

COOPERATIVE FORECASTING GROUP

June 23, 2021

Virtual Meeting

10:06 A.M. to 12:01 P.M.

MINUTES

Mr. Jeff Bronow, CFG Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:06 A.M.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Kui Zhao asked a question about the minutes from the April 28th Cooperative Forecasting Group (CFG) meeting. She referred to page 3, paragraph 3, line 1, and asked if the figure provided for the number of prisoners in Maryland in need of reallocation for redistricting purposes was accurate. Mr. Shawn Kimberly said that the number reflects what Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) staff stated in the meeting.

Ms. Zhao moved to approve the minutes from the April meeting of the CFG, with Ms. Kathleen Comber seconding the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND THE FUTURE OF OFFICE SPACE / TELEWORK

Prior to introducing the guest speaker, Mr. Bronow noted that this topic is on everyone's mind and that Howard County is starting to implement an optional telework policy.

Mr. Femi Adalokun, City78 (an urban planning and location intelligence firm located in Washington DC), presented on the work of his organization on COVID-19 recovery and what the future may hold for office space and telework trends.

Mr. Adalokun analyzed the current state of the economy, and how COVID is affecting employment and business activities. The shift to major telework affected 'third places' (places that are not home or work) the worst, particularly the hospitality and public transit sectors. Apple Maps COVID-19 Mobility Trends reports for Baltimore show that transit did not experience as much recovery from pandemic impacts as driving or walking.

City78 analyzed the benefits and challenges of working from home pre-pandemic and amidst the pandemic. Mr. Adalokun said that data from the Buffer 2019 State of Remote Work Report

found the number one benefit of remote work pre-COVID to be “flexible schedule”, and that amidst COVID the number one benefit was “no commute.” The number one challenge of remote work pre-COVID was unplugging after work, amidst COVID the number one challenge was collaboration with co-workers. City78 is conducting their own survey of remote workers. The majority surveyed reported remote work to have a somewhat negative impact on ability to innovate. City78’s survey is ongoing, collecting data on many measures of remote work, such as propensity for remote work post pandemic and mode of transportation favored if returning to work. Mr. Adalakun wonders if the gains from remote work may decline over time as adverse effects are amplified (such as unplugging after work). The importance of in-person collaboration with regard to a company’s overall output and ability to innovate suggests that a hybrid approach to work may be the most favorable way forward for both organizational and worker productivity.

[PowerPoint: City 78 – COVID-19 Economic Recovery and Future of WFH]

3. ROUND 10 JURISDICTION LEVEL BASE-YEAR EMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES

Mr. Shawn Kimberly, Baltimore Metropolitan Council, provided a summary of the jurisdictional level employment estimates for Round 10 base-year 2020, developed utilizing the methodology approved by the CFG: Total Employment equals wage and salary employment (with adjustment for those not covered by unemployment insurance) plus self-employment.

Mr. Kimberly described the BEA/BLS ratio development. He said that it accounts for the pandemic impacts by utilizing annualized 2020 QCEW data as its base, which became possible with the release of the fourth quarter data on June 2nd (completing the dataset for the calendar year). A ratio for 2020 was estimated by incorporating a minor adjustment based upon growth in the ratio over time (looking at the past 5 years). He went on to provide the base-year employment estimates for each jurisdiction, and described the development of each component of the estimates with the support of a series of slides illustrating the steps, sources, and calculations involved.

Ms. Zhao asked if the presentation will be available online, and if countywide forecasts for Round 10 are still due in September or October 2021. Mr. Kimberly said the presentation would be available online, and that the end of October 2021 is the scheduled due date for jurisdictional level control totals. He added that with the base-year employment estimate now provided, the group should have what they need from BMC to work on the employment portion of Round 10 development.

Mr. Bronow clarified that the October deadline is for the control totals. The TAZ level is not due until the end of the year. He noted that what Mr. Kimberly had presented were the jurisdictional level control totals for employment for base-year 2020 for each jurisdiction in the region, based upon the CFG approved methodology. Mr. Bronow said that BMC staff had prepared all the information and done the work for the group for base-year 2020.

Upon completion of the presentation describing base-year employment estimates and the methods utilized in their development, Mr. Kimberly suggested that membership closely monitor and record the steps they take in the development of their own jurisdictional and TAZ level estimates and forecasts, as doing so will help them complete their own methodology statements (due in April 2022). Using the example of self-employment allocation, he noted that different jurisdictions may take different approaches to the development of their estimates and forecasts, and the documentation of the methods used by each jurisdiction is critical to the informed use of the dataset by all of its consumers (government planning partners, private sector users, and members of the public).

Ms. Zhao noted that on the Round 10 schedule, group quarters population was not listed separately for the “Jurisdictional Level Totals” task, but is broken-out separately for the “TAZ Level Data” task. She asked if that meant that group quarters population does not need to be included for the October jurisdictional level task. Mr. Kimberly said that the group quarters population does not need to be broken out separately for the October jurisdictional level task, but that the group quarters population would be contained in the total population figures to be submitted in October.

[PowerPoint: Round 10 Base Year Employment CFG Methodology – Jurisdictional Totals]

4. 2020 TAZ BOUNDARY DELINEATION: TASK UPDATE

Mr. Brian Ryder, BMC, said the 2020 TAZ boundary delineation task is almost complete and that he and CFG membership are working to finalize the task for a few remaining jurisdictions. He then shared a table highlighting the number of TAZs by jurisdiction and update year. He noted that for the 2020 TAZ boundary update, there are generally just a few TAZs being added to each jurisdiction. When the shapefile is complete he will distribute it to CFG membership. Before doing so, he needs to clip out shorelines and finalize TAZ numbering.

