COOPERATIVE FORECASTING GROUP
April 28, 2021
Virtual Meeting
10:00 A.M. to 12:00 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 moved to approve the minutes from the February meeting of the Cooperative Forecasting Group (CFG) with Ms. Jamie Williams seconding the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. JURISDICTION LEVEL INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT PROJECTION METHODOLOGY

Mr. Al Sundara, Manager of Maryland Department of Planning's State Data Center, provided a presentation on the methodology utilized by his agency in the development of their employment projections. Before delving into the employment projections, Mr. Sundara began by explaining that the State Data Center produces population related projections, including datapoints for: total population; household population; number of households; average household size; and labor force (developed with the consideration of 16 years + population and labor force participation rates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics).

Mr. Sundara stated that while the Maryland Department of Planning had not updated the employment projections in the recent past, he expects to work on the task in the coming months. He explained that the employment projections include: total jobs by place of work by jurisdiction (individual counties and Baltimore City); total jobs by place of work by 2-digit NAICS industry sector. The projection methodology includes source data from federal, state, and regional agencies including: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) - wage and salary jobs by industry (and proprietor data for selected industries); Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics (for proprietor data in most industries); Maryland Department of Labor (historical jobs by industry); Bureau of Labor Statistics (national level labor force and jobs projections); Baltimore Metropolitan Council and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (most recent Board approved employment projections by jurisdiction).

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Voting: City of Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Harford County, Howard County, MD Department of Transportation and Annapolis Transit. Non-Voting: Queen Anne's County, MD Department of the Environment, MD Department of Planning, and MD Transit Administration.

Mr. Sundara then provided an overview of the process behind the development of the employment projections:

- Total Jobs by Place of Work by Jurisdiction

  o For BMC and MWCoG jurisdictions, utilize board approved forecasted county totals (Maryland Department of Planning rarely adjusts these)

  o Maryland Department of Planning develops projections for counties in Southern Maryland, Western Maryland, and Eastern Shore

    ▪ Regression equations to determine growth rates to apply to current county totals

    ▪ Projected employment is a function of time, labor force growth rates, and labor force participation rates (LFPR)

      • Labor force = Population >=16-years * projected LFPR by age group (BLS)

- Analyze historical trend data

  o BEA Wage and salary data

  o BEA Proprietor data for Farms and Management of Companies and Industries

  o Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics for proprietor data for all other industries

  o Use of Fratar method to address non-disclosed employment in any industry

- Produce total jobs by place of work by industry

  o Analyze Maryland Department of Labor employment by industry trends

  o Derive the proportion of industry employment at the 2-digit NAICS level and apply to county totals (with growth based upon the above historical trend analyses)

Mr. Sundara noted that the Maryland Department of Planning will be working on these projections later in the year, as there are other tasks he is involved with currently – including preparation for the 2020 Decennial Census redistricting data file release.

Mr. Bronow noted that if the State Data Center is going to be working on their own employment projections, as the CFG is developing their own forecasts for Round 10, this might be a good time to compare results and to see how the datasets might inform each other. Mr. Sundara agreed and said that in the past, some CFG jurisdictions have utilized State Data Center projection numbers or techniques.

Mr. Kimberly noted that while the State Data Center incorporates the employment forecasts of the CFG into their process, they develop forecasts for many of the state's smaller jurisdictions (which may not have the resources and expertise to complete the task) using the methods

described in the presentation. Mr. Kimberly asked if the State Data Center could develop and share draft employment projections for CFG jurisdictions following this methodology. Mr. Sundara said that while this is something that they can do (if there is interest from the group), he stressed that the reason they incorporate the work of the CFG into their projections is because the local jurisdictions generally have a better idea of the scale and location of future growth for their own domain.

