

COOPERATIVE FORECASTING GROUP

April 27, 2022

Virtual Meeting

10:04 A.M. to 11:33 A.M.

MINUTES

Mr. Jeff Bronow, Howard County, called the meeting to order at 10:04 A.M.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Deborah Price, Harford County, moved to approve the minutes from the February meeting of the Cooperative Forecasting Group (CFG), with Ms. Kathleen Comber, Carroll County, seconding the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. ACCESSING CENSUS DATA VIA DATA.CENSUS.GOV

Mr. Tyson Weister of the U.S. Census Bureau presented on navigating the data.census.gov website and accessing the demographic data available through the application. Mr. Weister demonstrated the use of the application with example queries and highlighted recent updates and improvements.

Mr. Weister noted that query results based upon geography on the data.census.gov website now contain more summary data than previous versions. The geographic query results display a series of commonly accessed demographic datapoints, essentially providing a profile of the selected geography. The results contain visualizations and are quite comprehensive, covering a variety of demographic information, allowing the user to get a better sense of the types of data the Census has to offer. These geography based summary profiles are currently available for the place, county subdivision, county, state, and nation levels.

Mr. Weister demonstrated how to perform this type of query step-by-step, and noted that the results draw information from different tables, surveys and programs into one view. From the query results summary page, the user can explore a variety of available demographic datapoints and click to access the source tables.

Updates and improvements to data.census.gov presented by the speaker:

- Updates to the navigation and result list include the addition of a banner to alert users if there are critical notifications;

- Table headers were improved by locking them in place, allowing users to scroll through data while column names remain visible;
- The data.census.gov application now contains access to micro-data, and has improved help sections, educational resources and FAQs;
- There is now a dedicated filter panel accessible at any point throughout the site, making it easier to make initial queries and to amend them. Mr. Weister pointed out that the filter panel is easily accessible in the upper left section of the page.
 - Using Baltimore County as an example, Mr. Weister demonstrated that pressing the filter button expands a tray to show the filters you selected and the remaining filter options possible to select. The filter tray can expand and collapse as needed, allowing more flexibility in the layout;
- Mr. Weister pointed out another helpful update, the ability to easily locate information about specific tables and to customize table format. Now, always shown by default are buttons to access table notes, column display/hide functionality, and downloads/exports;
- The table results list now shows 25 or 50 tables by default instead of 10;
- Another useful feature is the option to view historical versions of selected tables. This presents the user with the ability to access data over time, and displays all possible vintages of the table;
- To speed up querying, the nine most commonly used geographies in the geography filter panel are now presented in boxes at the top of the screen. A comprehensive and alphabetized list of all other geographies is provided below;
- Incompatible filter options are now hidden from view, instead of displaying them in a grayed-out format (thereby making it easier to identify “selectable” criteria);
- Simplified the lists for geographies that may experience change over time. For example, MSA names are occasionally adjusted to include additional principal cities, as population and employment size criteria are updated. The updated version of data.census.gov utilizes the latest name across all vintages, in order to reduce confusion;
- There are now more options to select collections of geographies in a single click. For example, all census tracts within larger geographies (such as nation, state, and MSA) can be selected at once;
- There are now more format options and new buttons for downloading/export (including Excel, csv, and zip files).

In the updated mapping interface, new buttons have replaced drop down menus. Users can now easily customize legends/layers to show more boundaries, identify points on maps, select base map options, adjust transparency and save the center point on a map. Mr. Weister

demonstrated how to navigate the mapping interface, and explained how to customize maps to geographies and variables of interest.

[PowerPoint: U.S. Census Bureau: data.census.gov Updates]

3. RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL OF ROUND 10 FORECASTS

Mr. Shawn Kimberly summarized the process the CFG went through over the past two years to develop the Round 10 population, household, and employment forecasts. He then requested that the CFG recommend Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) approval of the Round 10 forecasts.

Mr. Bronow called for a vote to recommend approval of the Round 10 forecasts. Anne Arundel County and Annapolis City were absent from the vote. All other member jurisdictions voted to recommend approval the Round 10 population, household, and employment forecasts.

With the CFG's recommendation, the Round 10 dataset will be scheduled to be presented to the Technical Committee, and then to the BRTB for final approval. Mr. Kimberly asked members to coordinate with their Technical Committee members to give them some background information on the work they have done on the Round 10 population, household, and employment forecasts.

4. NEW BUSINESS

The next CFG meeting will be held Wednesday, June 22nd. The current plan is to make this a hybrid meeting, meaning that members can choose to attend virtually or in person. Any updates or adjustments to meeting format will be provided prior to the June meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 A.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
Jennifer Meacham, Baltimore County Department of Planning
Myles Muehlberger, Baltimore County Department of Planning
Sara Paraniyam, Baltimore City Department of Planning
Deborah Price, Harford County Department of Planning
Alfred Sundara, Maryland Department of Planning
Kristopher Weaver, Baltimore County Department of Planning
James Wilkerson, Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning
Jamie Williams, Baltimore City Department of Planning

Staff and Guests

Shawn Kimberly, BMC

Crystal McDermott, BMC

Brian Ryder, BMC

Tyson Weister, U.S. Census Bureau - Dissemination and Outreach Branch