About the AASHTO Census Transportation Planning Products Program

Established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT), the AASHTO Census Transportation Planning Products Program (CTPP) compiles census data on demographic characteristics, home and work locations, and journey-to-work travel flows to assist with a variety of state, regional, and local transportation policy and planning efforts. CTPP also supports corridor and project studies, environmental analyses, and emergency operations management.

In 1990, 2000, and again in 2006, AASHTO partnered with all of the states on pooled-fund projects to support the development of special census products and data tabulations for transportation. These census transportation data packages have proved invaluable in understanding characteristics about where people live and work, their journey-to-work commuting patterns, and the modes they use for getting to work. In 2012, the CTPP was established as an ongoing technical service program of AASHTO.

CTPP provides a number of primary services:

- **Special Data Tabulation from the U.S. Census Bureau**—CTPP oversees the specification, purchase, and delivery of this special tabulation designed by and for transportation planners.

- **Outreach and Training**—The CTPP team provides training on data and data issues in many formats, from live briefings and presentations to hands-on, full-day courses. The team has also created a number of electronic sources of training, from e-learning to recorded webinars to downloadable presentations.

- **Technical Support**—CTPP provides limited direct technical support for solving data issues; the program also maintains a robust listserv where many issues are discussed, dissected, and resolved by the CTPP community.

- **Research**—CTPP staff and board members routinely generate problem statements to solicit research on data issues; additionally, CTPP has funded its own research efforts. Total research generated or funded by the current CTPP since 2006 is in excess of $1 million.

**Staff**

- Penelope Weinberger, CTPP Program Manager
- Matt Hardy, Program Director, Policy and Planning
- Jim Tymon, Chief Operating Officer/Director of Policy and Management

**Project Team**

- Steven E. Polzin, Co-Author, Center for Urban Transportation Research, University of South Florida
- Alan E. Pisarski, Co-Author, Consultant, Falls Church, Virginia
- Bruce Spear, Data Expert, Cambridge Systematics, Inc.
- Liang Long, Data Expert, Cambridge Systematics, Inc.
- Nancy McGuckin, Data Expert, Travel Behavior Analyst

**Contact**

Penelope Weinberger, e-mail: pweinberger@aashto.org, phone: 202-624-3556; or CTPPinfo@aashto.org

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This brief is the fifth in a series describing commuting in America. This body of work, sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and carried out in conjunction with a National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) project that provided supporting data, builds on three prior *Commuting in America* documents that were issued over the past three decades. Unlike the prior reports that were single volumes, this effort consists of a series of briefs, each of which addresses a critical aspect of commuting in America. These briefs, taken together, comprise a comprehensive summary of American commuting. The briefs are disseminated through the AASHTO website (*traveltrends.transportation.org*). Accompanying data tables and an *Executive Summary* complete the body of information known as *Commuting in America 2013* (CIA 2013).

Brief 5 describes the changes taking place in employment patterns in the U.S. from the perspective of how this might influence commuting. This brief completes the information about the work force and employment presented in Briefs 3, 4, and 6.

**Jobs Versus Workers**

Brief 3 described workers as a component of the population and provided a comprehensive overview of changes in the workforce as they relate to the demographic characteristics of the population. Brief 4 provided more detailed descriptive data covering the geographic location of workers. Not surprisingly, there is a strong inherent relationship between jobs and workers—neither can exist without the other, at least not for any length of time. At the national level, aggregate disparities between jobs and workers can be explained by measures of vacant positions and unemployed workers. These measures do not add particular insight when trying to understand commuting trends. However, at more detailed levels of geography, there can be significant variations between the nature and counts of jobs and counts of appropriately-credentialed workers, and these disparities can influence commuting patterns as workers travel to fill available positions. Brief 15 discusses the flow of workers between geographies; this brief provides summary information on the location of jobs by geography.

The geographic location of jobs is influenced by a host of considerations. The top factors include access to markets or customers for retail and service activities, access to labor force, and access to materials/resources for jobs that involve working with physical commodities. The location of some employment types is constrained by the need to be in proximity to certain locations. For example, rapid growth in employment in energy extraction in North Dakota is driven by and dependent on being in proximity to the state’s oil- and gas-bearing formations. Other jobs, such as healthcare, materialize in proximity to populations that
need services. In some situations, the growth of jobs (e.g., North Dakota energy extraction) attracts workers and, subsequently, generates more jobs to provide services to the growing population. In other cases, the growth of population is associated with the appeal or amenities in a given area, which then creates new employment (e.g., retirees moving to mild Southern climates, creating service and healthcare jobs to serve that population). Attractive, amenity-rich areas can also attract employment whose location is not constrained by access to natural resources or local markets (i.e., software, pharmaceuticals, some technologies, and some services that are dependent upon national or international markets), which subsequently attracts population and supporting employment. Commuting patterns are created as the various factors that influence the location of jobs and households play themselves out.