Mr. Bronow noted that from the provided table it appeared Anne Arundel County and Harford County had the largest increases in the number of TAZs. Mr. Ryder clarified that those counties are still a work in progress, and have not finalized their boundary delineations. He added that for Anne Arundel County, they are in the process of determining whether or not to split 30 zones. What is shown in the table for Harford County is a reflection of a BMC exercise comparing 2020 Census block groups with current (2010) TAZ boundaries, as Harford County staff have not yet delineated 2020 TAZs.

Mr. Kimberly stated that the original task was due at the end of June, and that the completion date for the project may get pushed. The Harford County CFG representative, Ms. Deborah Grant is on leave, scheduled to return in July. Mr. Kimberly said that he hoped the project could be finished by mid-July. He stressed the importance of completing the task soon, so that CFG membership can proceed with the work of the Round 10 estimates and forecasts (which are to be reported in the 2020 TAZ zone structure). He added that when the Census Bureau releases the 2020 Decennial Census Redistricting File on August 16th, BMC staff will begin work on summarizing the data to the 2020 TAZ geography, and will distribute the resulting GIS

shapefile to CFG membership for their use in the development of Round 10 estimates and forecasts. Mr. Bronow said that is a great help because that data could then be used for the base-year 2020 jurisdictional and TAZ level population and household estimates. Mr. Kimberly agreed, noting that the file would include information on total population, group quarters population, and occupied housing units (households).

Mr. Bronow said that Mr. Al Sundara had mentioned to him that they will be taking the census data on August 16th, and per state law, they will redistribute the prison population to their last known addresses. This modified file is the dataset to be used for redistricting purposes. But the CFG will still be using the original data as released, and the prison population will show as group quarters. He asked Mr. Kimberly if that is accurate.

Mr. Kimberly said yes. The data that is released on August 16th from the Census Bureau (the PL 94-171 redistricting file) is the data that CFG membership should use in the development of Round 10 estimates and forecasts. Approximately five weeks later, after MDP has made the prison population adjustments, they will release the modified file that is developed specifically for redistricting in Maryland. Ms. Krishna Akundi, MDP staff, noted that Mr. Kimberly's summary was correct.

5. VINTAGE 2020 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU POPULATION ESTIMATES PROGRAM DATA

Mr. Kimberly provided an overview of the U.S. Census Bureau's vintage 2020 Population Estimates Program (PEP) county level data. The population estimates were released at the County level on May 4th, 2021. The PEP data is used as a control number for some of the Census Bureau's other surveys including the ACS. Mr. Kimberly said to use caution when accessing the data, making sure to utilize the most recent vintage, because the latest version contains adjustments to historical data. He added that PEP data is not developed from a survey, noting that it is a modeled dataset that uses the cohort-component method as its basis. Data sources come from vital statistics, tax returns, medical records and ACS data.

Mr. Kimberly said that the purpose of the presentation is to provide CFG membership with a summary of the Census Bureau's annually produced population estimates and components of change data over the last decade. He started by noting that Maryland has grown at a slower pace than the nation, and that the region has grown at a slower pace than the state.

Over the last ten years the region has grown by 3.1%, while the state and nation grew by 4.6% and 6.5%, respectively. Regional population growth was positive in all years except 2020. Both natural increase and net migration have been in steady decline over the last ten years. Natural increase declined by 64.1% from 2010 to 2020, but remained positive. He added that while international migration was positive at the regional level throughout the time-period, year-over-year domestic migration was negative for all but the first two years of the decade.

Mr. Kimberly then provided a series of six slides for each jurisdiction, detailing population change over time, as well as the components of change (including natural increase and migration).

At the end of the presentation, Mr. Kimberly displayed a series of charts (one for each jurisdiction) illustrating the annual jurisdiction level PEP data (2010 through 2020), with an overlay of the 2015 to 2030 Round 9A CFG population figures. The results were mixed. The charts indicated a strong relationship between the annual PEP data and the trajectory of the Round 9A data for some jurisdictions, but not for others. Mr. Kimberly added that it might be helpful for CFG membership to evaluate their population figures each year by comparing them with each release of the PEP data (generally released in March).

Mr. Bronow commented that he is looking forward to the 2020 Decennial Census results to see what the 100% count shows versus these estimates.

[PowerPoint: US Census Bureau Population Estimates – Jurisdictional Level Components of Change – v2020]

6. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Kimberly said the next meeting will be pushed back one week, to Wednesday, September 1st, and that it will be virtual. He asked that the group contact himself or the Chair (Mr. Bronow) with topic suggestions for forthcoming CFG meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Krishna Akundi – Maryland Department of Planning
Jeff Bronow, Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne’s County Department of Public Works
Kathleen Comber, Carroll County Department of Planning
Rick Fisher, Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning
Sara Paraniyam, Baltimore City Department of Planning
James Wilkerson, Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning
Kui Zhao, Baltimore County Department of Planning

Staff and Guests

Femi Adedokun, City78
Shawn Kimberly, BMC
Crystal McDermott, BMC
Dennia Palmer, BMC
Brian Ryder, BMC