains more pronounced in cities than elsewhere. In 2012, 22 percent of big-city residents lived below the poverty line, compared to 15 percent of Americans overall. After dropping precipitously in the 1990s, concentrated urban poverty rose in the 2000s, so that by 2005-09, one in five poor city residents lived in an extremely poor neighborhood.

New research also chronicles the negative impacts of growing up in areas of segregated, inner-city poverty. Patrick Sharkey (*Stuck in Place*) shows that major social problems like high rates of African American incarceration and the black-white test score gap have their roots in multigenerational neighborhood inequality. And while the impacts of the Moving to Opportunity experiment—which helped poor families locate from high-poverty public housing to low-poverty neighborhoods—on employment and educational outcomes were less than researchers hoped for, its positive effects on the mental health and sense of well-being among participants were substantial.²

The persistence and negative consequences of urban poverty have given rise to a raft of new strategies aimed at breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty in inner cities. Perhaps most celebrated among these is the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ), a comprehensive system of educational, social services, and community-building programs and supports for families living in Central Harlem. HCZ's success inspired the Obama administration's Promise Neighborhoods initiative, which sought to expand its comprehensive, neighborhood-focused model to other impoverished communities around the country. Other recent efforts, such as the expansion of KIPP and other "no excuses" charter school networks focused on preparing low-income kids for college, have focused primarily in distressed big-city neighborhoods. This inner-city focus is surely needed, given that those communities remain home to very real and pressing problems, and experiments there continue to reveal more about what works.

Yet inner cities do not represent all, or even most, of the places where poverty is found in America today. The magnitude and geography of poverty have both shifted dramatically since the dawn of the War on Poverty.

For starters, there are many more poor in America today than four decades ago. In 2012, 47 million Americans lived below poverty, up from 27 million in 1970. It stands to reason that poverty is now found in a wider set of places than when the poor were much less numerous.

Many of those places experiencing poverty at newfound levels are suburbs. From 2000 to 2012, poverty in America rose much more rapidly in suburbs than in other kinds of places. The number of poor individuals living in big cities in the 100 largest metropolitan areas rose by 29 percent over that period,

compared to 65 percent in communities outside big cities within those metro areas. While big cities and rural areas each had more poor people than suburbs in 1970, suburbs were home to 3 million more poor than big cities, and 7 million more poor than rural areas, by 2012. People in cities remain more likely to be poor than their suburban counterparts, but they no longer outnumber them, which they did as recently as 2000.

There are many reasons why poverty has climbed much faster recently in suburbs:

- Population is growing faster in suburbs than in cities. With wage stagnation and slow job growth making poverty a seemingly more structural feature of the American economy, it is not surprising that poverty has suburbanized alongside broader metropolitan population.
- Low-wage workers are increasingly suburban, too. More than two-thirds of metropolitan workers in low-wage occupations (where at least one-quarter of workers make less than \$10/hour, e.g., food preparation and serving; sales; personal care and services) live in suburbs, where such jobs are plentiful.
- In many aging suburbs, housing has become relatively more affordable. In 2008, nearly half of all households with Housing Choice Vouchers in major metro areas lived in suburban communities. Meanwhile, the re-popularization of many neighborhoods in central cities in recent years has led to a run-up in urban real estate prices and selective out-migration of low-income households to more affordable suburbs. There aren't many places left to live on \$15,000 in Boston, Seattle, or San Francisco.³
- Immigration has contributed in part to poverty's increasingly suburban character. In many metro areas without a continuous history of immigration, new lower-skilled immigrants to the region are settling directly in suburbs, skipping cities altogether.⁴ Most immigrant poor in places like Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. lived in suburbia.
- Finally, the Great Recession affected suburbs first, and hardest. Elizabeth Kneebone's research on "job sprawl" finds that construction and manufacturing, the two major U.S. industries that suffered the steepest job declines from 2007 to 2009, are also the two industries (other than farming and mining) most likely to locate in the farther suburban reaches of major metro areas.⁵

These trends reflect that society has at least partially fulfilled the public policy goal of de-concentrating poverty, and opening up suburban communities for low-income, particularly minority, families. Yet not all suburbs are created equally when it comes to the factors that matter for upward mobility. Steven Raphael and Michael Stoll document that poor black and Latino families who live in the suburbs tend to be in communities with fewer jobs, particularly in metro areas that experience higher rates of poverty overall.⁶ The rising prevalence of high-poverty suburban neighborhoods (where at least 20 percent of residents are below poverty) further underscores the fact that poverty is concentrating in less-than-advantageous suburban locations.⁷

Implications of Suburbanizing Poverty

Being poor in the suburbs, then, does not necessarily remove the obstacles to stability and self-sufficiency that a family's location may present. Crime may be lower and schools may be better than in the inner city (though this is not always the case), but transportation and social services options may be fewer. A lack of quality labor market opportunities may be issues in both types of places, but for

different reasons. That is, focusing on place remains a relevant strategy for addressing suburban poverty, but the problems to be addressed are distinct.