Brief 4, in a series of tables, described current population levels and their geographic distribution patterns and further traced population trends for the main national geographic units from 1990–2010. These tables establish the framework for examining worker and job trends.

Table 5-1 provides a national-level summary for 2010 for population and the associated worker and jobs levels within those geographic categories for metropolitan areas. Figure 5-1 presents the distribution of workers, population, and jobs by area type graphically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Workers</th>
<th>Workers per Capita</th>
<th>Jobs</th>
<th>Jobs per Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metro–Central Cities</td>
<td>75,283,196</td>
<td>27,899,370</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>40,536,506</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro–Other Principal Cities</td>
<td>24,065,670</td>
<td>9,340,785</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>13,267,941</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro–Suburbs</td>
<td>163,103,266</td>
<td>71,420,007</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>57,306,197</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro–All</td>
<td>262,452,132</td>
<td>108,660,162</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>111,110,644</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Metro (by Subtraction)</td>
<td>46,293,406</td>
<td>28,280,848</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>25,830,366</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total U.S.</td>
<td>308,745,538</td>
<td>136,941,010</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>136,941,010*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Central City Share 24.3% 20.3% 29.6%
Other Principal City Share 8.8% 6.8% 9.7%
Suburban Share 52.8% 52.2% 41.8%
Non-Metro Share 15.0% 20.7% 18.9%

*For purposes of analysis, total U.S. jobs set to equal workers.

Source: Summary of ACS data

1 *Commuting in America 2013*, Brief 4, “Population and Worker Dynamics,” Tables 4-7, 4-8, 4-9.
Figure 5-1. Distribution of Jobs, Workers, and Population by Area Type

Source: Summary of ACS data

Key points:
- Metro areas have approximately 85 percent of the nation’s population, 79 percent of its workers, and 81 percent of the jobs.
- Workers per capita is lowest in the central cities and is similarly modest in the other principal cities. It is higher in the suburbs and significantly higher in non-metro areas.
- In something of an inverse relationship, jobs per worker is greatest in central cities and other principal cities and lowest in the suburbs. Jobs per worker is somewhat higher in non-metro areas but well below levels in central cities.
- While age is a factor (children and retirees), central cities have the lowest labor force participation, yet the greatest ratio of jobs per worker.
- Comparing workers and jobs in metro areas provides an important insight. There are roughly 2.5 million more jobs than workers in metropolitan areas, meaning there is a net flow each day of non-metro workers into metro areas.
- Approximately 20 percent of suburban workers must travel outside the suburbs to find employment, and more than 30 percent of central city and other principal city jobs must be filled by commuters from outside the geography.
Table 5-2 itemizes population, workers, and jobs by Metro area size for all Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) and Consolidated Statistical Areas (CSAs) of over one million population. This encompasses 130 MSAs, with some CSAs, such as New York, comprising up to seven separate MSAs. The far right-hand column in this table summarizes “surplus jobs,” which is the difference between total MSA workers and total MSA jobs. A positive surplus jobs number means that workers from surrounding areas travel to the respective MSA to fill the available positions. Of the 54 CSAs included in the Table 5-2, all but 11 import workers.

Table 5-3 itemizes population, workers, and jobs for the central cities within the respective CSAs. As defined for the purposes of this series of briefs, each MSA has one—and only one—central city, representing the Principal City with the largest population. CSAs are shown in italics in the tables.