Mr. Bronow asked Mr. Sundara about the work that the Maryland Department of Planning is doing with the 2020 Decennial Census redistricting file (PL 94-171). The Census Bureau is scheduled to release the redistricting file in a "legacy" format in mid-to-late August. Maryland state law requires that the state's prison population be counted at their home addresses, rather than at the location of the prison facility. Because the Census Bureau delivers the redistricting file counting incarcerated persons where they are confined, in the state of Maryland an adjustment needs to be made to the file to move the count for each prisoner from the prison to their home address. Mr. Sundara said that Caliper Corporation has been hired to perform the task of assigning each prisoner back to their home location, creating the file that Maryland jurisdictions are to use in their redistricting efforts.

The reassignment of Maryland's prison population of approximately 25,000 persons from the prisons back to their homes will take some time (it may take an additional four weeks). Mr. Bronow asked if it would be appropriate for Maryland jurisdictions to use the raw redistricting file as a placeholder until the adjusted file is completed, given the shortened timeline to complete the redistricting process resulting from the delay in the Census Bureau's release of the PL 94-171 file. Mr. Sundara noted that while the Maryland Department of Planning is Maryland's designated state agency coordinator for the Census Redistricting Data Program, the redistricting file will be made available to the public on the same day that his agency receives it. He added that while local jurisdictions will have the raw file available to them to begin their own work, it is the prisoner adjusted file they will be posting to the redistricting website. It is this final (prisoner adjusted) data file that is to be used in the redistricting process.

Ms. Zhao asked for further clarification on when the Maryland Department of Planning's work with the redistricting file would be complete. Mr. Sundara approximated that the file would be complete within four to five weeks from the date that the Census Bureau releases the raw file. He explained that not only does Caliper need to regeocode and tabulate prisoners at their home addresses, but the Maryland Department of Planning needs to perform their own quality control review of the adjusted data file before releasing it for use.

Mr. Kimberly added that BMC GIS staff will be working to summarize the Census Bureau's redistricting file upon its release in mid-to-late August, based upon the new (but not yet complete) 2020 TAZ boundaries. BMC will make this data available to CFG membership when the data processing is complete.

[PowerPoint: MDP Projections Methodology: Employment]

3. 2020 TAZ BOUNDARY DELINEATION: TASK UPDATE

Mr. Brian Ryder provided an update on the status of the 2020 TAZ boundary delineation task. He stated that a few of the basic guidelines for the review are to try to align the TAZ boundaries with 2020 Census geography, while adhering to the 2010 TAZ structure (when possible, and without losing TAZs). He said that the group is making progress and that he has been updating his files and maps as he receives edits from each jurisdiction. So far, Brian has received feedback from four jurisdictions, and an additional two jurisdictions are currently working on their reviews of the preliminary boundaries developed by BMC. Mr. Ryder added that BMC is having discussions with the State Highway Administration, as they have a statewide model and will be interested in what adjustments BMC jurisdictions will be making as 2020 TAZ structure is developed.

Mr. Ryder is still working on the comments received from the four jurisdictions that have submitted them and he plans to have an updated shapefile for their review soon, planning for mid-May. Once all edits have been made and the task is finalized, the next steps will be to renumber the TAZs, clip the shoreline, and develop a 2010/2020 TAZ crosswalk. He added that he is available to provide support and answer any questions the group may have as they work to complete this task (by the end of June 2021).

Ms. Zhao inquired about the zones that are coded as dark blue ("split TAZ using block groups"), asking if it was required that they be split, based upon population guidelines. Mr. Ryder clarified that they do not have to be split. The dark blue zones are those that contain two or more block groups and have high populations – so they can be split, but do not necessarily need to be split. Mr. Ryder added that the dark red coded zones on the map are areas where BMC is suggesting the use of blocks (rather than block groups) to create TAZs.

Ms. Zhao asked for clarification between specific color codes used on the PDF map. Mr. Ryder provided an explanation noting that the red shades generally indicate candidates for TAZ merge and the blue shades indicate candidates for split. Noting that the map contains a lot of information and several color codes, Mr. Ryder reiterated that he is available to assist CFG membership with the TAZ delineation task upon request.

[PowerPoint: TAZ_BoundaryDelineation]

4. ROUND 10 AND QCEW REVIEW – SCHEDULE AND TASKS (OPEN DISCUSSION)

Mr. Kimberly reviewed the updated draft Round 10 schedule, highlighting progress and adjustments.

