

LOOKING TOWARD THE 1980 CENSUS

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At the Federal Highway Administration, we conducted a telephone canvas of those states and urban transportation studies that ordered and received the Urban Transportation Planning Package. As of this writing, 112 urbanized areas have ordered the package (Table 1). (This does not include special orders.) Of the 112 orders, 7 were filled in 1972 (Wilmington, Delaware; Bay City, Michigan; Madison, Wisconsin; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Billings and Great Falls, Montana; and Fargo-Moorhead, Minnesota) and the remaining 44 in 1973. States that had not ordered at all were Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, Louisiana, Utah, Colorado, and South Dakota.

It is too early to make a definite judgment as to the effective use of the package; nevertheless, based on the responses from the field, we have made the following observations.

1. Only a few areas have made use of the files. In addition to Albuquerque and Wilmington, only Madison, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Spokane, Eugene, Portland, and Fargo-Moorhead have undertaken tape processing. The latter 3 areas reported limited use.
2. The remaining areas have used the printout. As a rule, the census bureau has supplied a copy of the printout of the package first, and the tape followed several weeks later. About a half-dozen areas only recently received their tapes and have not had time to process them. Columbia, South Carolina, has not yet used the data at all because of difficulties arising from the study area being twice as large as the package coverage.
3. The use of the printouts was limited to only Parts I and II. Although the use of Parts III and IV is planned, some areas were quite concerned about whether they will be able to make the necessary adjustments for application. Part I data are being used as a check against other local data, in model development, in various levels of reviews, in corridor studies, and in transit studies. All users were pleased with these tabulations of the socioeconomic characteristics of the population by zone of residence.
4. The question arises, Why such a limited use of the package, especially of Parts III and IV? The most prevalent answers were

Table 1. Use of Urban Transportation Planning Package.

Region	State	Number Ordered	Number Received	Use		
				Tape	Printout	None
1	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico	13	2		2	
3	Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia	13	9	1	8	
4	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina	19	7		6	1
5	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin	29	13	2	11	
6	Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas	7	5	1	4	
7	Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska	6	6		6	
8	Colorado, Montana, Utah, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota	3	3	1	2	
9	Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada	18	3		3	
10	Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington	4	3	3		
Total		112	51	8	42	1

that lack of time, staffing limitations, reorganizations, and computer problems all seriously affected the use of the package. My personal observation is that many were reluctant to tackle the adjustment problems associated with Parts III and IV.

In summary, our experiences to date are as follows:

1. The actual application of the package has been quite limited;
2. The data were unfortunately slow in coming—about 1 year behind original estimates (in August 1973 fewer than half of the ordered packages had been delivered);
3. Most users do not have time or ability to go through any adjustment process; and
4. Only about half of the urbanized areas in the country ordered the data.

These facts lead us to conclude that, in 1980 and particularly in pretests, we should be concerned with the following items:

1. There must be a rephrased journey-to-work question that will elicit a higher quality address;
2. The geographic coverage of the journey-to-work coding should be expanded to SMSAs and must cover multiareas in large urban regions;
3. The coding resources (guides, maps, business directories) must be significantly enhanced; and
4. The processing must be speeded up and possibly contracted out.

It might also be well to consider the institutional framework that will exist for future urban transportation planning. New highway legislation provides special funds to metropolitan agencies for urban transportation planning. These funds amount, in general, to about 23 cents per capita or about \$11,500 per year in areas of 50,000 population and about \$230,000 per year in areas of 1 million population.

If we consider that a well-balanced urban study should devote more than 20 percent of its resources for data, leaving the rest for actual plan development, then study data budgets in the 50,000 to 1 million population range would extend from \$2,000 to about \$40,000 per year. These amounts include provision for travel surveys, traffic counts, and surveillance activities as well as census data. Thus, we see that the small areas are going to remain in a bind to get data, while large areas can afford comprehensive data bases. The UTPP costs areas in the 50,000-population range approximately \$1,400 and those in the 1-million range \$8,000—a real bargain on a per capita basis. Small studies will be one-person operations, and large studies will perhaps be able to afford data specialists.

Looking toward 1980, we are optimistic. In spite of the shortcomings of the 1970 experience, we do not suggest turning back. The worst problems are behind us and, having identified the weak areas, we should proceed to develop a refined, more adequate, and more flexible approach to uses of census data in transportation planning.