Poverty's shift toward the suburbs has two important implications for efforts to address poverty through place-focused strategies.

First, the rationales and mechanisms for public policy interventions in poor inner-city neighborhoods often do not fit the suburban context. Many place-focused federal policies, for instance, aim to *improve neighborhoods*, addressing the localized market failures that contribute to poverty by upgrading the physical and economic environments in poor neighborhoods through regulations, tax credits, and grants for economic and affordable housing development. But the challenges facing poor suburbs often stretch over much wider areas, in communities that lack strong connections to economic activity, rendering highly localized investments ineffective. Municipalities in south Cook County, IL outside Chicago, or unincorporated Harris County, TX outside Houston, might accept a high-quality affordable housing development, but it wouldn't go very far toward addressing their deeper, underlying challenges.

Likewise, the strategy of *delivering services* in low-income communities to help local residents meet basic needs or access better education and work opportunities arguably works when sufficient density exists to support a bricks-and-mortar approach. Dollars for mental health and substance abuse treatment, job training, Head Start and child care, and community health centers typically flow to poor urban communities where poverty rates are high. But the methods for allocating those funds tend to miss suburbs where poverty is growing and spread out. That is one reason why, even though there are many more poor individuals living in Cleveland's suburbs than in the central city, the city is home to more than a dozen federal consolidated health centers, versus none in the suburbs.

Second, many of the places confronting high levels of poverty today have very little history in dealing with those challenges. As such, they have far less public and private institutional capacity than large cities for delivering critical services or redeveloping neighborhoods. Indeed, many suburbs have resisted building such capacity, hoping that the lack of such programs might "deflect" the problem of poverty to surrounding communities. Other suburbs simply face severe budget constraints, owing to their limited fiscal capacity, that force difficult trade-offs between providing basic municipal services and mounting targeted efforts to help low-income residents. This is not uniformly true across suburbs; large and wealthy suburban counties like Montgomery, MD can mount significant efforts on behalf of their growing number of poor families. But there are far more places like Penn Hills, PA, just outside Pittsburgh, where small allocations of federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars are often used to fund basic city services rather than strategically revitalize distressed neighborhoods.

Even new efforts reinforce this urban/suburban capacity divide. The Low Income Investment Fund and Citi Foundation recently held a competition to identify and fund promising organizations that will work in targeted communities to improve the lot of both places and their residents. Under the "Partners in Progress" initiative, 13 high-capacity "community quarterbacks" will coordinate multiple initiatives at the neighborhood level. Of the 13 grantee organizations, fully 11 will work in central-city communities.⁸ Similarly, the first five communities to be awarded "Promise Zone" designation by the Obama administration—which provides places with enhanced technical assistance and preferences in accessing federal funding—included no suburbs.⁹ There are perhaps many legitimate reasons why these efforts have largely excluded suburbs, but the end result is that many places that could benefit from the presence of strong intermediary organizations may lose out from the services they can provide and the investment they can attract.

Public policy makers cannot afford to overlook the new spatial reality of poverty in metropolitan areas. As recent research from Raj Chetty and colleagues shows, regions differ greatly in the degree of economic mobility their low-income residents experience over time. They find that one of the strongest predictors of mobility is a region's degree of racial and income segregation—the more that black and white, rich and poor live in separate communities, the harder it is for low-income people to climb the economic ladder.¹⁰ And with a majority of African Americans and the poor in major metro areas now living in suburban communities, more of that segregation is occurring among suburbs, rather than between cities and suburbs.¹¹

Beyond that economic rationale, there may be rising political risk to focusing place-based anti-poverty efforts primarily on urban areas. While the challenges facing many inner cities remain stark, the fact that they contain a shrinking share of America's low-income population means that the natural political constituency for efforts to help those places is narrowing. Myron Orfield finds that racially and ethnically diverse suburbs, where poverty is often growing fastest, are the true “swing” political districts.¹² As place-based anti-poverty investments come under increasing scrutiny and pressure in the context of shrinking discretionary resources, it will be difficult to sustain support for those programs on both sides of the aisle without increasing their relevance to suburban communities.