Base Year Employment Methodology

- Mr. Kimberly noted that the group had agreed upon the base-year employment methodology at the February meeting, completing that task.

QCEW File Review

- CFG membership is in the process of making final adjustments before the task is to be concluded (hopefully in late May or June).

- For those interested in making attempts to account for pandemic impacts upon their 2020 (and near term) employment allocation, BMC can make available the QCEW point level data for each quarter of 2020 - using the employment and spatial information as received from the Maryland Department of Labor in its raw format.
    o While these files would not incorporate the CFG QCEW file review edits – they can provide some insights into how employment differed over the course of 2020 (both numerically and spatially) at the subcounty level.

Base-year Employment Estimates

- BMC staff will create jurisdictional level base-year employment estimates with the agreed upon methodology. The QCEW data necessary to complete the estimates is to be released in June, making it possible for BMC staff to complete the jurisdictional level base-year estimates by late June or early July.

- Having the base-year employment data in place should allow CFG membership to make progress in the development of their Round 10 forecasts.

2020 TAZ Boundary Delineation Process

- As Mr. Ryder noted in his update, much progress has been made on this task. The task is scheduled for completion by the end of June 2021.

Change in the 2020 Census Redistricting Data Release

- As previously covered, the Census Bureau has adjusted their schedule for the release of the redistricting data file.

- To assist CFG membership, BMC GIS staff will download, process, and summarize by jurisdiction and 2020 TAZ geographies key datapoints from the 2020 Decennial Census redistricting file (upon the data release in "mid-to-late August").

Census Bureau Population Estimates Program (PEP) Data

- While the redistricting data release was postponed from the typical date of April 1 of the year following a decennial census, CFG membership can get an indication of what the jurisdictional level results might look like by reviewing the PEP data. The vintage 2020 jurisdictional level PEP data is to be released May 4. This information may help CFG members gain a sense of what their Round 10 base-year population figures might look like. The data is historically revised and will provide population estimates by year from 2010 through July 1, 2020.

Round 10 Data Submission Timeline

- CFG membership is scheduled to provide the final jurisdictional and TAZ level estimates and forecasts (in 5-year increments through 2050) by January 15, 2022 for the following datapoints:

    o Population

    o Group Quarters Population (institutional/non-institutional split)

    o Households

    o Total employment

- Jurisdictional level totals for the above four data points to be submitted in September/October 2021

Start to Consider the Development of Methodology Statements

- Begin to take notes on what work you do (and when) in the development of your estimates and forecasts. Doing so will make this task easier when you are completing Round 10 efforts in 2022.

Third Party Employment Data Purchase

- Mr. Kimberly noted that for Round 9 there was some interest in acquiring employment projections from a third party. Data had been purchased from IHS Global and Woods and Poole in 2016. He asked if there was interest from CFG membership in a third party employment data purchase. No interest was expressed.

Mr. Bronow asked when the Round 10 forecasts are scheduled for adoption by the BRTB. Mr. Kimberly said that the forecasts are scheduled for adoption in July of 2022.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Kimberly brought up a scheduling note. While the June meeting will take place as normally scheduled, the August meeting is being shifted from (the typical) fourth Wednesday of the month to one week later (September 1, 2021).

The meeting adjourned at 11:08 A.M.

ATTENDANCE

Members
Krishna Akundi – Maryland Department of Planning
Jeff Bronow, Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning
Kathleen Comber, Carroll County Department of Planning
Rick Fisher, Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning
Joel Gallihue, Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning

Sara Paranilam, Baltimore City Department of Planning
Al Sundara, Maryland Department of Planning
James Wilkerson, Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning
Jamie Williams, Baltimore City Department of Planning
Kui Zhao, Baltimore County Department of Planning

Staff and Guests

Charles Baber, BMC
Greg Goodwin, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Shawn Kimberly, BMC
Crystal McDermott, BMC
Brian Ryder, BMC