Core cities remain relatively worker-poor and job-rich, relying on suburbs and, to some extent, non-metro areas to provide workers.
**Table 5-2.** Population, Workers, and Jobs by Metro Area Size, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York CSA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Over 5M</td>
<td>22,886,737</td>
<td>9,672,282</td>
<td>9,657,479</td>
<td>(14,803)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles-Riverside CSA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Over 5M</td>
<td>17,877,006</td>
<td>6,968,876</td>
<td>7,036,843</td>
<td>67,967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago CSA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Over 5M</td>
<td>9,666,021</td>
<td>4,159,124</td>
<td>4,244,251</td>
<td>85,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington-Baltimore CSA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Over 5M</td>
<td>8,981,561</td>
<td>4,103,105</td>
<td>4,246,093</td>
<td>142,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco-San Jose CSA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Over 5M</td>
<td>8,153,696</td>
<td>3,371,058</td>
<td>3,463,350</td>
<td>92,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston-Providence CSA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Over 5M</td>
<td>7,866,843</td>
<td>3,746,882</td>
<td>3,761,760</td>
<td>14,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia CSA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Over 5M</td>
<td>7,067,807</td>
<td>3,082,013</td>
<td>3,033,987</td>
<td>(48,026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York CSA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Over 5M</td>
<td>22,886,737</td>
<td>9,672,282</td>
<td>9,657,479</td>
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</table>

**Source:** Cambridge Systematics, summary of ACS data
Table 5-3. Population, Workers, and Jobs for Central Cities in CSAs, 2010

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York, Stamford, New Haven, Allentown, Ewing, Kingston, East Stroudsburg</td>
<td>8,615,027</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>3,341,374</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>3,786,427</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>445,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles, Riverside, Thousand Oaks</td>
<td>4,223,175</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>1,596,411</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>1,794,718</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>198,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, Kankakee, Michigan City</td>
<td>2,754,614</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>1,077,989</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>1,280,290</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>202,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, Baltimore, Hagerstown, Chambersburg, Winchester, Lexington Park</td>
<td>1,320,443</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>549,721</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>1,022,843</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>473,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco, San Jose, Stockton, Santa Rosa, Vallejo, Santa Cruz, Napa</td>
<td>2,463,502</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>965,331</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>1,141,901</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>176,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston, Providence, Worcester, Manchester, Barnstable Philadelphia, Reading, Atlantic City, Dover, Vineland, Ocean City</td>
<td>1,131,439</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>377,723</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>852,587</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>474,864</td>
</tr>
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<td>474,864</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cambridge Systematics, summary of ACS data
All but one of the CSAs (Virginia Beach) has a surplus of central city jobs. The average surplus is 30 percent, indicating that at least 1/3 of central city jobs are filled by workers from outlying areas. In actuality, as some city residents work in outlying areas, the share of city jobs filled by workers from outlying areas is higher. An understanding of these geographic flows of commuters is presented in Brief 15.

Today’s complex and dynamic urban form, at a minimum, makes it challenging to fully understand what’s going on in terms of job location trends when relying on the traditional Metro area classifications. The geographic pattern of job growth trends cannot be described meaningfully at the national level. One reason is that jurisdictional boundaries change over time; another is that the growth and development of employment and activity nodes beyond traditional central cities result in changing geographies for MSAs. In the absence of an ability to quantify relative trends in the orientation of job locations and change, this brief defaults to using descriptive trend data at the county level. County boundaries remain fixed, and data are available to quantify employment growth trends at the county level.

The following maps are used to communicate conditions and trends as they relate to jobs and workers. These maps are based on census-produced estimates of daytime population. The 2000 data are based on the 2000 census long-form information on work trip commuting. The 2010 estimates are based on 2006–2010 American Community Survey five-year estimates of commuting flows applied to 2010 demographic estimates to derive estimates of 2010 daytime population.

Figure 5-2 presents the change in daytime population due to commuting for 2000. This change represents the net effect on the reference county’s population associated with workers being assigned to their county of employment for enumeration. Expressed as a percent, positive numbers indicate a net inflow of workers to the county.

As indicated by the blue- and green-shaded counties, the vast majority of counties have lower daytime population, and their workers commute to generally urban jobs in adjacent counties. Yellow, orange, and red-shaded counties are net importers of workers. In 2000, approximately 2/3 of counties had lower daytime population due to commuters leaving the county.
Figure 5-2. Daytime Population Change Due to Commuting, 2000
Source: Census

Figure 5-3 is this same map for estimated 2010 conditions. Due to the lack of a long-
form 2010 census, 2006–2010 American Community Survey commuting flow data were 
applied to 2010 demographics.

Figure 5-3 is similar to Figure 5-2, but shows a slight increase in the number of counties 
that are net importers of workers—887 in 2000 and 931 in 2010.
Figure 5-3. Daytime Population Due to Commuting, 2010
Source: Census

Figure 5-4 is a county map of the percent of workers who lived and worked in the same county based on 2000 census data. Higher shares indicate counties whose economic activities are more self-contained, with residents providing a higher share of the workforce.