Finally, even if federal investments in place-based anti-poverty efforts could be sustained, their impact would continue to pale in comparison to the need. Elizabeth Kneebone and I estimated that in fiscal year 2012, the federal government spent roughly \$82 billion on these efforts, which is about the size of the SNAP (Food Stamp program) alone this year. However, that \$82 billion in place-based investment was spread across 10 different federal agencies and more than 80 different, fragmented programs. Simply redeploying insufficient resources from struggling inner-city neighborhoods to struggling suburban locales under the same programmatic architecture would not serve the cause of either type of place. Limited federal spending must be used as a catalyst for broader, smarter investment at other levels of government, and by the private and civic sectors, to respond to the challenges of poverty in a much wider array of places.

How to Respond

Little to no new federal money will likely be available for place-focused anti-poverty programs in the near future.¹³ Given that, there are two ways in which our approaches to fighting poverty could be updated for poverty's new suburban age, and to extract greater value out of (at best) flat investment in such programs.

One approach would aim to make place *less relevant* in how services are delivered, and in the opportunities made available to low-income families, so as to narrow the gap in investment levels and effectiveness between city and suburban locations. Along those lines, policy makers might consider:

- Further investing in *people-based* programs that demonstrate good outcomes regardless of an individual or family's location. New calls to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), particularly for taxpayers without children, could help increase labor supply and earnings among low-income workers in urban and suburban communities alike.¹⁴ Because participants access the program by filing a federal tax return, there are very few barriers to the EITC that relate to the type of community in which one lives. (This one would cost real money, of course.)

- Streamlining *systems that provide access to work supports* for low-income families. Distance, inadequate information, and stigma can all contribute to lower rates of participation in key state- or county-administered programs that support working poor families, such as food assistance, child care, and subsidized health insurance. Through the Work Support Strategies initiative, a collection of states is working to streamline and integrate their eligibility and enrollment systems for these programs in ways that may have the effect of minimizing place-based barriers to families' participation.¹⁵
- Extending *school choice* programs beyond central cities. One of the most direct ways in which place can affect the life chances of the poor is via neighborhood school assignment policies that cluster kids by socioeconomic status. Overall, the typical low-income student in a major city in 2010 attended a school in which 65 percent of students were low-income, and which scored at only the 32nd percentile on statewide exams. Recognizing this, a growing number of urban school districts have moved toward a "portfolio" approach, based on closer district-charter collaboration, that widens student access to public schools beyond their neighborhood school.¹⁶ Yet access to better schools is a critical issue for the typical suburban low-income student, too, who attends a school that scores at only the 45th percentile on statewide exams.¹⁷ State and local policy makers and education reformers could do much more to introduce this new model into the many larger suburban school systems confronting growing poverty.
- Enhancing labor mobility via *private transportation subsidies*. While most low-income suburban communities have access to some form of public transit, low frequency and limited routes mean that their commuters can reach only a small fraction of metropolitan jobs within a reasonable amount of time.¹⁸ Meanwhile, as Margery Turner points out in her piece for this conference, programs that provide special-purpose vans or buses to transport workers from low-income neighborhoods to employment centers have produced disappointing results.¹⁹ Federal and state policymakers, local philanthropy, and even large employers might shift that investment toward programs that provide low-cost access to automobiles, which remain the primary commuting mode for low-income urban and suburban workers alike. Milwaukee-based Ways to Work finances affordable auto loans for low-income families with challenging credit histories through a blend of public and private dollars, and contracts with partner agencies in over 40 sites nationally to provide wraparound financial capacity building services to program participants.

A second approach would aim to make place-focused anti-poverty strategies themselves *more relevant* for the suburban areas where poor people increasingly live. To do so, policy makers should:

- Explicitly favor *scaled service providers*. With poverty affecting many more families and places than ever before, public policies must greatly extend the reach of dollars being spent on place-focused anti-poverty efforts. Some organizations, such as Neighborhood Centers in Greater Houston, IFF in the Midwest, and Ways to Work nationwide, have achieved much greater scale in their service delivery model, often operating multiple programs in multiple places at the same time, and thereby stretching limited dollars further. But most federal and state programs give no preference in their grantmaking criteria or administrative rules for organizations that can achieve greater unit-cost efficiencies (not to mention superior outcomes). One result is that they face the same reporting requirements as single-neighborhood, single-service providers, greatly complicating their efforts to align and integrate multiple services on the ground.

