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CENTER FOR APPLIED URBAN RESEARCH

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

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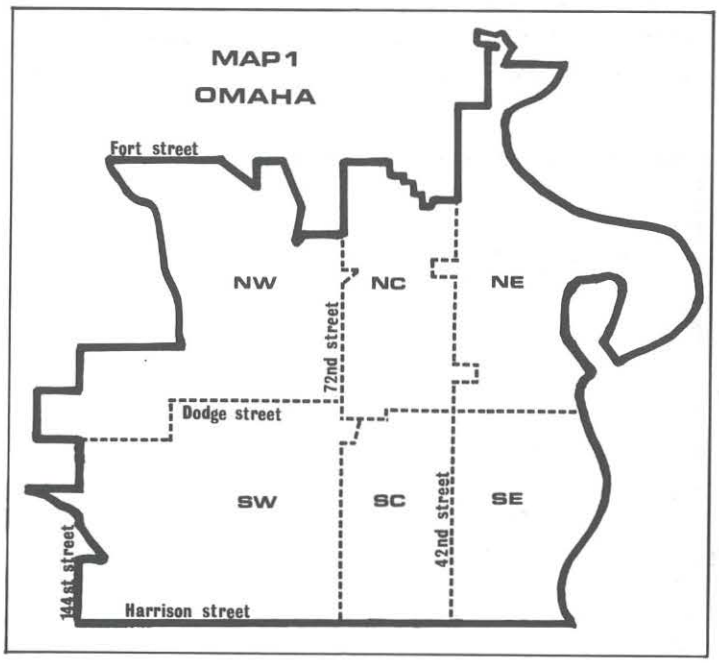
OMAHA'S CHANGING PROFILE

Introduction

In cooperation with the Economic Development Council of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, the Center in 1973, initiated a program of providing up-to-date economic and demographic data on Omaha.[1]

During the initial year, data were developed on population, employment, income, housing, retail sales and real estate values and taxes. The results of the year-long research has been produced as "Omaha's Changing Profile" (33 minute color slide presentation).

In "Omaha's Changing Profile" the city was divided into six geographical subareas as depicted on Map 1. The delineations allow comparisons to be made of the transformation that has taken place in various sections of Omaha.



The major results of the study are presented in Tables 1 through 10. Preceding each table is a brief description of the information presented.

[1]Omaha is defined as the urban portion of Douglas County. In future issues of the Review data on construction activity, new business starts, bankruptcies, and selected financial indicators (e.g., interest rates, volume of bank business loans, and wholesale prices) will be presented.

Population

The population of Greater Omaha has increased by nearly 140,000 since 1950. During the same period of time, however, there has been a sharp decline in Eastern Omaha--an estimated net loss of 38,000 persons since 1950.

TABLE 1
POPULATION[1]

	1950	1960	1970	1973
Northeast	91,358	99,959	80,959	79,151
Southeast	100,812	95,308	78,630	75,255
Northcentral	38,725	61,935	69,500	72,540
Southcentral	19,496	35,920	40,374	41,501
Northwest	NA	13,415	40,794	47,276
Southwest	NA	18,649	64,462	72,607
Omaha total	250,391	325,186	374,719	388,330

[1]The July, 1973 population estimates are based on natural increase (births minus deaths) added to 1970 Census figures. Migration rates for all census tracts east of 72nd Street were computed from rates established over the 1960-1970 period, and the distribution of additional population in tracts west of 72nd Street was based on new construction, i.e., building permits. Statistics for 1950, 1960 and 1970 from Census of Population.

Nonwhite Population

The nonwhite population in Omaha has increased by 138 percent since 1950--from 16,601 to 39,489. About 96 percent of the increase has been in Northeast and Northcentral Omaha. The data also indicates that there is a greater geographical concentration of nonwhites in the Northeast and Northcentral sections of the city in 1973 than existed in 1950.

TABLE 2
NON-WHITE POPULATION[1]

	1950	1960	1970	1973
Northeast	14,257	23,949	29,667	31,466
Southeast	2,344	2,077	2,530	2,688
Northcentral	267	126	4,024	4,441
Southcentral	14	106	262	245
Northwest	----	8	387	416
Southwest	----	21	209	233
Omaha total	16,601	26,287	37,079	39,489

[1]Data for 1950, 1960 and 1970 are from Census of Population. The November, 1973 nonwhite population estimates are based on natural increase (births minus deaths) added to 1970 Census figures. Data since 1970 were compiled from the Omaha-Douglas County Division of Vital Statistics.

Age Structure of the Population

Between 1950 and 1973, the population of Omaha became considerably younger. The overall median age of the population in 1950 was 32.0 years, with a relatively large proportion of the population of working age. By 1973, Omaha had a more youthful population whose median age approximated 26 years. Residents of Southeast Omaha are relatively older and those of Southwest Omaha younger than persons living in other sections of Omaha.

