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The role of labor market structure in urban sprawl

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In this article, I construct and calibrate a tractable search and matching model in which the residential density of workers is endogenous. Using this new framework, I demonstrate that labor market structure generates significant urban sprawl. I identify the fact that firms compensate workers for their spatial costs as the major cause of this large inefficiency. Next, I underline that optimality can be restored if the government implements an employee commuter-benefit program. Finally, I demonstrate that these results are robust to the inclusion of other features such as various job centers, wage settings, calibrations, preferences and social welfare functions.

JEL Codes: J63, J64, R14

Keywords: Urban Sprawl, Search and Spatial Frictions, Efficiency

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