The principles outlined in the Department of Education’s new Performance Partnership Pilots—which would allow states and localities to blend funding across multiple federal programs, and simplify reporting requirements and reducing administrative burdens for awardees—could be applied to high-performing non-profits.²⁰ Such organizations could be identified by an independent panel based on indicators such as long-run financial stability, leadership experience and track record, positive independent evaluations of program delivery efficiency and efficacy, existence of internal planning and evaluation personnel and tracking of key program and client metrics, organizational “market share,” and success in partnering with smaller, local organizations.

- Promote *collaboration*. Since not all places facing growing poverty may have a truly scaled provider operating in their midst, public policies must also get existing actors to work better together, particularly across jurisdictional lines. Unfortunately, programs have created real or artificial barriers to such collaboration between cities and suburbs, or among suburbs themselves. For instance, while HOME program dollars for affordable housing development can go to a collaborative entity that contains both big cities and smaller surrounding communities, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars cannot, blocking participation among suburban communities struggling with growing poverty.

At a minimum, federal policymakers should conduct a top-to-bottom review of anti-poverty programs to identify barriers to local collaboration—administrative, regulatory, or statutory—and recommend potential solutions. Ideally, competitive federal grant programs would favor applications from collaborative entities. States can pave the way for such collaboration; one example is Ohio’s Local Government Innovation Fund, which helps smaller cities and towns conduct strategic assessments to identify opportunities for collaboration and consolidation. Philanthropy, too, can grease the wheels, providing needed seed capital and a “safe space” for suburbs to come together around common issues in education or community development.

- Provide *enterprise-level investment*. Truly scaled interventions that work across multiple places require diversified public and private funding, and a focus on results. Most anti-poverty policies and philanthropic investments, however, support efforts at the program or transaction level, making it difficult for local efforts to branch into new communities or respond nimbly to the rapid market changes occurring there. New, promising vehicles are beginning to emerge that, by backing high-performance organizations with patient capital, stretch limited resources further and sharpen the focus on outcomes. For instance, the U.S. Treasury Department’s Hardest Hit Fund was created to assist states that suffered the worst effects of the foreclosure crisis. In Illinois, those funds were used to back the Mortgage Resolution Fund, a collaborative organization that used the funds to purchase nonperforming mortgages and provide wrap-around services to borrowers to mitigate foreclosures, primarily in four suburban clusters in the Chicago region.²¹ In the Washington, DC area, Venture Philanthropy Partners concentrates its investments and technical assistance on a small number of high-capacity organizations, providing multi-year operating subsidies that help established nonprofits in the District of Columbia expand their services into surrounding suburbs.

There are modest but meaningful steps federal and state governments and philanthropy could take in each of these areas to better serve both urban and suburban low-income communities. In the end, however, growing poverty in metropolitan areas is a large-scale economic phenomenon, and tends to affect entire sub-regions—the south sides and suburbs of Atlanta, Chicago, and Seattle; or the east sides

and suburbs of Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Washington, D.C. To avoid recreating in suburbia the kinds of concentrated disadvantage that characterize so many of our urban centers, public policies must better engage with housing dynamics, transportation needs, service networks, and economic and workforce development across these sub-regions.

As David Erickson, Ian Galloway, and Naomi Cytron of the San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank argue, place-focused anti-poverty strategies need “quarterbacks” to identify and build on areas of leadership and strength across communities, blend multiple funding streams, and help fill gaps in local capacity.²² Such quarterbacks have already emerged in several areas of the country, like the Metropolitan Planning Council in the Chicago area, Neighborhood Centers in Houston, IFF in the broader Midwest, or The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) in the Mid-Atlantic area. But they are far from ubiquitous, and those that exist labor under inflexible systems that arguably constrain greater reach and effectiveness.

