

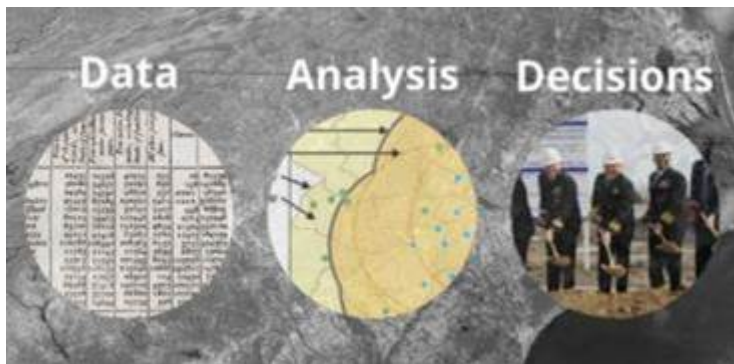


Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: Who's Moved Out and Who's Moved In: Exploring Housing and Migration Data Using a New Data Resource—Carolina Demography

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Numerous prestigious universities in North Carolina

hold huge amounts of expertise and data, but often it is inaccessible to professionals working at the local level. The relatively new center called Carolina Demography is an effort to bring the power of high-level population research to local needs. This post discusses the type of data available of interest to community economic development (CED) professionals, using migration data as an example.

The Carolina Population Center, located at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been around for decades, but its work has focused primarily on supporting major academic research initiatives, primarily national and international in nature. A little more than a year ago, however, it launched a new service called Carolina Demography. In making the announcement, the Director of the Population Center noted “In recent years...we have done little to serve directly the state of North Carolina.” The new service is meant to provide North Carolina-specific data and consulting services on population and demographic trends to communities.

There is a limited set of data available for free on its web site. Much of the information provided is re-packaged from national sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the American Community Survey, but the benefit for CED professionals is that they are focused on issues common to community economic development discussions. For example, the web site features data on housing units for each decade from 1940-2050 (projected) at the block group level – the smallest geographic unit available. There are 6,155 block groups in North Carolina, and the web site offers the underlying data for download. The accompanying short time-series animation clearly shows the past and potential picture of economic growth centers in the state.

Carolina Demography provides blog posts once or twice a month, often highlighting population data developed by other organizations with some particular meaning for North Carolina. A recent post focused on state-to-state migration. As might be expected given its home in the Carolina Population Center, the posts include some information that may be of greater interest to academics than to small town economic development officers, but there are nuggets of data that would benefit most North Carolina CED professionals. For example, the post points out that in 2011- 2012, North Carolina saw a net gain of about 35,000 people due to migration, but that relatively small number masked the fact that it was due to about 240,000 people moving out and 275,000 moving in. In terms of which specific states had the highest levels of migration with North Carolina — Florida, South Carolina, and Virginia came out on top. Each had over 40,000 people move to or from the Tar Heel State.



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