

# Uses of Transportation and Place-of-Work Data from the 1980 Census

Rolf R. Schmitt

The decennial census is increasingly a source of converging interests between the transportation community and other planners, analysts, and researchers. The transportation community has become increasingly dependent on the entire range of data in the decennial census, whereas the so-called transportation questions in the decennial census have become a major resource for a widening spectrum of data users. These converging interests are underscored by the papers in this part.

The portions of the decennial census questionnaire most closely associated with transportation include the questions on place of work, travel time, and vehicle availability. The place-of-work question is the key to understanding the growing constituency for these portions of the decennial census within and beyond the transportation community. This question provides the means to determine the number, social and economic characteristics, and travel behavior of workers at their workplaces. Nearly as much can be known about the nation's daytime geography as about its population at home. Such information is essential for planning and marketing virtually all kinds of facilities and services in both the public and private sectors.

The growing constituency for decennial census data within the transportation community is suggested in the first three papers. Richard Glaze examines from the Florida perspective a relatively new involvement of state transportation agencies in acquiring and using data from the decennial census. Thabet Zakaria reviews the ongoing, traditional uses of census data for urban transportation planning based on his Philadelphia experience. Sam Zimmerman focuses on the particular needs of transit based on nationwide experiences.

The growing constituency beyond the transportation community for the transportation elements of the decennial census is suggested by the next four papers. Hammel illustrates how the journey-to-work questions have been used by public agencies involved in economic development and social service planning in the New York area. Diamond indicates the diverse uses of similar census data in Southern California by private firms for marketing, site selection, and so forth. Bontempo and Surridge cover both public and private applications of the data by a statewide constituency of small agencies, firms, and individuals in Pennsylvania. Reed brings the discussion back to a national scale, explaining how one study is currently using the data to compare changes over time and among metropolitan areas in geography, demographics, and travel patterns.

Part III of this report concludes with a paper by McDonnell that summarizes comments by the users of the 1980 census data and compares those comments with those of users of the equivalent data from the 1970 census. These experiences and evaluations by the users of the 1980 census, in conjunction with their views of changing data needs over the next decade, suggest the perspectives on which their recommendations for the 1990 census are based.

Most of the papers in Part III were prepared as background presentations for this conference to provide an overview of the diverse experiences with the 1980 census data. The perspectives of these papers taken together should be viewed as representative rather than as comprehensive, however, because many applications and experiences are described in Transportation Research Record 981, which provides much detail that could not be accommodated here.