



TRAFFIC ANALYSIS ZONES

HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?



TAZs – HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?

Session Objectives

TAZs have been a part of the CTPP/UTPP data product since the inception of the tabulation. However, over time TAZs have become very costly to produce, redundant with other geographies and confusing in their structure.

- Assess the issues surrounding the continued production of TAZs for Census Transportation analyses
 - Examine the usefulness / utility of having the TAZ geographic delineation
 - Examine the challenges and limitations of the TAZ geographic delineation
 - Examine the costs of the TAZ geographic delineation
 - Identify potential future strategies to maintain Census small area analyses for transportation planning
- Help frame the CTPP Oversight Board's discussions for future TAZ level data requests

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Usefulness / Utility of Having the TAZ Geographic Delineation

Zhao & Zhao:

- “More than 70 percent of survey respondents prefer to have CTPP tabulations at the TAZ level”
- “About a quarter of survey respondents described TAZ level tabulations as a necessity”
- “To use CTPP data for travel demand modeling, it is essential to have data at the TAZ level”
- “Many small- and medium-sized MPOs with limited resources rely heavily or completely on CTPP data, so maintaining TAZ geography will be their only means to analyze small area data”

- What analyses are you and other transportation planners doing at the Census TAZ level of geography?
- What would be lost in these analyses if only larger geographic delineations were available?

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Challenges and Limitations of the TAZ Geographic Delineation

Zhao & Zhao:

- “A third of users say Census TAZ level margins-of-error are significant enough to alter the way the data are used”
 - “Two thirds of agencies do not have the same model TAZs as Census TAZs”
 - “Workplace geocoding problems are more prevalent at more detailed geography like Census TAZ”
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- How have your and other transportation planners’ analyses at the Census TAZ level of geography been affected by larger margins-of-error?
 - How have your and other transportation planners’ analyses at the Census TAZ level of geography been affected by the need for small area data perturbation?
 - How have workplace geocoding issues affected your and other transportation planners’ analyses at the Census TAZ level of geography and other geographic levels?

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Costs of the TAZ Geographic Delineation

Zhao & Zhao:

- The large majority of MPOs actively participated in the past few TAZ delineation processes
 - CTPP is a pooled fund program administered by AASHTO
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- In your experiences, what are the marginal costs and resource requirements of defining TAZs, tabulating ACS results, and reporting data at the TAZ geographic level for ...
 - Census Bureau and USDOT establish TAZ boundary requirements
 - State DOTs and MPOs define TAZ boundaries and share with Census Bureau
 - Census Bureau geocodes ACS home and workplace data to TAZ level
 - Census Bureau applies data perturbation routines to TAZ level data and supplies “A” and “B” tables
 - AASHTO incorporates TAZ level data into CTPP data products

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Strategies to Maintain Census Small Area Analyses for Transportation Planning

Zhao & Zhao:

- TAD level tabulations will help to mitigate some of the TAZ data issues
 - TAZ delineation process should be conducted on a more frequent basis
 - Adopting new technologies in ACS data collection process could greatly improve workplace location data
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- What suggestions do you have to improve the quality of Census small area data tabulations for transportation planning?
 - What suggestions do you have to limit the cost and resource needs associated with maintaining Census small area data tabulations?

TAZS – HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?

Recommendations for the CTPP Oversight Board

- What guidance do you want to provide to the CTPP Oversight Board as they consider the need for data at the TAZ level geography?