A bolder federal-state-local response would provide competitive funding in the form of a *Metropolitan Opportunity Challenge*. The Challenge would focus on increasing access to opportunities and resources critical to the success of low-income families and communities across entire regions or sub-regions. Unlike existing initiatives, however, the Challenge would provide funding to scaled intermediaries focused on achieving longer-run outcomes for these families and communities, rather than narrow programmatic outputs.²³ In that vein, the Challenge would:

- Be a competitive grant program for states, to condition funding on critical state-level reforms that ease access to work supports for low-income individuals and families (like those being tested through the Work Support Strategies Initiative), and to bring states to the table to gain their needed cooperation in carrying out metro strategies. States would apply jointly with their metropolitan areas to outline how funding would subsequently be deployed at the regional or sub-regional levels.
- Support tailored metro-level strategies, providing enterprise-level funding to existing or emerging quarterbacks that demonstrate scaled delivery, collaborative approaches, and interventions that capitalize on the economic assets of lower-income communities. Strategies could focus, for instance, on the strategic location of affordable housing near good schools, stimulating economic development along key underserved corridors, scaling the provision of health and social services, or coordinating workforce strategies with early learning centers to help more adults prepare for in-demand careers. Importantly, the Challenge would be agnostic about specific implementation choices, but like growing “Pay for Success” efforts would condition a portion of funding on how well the strategies achieve measurable gains in opportunity for families and communities.
- Encourage regions and sub-regions to focus on investing in real levers for economic mobility, particularly higher-quality education and training opportunities aligned to sector-based economic development. Broadening access to services and affordable housing and transportation options are worthy goals, but the Challenge should also seek to stimulate much greater collaboration among suburban jurisdictions, and between cities and suburbs, to foster the economic fundamentals that allow local businesses to expand as well as attract new inward investment.

- Bend larger mainstream funding, requiring states and regions to align existing place-focused resources (e.g., Title I dollars for low-income schools, or federal transit subsidies, or state and local economic development tax expenditures) behind proposed Challenge strategies.
- Grow stronger networks of intermediaries and supporting institutions working at the regional and sub-regional scales. While existing or potential quarterbacks may already exist in some locales, the Challenge could also help attract high performers to regions with limited existing capacity, in the way that the Department of Education's Investing in Innovation program has helped Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) expand high-performing charters expand into new markets.

To provide sufficient incentive and resources to truly transform existing place-focused approaches, the Metropolitan Opportunity Challenge would need to be funded at a multi-billion dollar level. While federal support for such an initiative could certainly leverage state, local, philanthropic, and private-sector resources through a matching requirement, the Challenge would still require significant federal resources. The Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor currently operate the largest numbers of programs that attempt to address poverty in place, and could operate the Metropolitan Opportunity Challenge under a special partnership. If those agencies combined just 5 percent of the existing resources they dedicated to those programs, that would free up \$3.5 billion to support the Challenge, almost as much as Race to the Top provided (and roughly equivalent to what HUD currently spends on the Community Development Block Grant program alone). Ideally, resources would be redirected from programs at those agencies with the weakest evidence of effectiveness, and those that are most limited in their geographic and programmatic reach.²⁴

To be sure, this would entail an uphill political battle. For instance, the Obama administration has proposed on multiple occasions (including in its fiscal year 2015 budget) to significantly cut or make competitive the Community Services Block Grant Program, which contains vestiges of the original War on Poverty programs, but Congress has rejected those proposals. Yet it will be increasingly difficult to defend existing approaches and funding streams that fail to grapple with the current-day complexities and geography of poverty in America. As existing programs come under further scrutiny and fiscal pressure, the Metropolitan Opportunity Challenge could be positioned as something of an "escape valve" for repurposing additional cuts into a bolder, bottom-up approach for enhancing regional opportunity.

Conclusion

We've learned a great deal over the last five decades from the successes and failures that grew out of the War on Poverty. Today, however, the challenge is growing in new locations all the time, evidently at a much faster rate than the resources we seem to be willing to dedicate to confronting it.

The upshot is that we don't have another 50 years to recreate the urban poverty playbook in suburbia. The need is too pressing and the playbook outdated. Continuing business as usual risks limiting the future economic potential of millions of Americans and their communities. Fortunately, innovation in our nation's metropolitan areas points the way toward more efficient, effective, and far-reaching models for addressing the new relationship between poverty and place.