A number of considerations, including the geographic size of the county and its proximity to adjacent employment and labor force resources, influence the extent to which there is mobility in the workforce between adjacent counties. In Figure 5-4, counties shaded in the blue are least autonomous in terms of residents living and working in the same county. These counties tend to be located in areas that have physically smaller counties near or in large metropolitan areas. At the other end of the spectrum, those counties shaded red have the vast majority of their workers working in the same county. This tends to reflect areas that are economically self-contained, with workers...
and jobs resident in the same county and areas where there may not be adjacent employment opportunities. Counties shaded orange and red may also be importing workers from adjacent counties in addition to retaining their own workers. For example, residents in Miami-Dade County in Southeast Florida tend to work in their home county, with geographic constraints on their ability to find nearby employment, but it also imports workers from adjacent counties.

Figure 5-4. Percent of Workers Who Lived and Worked in the Same County, 2000
Source: Census

Figure 5-5 is a companion map with the same information estimated for 2010 based on 2006–2010 American Community Survey data on commuting flows.

Data on the percent of population who live and work in the same county for 2010 indicate that the counties were more interdependent in 2010—that is, fewer counties had high levels of population living and working in the same county, and more counties had a lower
percent of the population living and working in the same county. There are 661 counties that have 50 percent or less of the population who live and work in the same county, indicating that “bedroom” suburban counties are still plentiful.

**Figure 5-5.** Percent of Workers Who Lived and Worked in the Same County, 2010

Source: Census

Figure 5-6 is a county map of the net flow of workers to or from the respective county for 2010. Positive numbers indicate the net percent of workers coming into the county relative to the workers working in the county. A negative number indicates an outflow of workers.
Counties with blue, green, and yellow shading export workers to adjacent counties, some of which are typically net importers of workers and shaded orange or red. One third of counties are net importers of workers. Rural counties that have a major employment site can also be significant importers of workers from low-density surrounding areas.

Figure 5-7 is a county map that displays the ratio of job growth to population growth between 2000 and 2010 as a percent. The counties are further categorized by whether or not there is job and population growth. Blue shading indicates counties with declining jobs. Green shading indicates counties that had job growth but declining population; this may be locations where natural resources or other conditions have created jobs, but the area’s attractiveness has not resulted in natural growth or migration offsetting deaths in the population. Yellow shading indicates jobs growing slightly more quickly than population up to a 2 percent job/population growth ratio; these are emerging employment areas where
population growth may not have kept pace with job growth. Orange and red shading indicate areas with dramatically more job growth than population growth; these may be unique situations, such as exploration for natural resources or a major new factory/facility in a small market that creates large percentage increases in employment relative to short-term population growth.

Figure 5-7. Ratio of Job Growth to Population Growth, 2000–2010
Source: Census

Figure 5-8 is a similar map that shows the ratio of job growth to worker growth (as opposed to population growth in Figure 5-7) for the same 2000–2010 period. The counties are further categorized by whether or not there is job growth. Blue shading indicates counties with declining jobs. Green shading indicates counties with job growth but declining resident workers. Yellow shading indicates jobs growing relatively more quickly than resident worker growth up to a 50 percent job/worker growth ratio; these are emerging
employment areas where resident worker growth may not have kept pace with job growth. Orange and red shading indicate areas with dramatically more job growth than worker growth; these may be unique situations, such as exploration for natural resources or major new factories/facilities in a small market that creates large percentage increases in employment relative to resident worker growth.

Figure 5-8 is similar to Figure 5-7. More than 1/3 of counties had no job growth in the decade. In approximately half of the counties, jobs grew faster than workers, indicating that these counties would need to draw workforce from adjacent counties and or may be attracting population in the future based on job prospects. A handful of counties had dramatically faster growth in jobs than workers, indicating unique circumstances where job growth outpaced worker growth.

Approximately 1/3 of counties had no job growth between 2000 and 2010.