TABLE 1
AGE STRUCTURE OF POPULATION[1]
(Percent of Area Total)

	Pre-School (0-4)		School-Age (5-19)		Young Adult (20-34)		Adult (35-64)		Elderly (65 & Over)	
	1950	1973	1950	1973	1950	1973	1950	1973	1950	1973
Northeast	10.6	7.8	20.0	33.0	24.4	20.1	35.9	27.1	9.1	12.0
Southeast	9.4	6.6	19.3	26.5	26.4	20.6	36.1	30.7	8.8	15.6
Northcentral	10.2	7.5	21.8	29.1	21.0	23.3	38.9	28.9	8.1	11.2
Southcentral	10.3	7.7	20.2	30.5	19.9	20.6	42.4	30.3	7.2	10.9
Northwest	NA	8.0	NA	37.4	NA	21.0	NA	29.3	NA	4.3
Southwest	NA	9.3	NA	37.2	NA	24.1	NA	26.5	NA	2.9
Omaha average	10.1	7.8	20.3	32.0	22.9	21.7	38.4	28.7	8.3	9.8

[1]Data for 1950, 1960 and 1970 from Census of Population. The 1973 statistics were computed by extrapolating rates of change over the 1950-1960 and 1960-1970 periods.

Median Family Income

Between 1959 and 1973, median family income increased almost $6,000--from $6,429 to $12,376. Growth in income has not been equal for all areas, as evidenced by a $6,000 gap between the median income in Northeast Omaha and that in Southwest Omaha. Moreover, the gap between the eastern sections and the remainder of Omaha has widened.

TABLE 4
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME[1]

	1959	1969	1973
Northeast	$ 5,555	$ 7,926	$ 9,528
Southeast	5,789	8,416	10,209
Northcentral	7,305	10,672	12,805
Southcentral	7,118	10,818	12,774
Northwest	7,640	13,063	15,619
Southwest	10,552	13,745	16,224
Omaha average	6,429	$10,408	$12,376

[1]Income data for 1959 and 1969 are from Census of Population. The July, 1973 income estimates are based on methodology employed in FHA Techniques of Housing Market Analysis, U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, D. C., 1970.

Housing Values

Based on sales of property in the first six months of 1973, the average home in Omaha sold for $21,500 in 1973. This represents an increase of more than $13,000 in the average value of homes in Omaha since 1950. As can be noted in the accompanying table, housing values differ considerably as one moves from the eastern section of Omaha to the central nd western areas.

TABLE 6
HOUSING VALUES[1]

	1950	1960	1970	1973
Northeast	$6,581	$9,662	$9,998	$13,092
Southeast	6,659	9,910	10,836	14,018
Northcentral	10,681	15,188	16,839	20,353
Southcentral	11,505	13,850	16,113	21,722
Northwest	NA	18,000	26,706	30,075
Southwest	NA	28,419	27,136	33,938
Omaha avg.	8,424	13,000	16,700	21,462

[1]Housing values for 1950, 1960 and 1970 are from Census of Population and Housing. The July, 1973 housing values are based on real estate transactions during the first six-months of 1973.

Housing Units

Since 1950, nearly 60,000 housing units have been added to Omaha's housing stock. As with population, the greatest growth has occurred in western sections of Omaha.

TABLE 5[1]
HOUSING UNITS

	1950	1960	1970	1973
Northeast	27,239	31,134	28,560	27,915
Southeast	29,019	33,822	31,006	29,640
Northcentral	11,864	18,977	23,435	24,715
Southcentral	5,989	10,732	12,951	13,618
Northwest	NA	3,623	11,661	13,945
Southwest	NA	5,241	17,878	23,642
Omaha total	74,111	103,529	125,491	133,475

[1]The number of housing units for 1950, 1960 and 1970 are from Census of Population and Housing. Rates of change over the 1950-1960 and 1960-1970 periods were used to project change over the 1970-1973 period. Building permits and estimated population figures were used as checks in each of the six subareas.

Assessed Value of Real Estate

The assessed value of real estate (including land and improvements) has almost doubled since 1960--from $1.1 billion in 1960 to $2.1 billion in 1973. Seventy percent of the increase was accounted for by the area west of 72nd Street.