President Johnson, for his part, foresaw this need to continuously refresh our approach to solving tough problems. Four months after the State of the Union address in which he launched the War on Poverty,

Johnson delivered commencement remarks at the University of Michigan. There, he described the challenge of the next half century as the building of a “Great Society,” one that “is not a safe harbor, a resting place, a final objective, a finished work. It is a challenge constantly renewed.”²⁵

¹ Portions of this essay are adapted from Elizabeth Kneebone and Alan Berube, *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2013).

² Xavier de Souza Briggs, Susan J. Popkin, and John Goering, *Moving to Opportunity: The Story of an American Experiment to Fight Ghetto Poverty* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

³ Alan Berube, “All Cities Are Not Created Unequal” (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2014).

⁴ Audrey Singer and others, eds., *Twenty-First Century Gateways: Immigrant Incorporation in Suburban America* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008).

⁵ Elizabeth Kneebone, “Job Sprawl Revisited: The Changing Geography of Metropolitan Employment” (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009).

⁶ Steven Raphael and Michael Stoll, “Job Sprawl and the Suburbanization of Poverty” (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2010).

⁷ Elizabeth Kneebone, Carey Anne Nadeau, and Alan Berube, “The Re-Emergence of Concentrated Poverty: Metropolitan Trends in the 2000s” (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2011).

⁸ Alan Berube and Natalie Holmes, “Wanted: Suburban Quarterbacks,” online at <http://confrontingsuburbanpoverty.org/2014/01/wanted-suburban-quarterbacks/>

⁹ “Fact Sheet: President Obama’s Promise Zones Initiative,” online at www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/08/fact-sheet-president-obama-s-promise-zones-initiative

¹⁰ Raj Chetty and others, “Where is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the U.S.”

¹¹ Alan Berube and others, “The State of Metropolitan America: On the Front Lines of Demographic Transformation” (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2010).

¹² Myron Orfield and Thomas Luce, “America’s Racially Diverse Suburbs: Challenges and Opportunities” (University of Minnesota Law School, 2012).

¹³ President Obama’s FY 2015 budget projects a further decline in the share of GDP dedicated to domestic discretionary spending, from a 40-year average of 3.8 percent to 2.2 percent by 2024. Bruce Katz, “The Hidden Line in Obama’s Budget and What It Means for Cities and Metro Areas,” online at www.brookings.edu/blogs/the-avenue/posts/2014/03/07-obama-budget-cities-katz

¹⁴ Jason Furman, “Poverty and the Tax Code.” *Democracy Journal* 31 (Spring 2014): 8–22.

¹⁵ Olivia Golden, “Early Lessons from the Work Support Strategies Initiative: Planning and Piloting Health and Human Services Integration in Nine States” (Washington: Urban Institute, 2013).

¹⁶ Paul Hill, Christine Campbell, and Betheny Gross, *Strife and Progress: Portfolio Strategies for Managing Urban Schools* (Brookings Press, 2012).

¹⁷ Brookings analysis of GreatSchools data.

¹⁸ Adie Tomer and others, "Missed Opportunity: Transit and Jobs in Metropolitan America" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2011).

¹⁹ Margery Turner, "Tackling Poverty in Place: Principles for a Next Generation of Place-Conscious Interventions." Paper prepared for USC *Innovating to End Urban Poverty* Conference, March 27-28, 2014.

²⁰ See U.S. Department of Education, "Performance Partnerships for Disconnected Youth," online at <http://www.ed.gov/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2014-PPPs-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

²¹ Brookings Institution, "Mortgage Resolution Fund: A Scaled Investment in Foreclosure Relief," online at http://confrontingsuburbanpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Brookings_ToolKit_CaseStudies_MRF.pdf

²² David Erickson, Ian Galloway, and Naomi Cytron, "Routinizing the Extraordinary," in *Investing in What Works for America's Communities*, edited by Andrews and Erickson (Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, 2012).

²³ This idea is explored in further detail in Elizabeth Kneebone and Alan Berube, "The Metropolitan Opportunity Challenge: Aligning Anti-Poverty Investments Region-Wide," online at http://confrontingsuburbanpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Brookings_ToolKit_PolicyBrief_MOC_05.16.2013.pdf

²⁴ More than \$500 million in place-based funding Elizabeth Kneebone and I tracked in *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America* was in programs that in fiscal year 2012 provided less than \$50 million in grants nationally.

²⁵ President Lyndon B. Johnson, "The Great Society." Remarks at the University of Michigan, May 22, 1964, online at www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/primary-resources/lbj-michigan/