Figure 5-8. Ratio of Job Growth to Worker Growth, 2010
Source: Census
Job Dynamics

While net changes in employment and workers in a given geography are relatively modest due to the fixed location of housing and employment infrastructure, the actual opportunity for changes in commuting flows is impacted by the dynamics of employment and residential location turnover. Figure 5-9 illustrates the significant opportunity for redistribution of the workforce based on the pace of changes in employment. The graphic presents gross job gains, consisting of new business formations (openings) and companies expanding their workforce, and gross job losses, consisting of companies going out of business (closings) or simply contracting. The key point in the figure is how much activity goes on that is masked by the relatively small net changes in jobs. In the relatively stable period before the recession, the typical quarterly pattern was a gross change on the order of roughly 7.5 million job losses and a similar level of gains each quarter. The gross impact could be as much as 10 percent of the total job complement. In addition, there is additional turnover of employment within stable firms and turnover in housing locations independent of employment conditions. Collectively, these dynamics create significant opportunity for changes in the home-to-work commute patterns. The reality, however, is that these patterns remain relatively stable over time. Understanding the dynamics in employment is relevant to the extent that it signals the presence of an opportunity for more dramatic commute pattern changes if, for example, a dramatic increase in travel costs ($10/gallon for gasoline) resulted in stronger motivations to leverage workforce dynamics to minimize commute travel by having commuting consequences play a more important part of job location and housing location decisions.

Figure 5-9. Business Job Gains and Losses in Fourth Quarter by Year, 2002–2012

Summary

Data availability and changing urban geographies complicate consistent analysis of trends in workers and jobs. Available data do allow analysis by metropolitan area classification and by county. The fundamental, now centuries-old, tradition of employment being clustered in activity centers with residents and workers more dispersed and commuting to these activity centers remains intact. Core cities remain relatively job-rich and worker-poor. Suburbs remain a significant source of workers, and rural areas have high labor force participation, with some of those workers commuting to metropolitan areas. Core cities are not the only concentration of employment, as additional principal cities have become employment activity centers, perhaps transitioning from more traditional suburbs into emerging employment nodes.

The dynamics of employment, with its obvious implications to commuting, become clear when recognizing that approximately 1/3 of counties in the U.S. had declining employment from 2000–2010. The dynamics of urban growth and development are compounded by broader demographic and economic trends that are resulting in employment and population changes. Some of these include the historical trends in migration to the South; others, such as the surge in employment in North Dakota resulting from energy exploration, are more context-specific. These macro trends, coupled with the firm-level employment dynamics of growth and decline of individual companies and job turnover within employers, results in significant opportunities for changes in commute patterns. However, overall commuting patterns have shown only modest change over time. The long-established inventory of housing and employment site assets and the relative consistency in the home and work location choice preferences of individuals have mitigated against rapid change in commuting patterns.
1. **Overview**—establishes institutional context, objectives, importance, data sources, and products to be produced.

2. **The Role of Commuting in Overall Travel**—presents national trend data on the relative role of commuting in overall person travel; explores commuting as a share of trips, miles of travel, and travel time at the national level.

3. **Population and Worker Trends**—provides very basic and key national demographic data.

4. **Population and Worker Dynamics**—focuses on the dynamics of the population and workforce, including data on migration, immigration, and differential rates of growth.

5. **The Nature and Pattern of Jobs**—defines employment and describes it in terms of its temporal, geographic, and other features.

6. **Job Dynamics**—looks at trends as they relate to jobs, including work at home, full-time versus part-time, job mobility, and changes in the nature and distribution of job types.

7. **Vehicle and Transit Availability**—reports on vehicle ownership and licensure levels and the availability of transit services. It also references factors influencing the availability of bike, walk, and carpool commute options.

8. **Consumer Spending on Transportation**—reports on various trends related to household spending on transportation.

9. **How Commuting Influences Travel**—explores how commuting travel influences overall travel trends temporally and geographically.

10. **Commuting Mode Choice**—provides a summary of mode choice for commuting (including work at home).

11. **Commuting Departure Time and Trip Time**—reports descriptive information on travel time and time left home, including national and selected additional data for metro area sizes.

12. **Auto Commuting**—addresses trends in privately-owned vehicle (POV) and shared-ride commuting.

13. **Transit Commuting**—addresses transit commuting.

14. **Bicycling and Walking Commuting**—addresses bicycling and walking as commuting modes.

15. **Commuting Flow Patterns**—addresses commuting flow patterns for metro area geographic classifications.

16. **The Evolving Role of Commuting**—synthesizes and interprets materials developed in the prior briefs to paint a picture of the current role of commuting in overall travel and evolving trends to watch going forward.

ES. **CIA 2013 Executive Summary**