CENSUS AND THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

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Demographics and transportation together provide comprehensive solutions to complex issues. They help get you where you need to go on time, save lives, and keep the economy moving.

Key census data variable used in transportation include:

- Population
- Age distribution
- Disability
- Household composition, income and life cycle stage
- Education level
- Residence location (urban, suburban, or rural)
- Land area
Texas’ relies heavily on Census derived data to fund the many elements of its transportation system. Federal programs that use Census data for funding distributions* include:

- Highway Planning and Construction - $3.9B
- Federal Transit Formula Grants - $315.9M (Urbanized Area)
- Federal Transit Formula Grants for Rural Areas – $47.2M (Nonurbanized Area)
- Federal Transit Capital Investment Grants - $44.0M (State of Good Repair)
- Elderly and Disabled Transit Grants – $19.9M
- Federal Transit Planning Grants – $11.6M
- National Motor Carrier Safety – $30.0M (TxDMV)
- State and Community Highway Safety Grants – $18.9M

* FY 2019
Census data are used in many transportation planning applications. These include:
- Population forecasting
- Travel demand modeling and microsimulation
- Title VI analysis
- Land use analysis

State and local planning experts contract for a special tabulation of American Community Survey data called the Census Transportation Planning Package (CTTP).

U.S. Census definition of “urbanized areas” is used in the Federal determination of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).

Both FHWA and FTA use census data to define their own population thresholds for urbanized and nonurbanized areas.
Census derived data is used in a number of other key transportation programs.

- Forecasting future program and investment needs.
- State funded programs including Metropolitan & Urban Area Corridor Projects, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement projects.
- Transportation alternatives such bike and pedestrian programs
- Federal disaster declaration process and FEMA reimbursement for debris removal and repair/replacement of non-federal aid highways.
- Local programs funded through MPOs.
- Environmental Community Impact Assessments.
- Local intersection signalization.
- Population highway signage.