TABLE 7
ASSESSED VALUE OF REAL ESTATE[1]

	1960	1970	1973
	(Millions of Dollars)		
Northeast	$ 336.1	$ 377.7	$ 411.4
Southeast	227.6	247.5	237.9
Northcentral	302.9	403.1	421.3
Southcentral	128.9	213.2	232.4
Northwest	15.7	164.6	210.6
Southwest	83.2	374.2	618.9
Omaha total	$1,094.4	$1,780.3	$2,132.5

[1]Figures on assessed value of real estate are based on the tax records of the Douglas-County Assessors Office. Assessed values are compiled by special tax district, grouped and fitted as closely as possible to the six delineated subareas of Omaha.

Retail Sales

Retail sales grew from $577 million in 1964 to $899 million in 1973, a 64 percent increase. Retail sales tend to parallel the western movement of stores and by 1973, Southwest Omaha accounted for the largest portion of the city's sales.

TABLE 8
DISTRIBUTION OF RETAIL TRADE STORES[1]

	1964	1967	1970	1973
Northeast	639	583	486	424
Southeast	1,185	1,128	1,009	900
Northcentral	274	292	294	325
Southcentral	261	272	286	301
Northwest	77	86	174	277
Southwest	76	122	224	355
Omaha total	2,512	2,483	2,473	2,582

[1]The estimated number of retail stores for 1964, 1967, 1970 and 1973 are based on data obtained from the City Directory.

Retail Stores

Retail store movement follows that of population. Over the 1964-1973 period, eastern Omaha was characterized by a net loss of 500 retail establishments while western Omaha witnessed a net increase of 479 stores.

TABLE 9
VOLUME OF RETAIL STORE SALES[1]

	1964	1967	1970	1973
Northeast	$ 74	$ 68	$ 73	$ 74
Southeast	165	154	170	176
Northcentral	100	97	116	123
Southcentral	113	108	114	129
Northwest	78	98	130	163
Southwest	47	102	189	234
Omaha total	$577	$627	$792	$899

[1]Aggregate sales data were obtained from Survey of Current Buying Power (Sales Management) and Census of Business data. To allocate sales by subarea retail stores were divided into major and minor employment sources. This information was obtained from the Omaha Chamber of Commerce and the City Directory. Employment in retailing for the SMSA was available from the 1970 Census of Population and Employment Service Reports. Estimates of employment in Douglas County were based on retail sales in Douglas County as a percentage of total retail sales for the three county SMSA. It was assumed that employees were distributed in the same proportion as sales by subarea. Retail sales were allocated to subareas on the basis of the proportion of employees in each subarea. Data from the Census of Business on sales per employee in the CBD versus sales per employee for the remainder of the County were utilized to construct weighting factors.

Professionals and Managers

The movement away from manufacturing to services, trade and government employment has been accompanied by an increase in the number of white collar jobs. Today, more than 50 percent of these employees reside west of 72nd Street as against 16 percent in 1960.

TABLE 10
ABSOLUTE DISTRIBUTION OF
PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGERIAL EMPLOYEES[1]

	1950	1960	1970	1973
Northeast	6,618	5,582	4,700	4,585
Southeast	6,995	5,994	4,905	4,633
Northcentral	5,078	7,366	8,322	9,406
Southcentral	2,914	4,157	4,485	4,963
Northwest	NA	1,508	6,091	9,029
Southwest	NA	3,049	10,165	14,654
Omaha total	21,605	27,656	38,668	47,270

[1]Base data for allocating employment into the delineated six subareas for 1950, 1960 and 1970 are from Census of Population. The July, 1973 statistics rely on Employment Service estimates and data from Occupational Estimates and Projections, a Center study that utilized Bureau of Labor Statistics methodology to compute occupational ratios by industry for the purpose of estimating and projecting occupations.

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PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE: A SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION

Introduction

Approximately 146,000 persons who live in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolitan area drive automobiles to and from work, and another 29,000 ride as passengers.[1] The residence and work place locations of the residents of this area are not presently subject to substantial change, but it is possible, in view of the energy crisis, to make positive changes in the transportation modes that link these locations. With this in mind, the staff of the Center for Applied Urban Research conducted telephone interviews with 528 persons in the area served by the Metropolitan Area Transit System. Questions were asked to determine the most important factor in encouraging bus ridership as well as public attitudes towards subsidization of the transit system and car pools as an option to bus ridership. Three of the major findings that emerged from the survey are:

1. The most important factor in inducing bus ridership to and from work is the provision of service closer to home and to place of work.

2. Attitudes on the total subsidization of transit service are divided. Low income persons tend to favor government subsidization, while higher income persons are opposed.

3. Given the current mass transit system, the majority prefer car pools to public transit.

[1]Journey to Work, 1970 Census of Population, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, p. 866.

Bus Ridership

When asked to rank the importance of reduced fares, more frequent service, service closer to home and/or work, and improved quality of the transit system as inducements to regular ridership to and from work, 59 percent indicated service closer to home and/or work as most important. However, nearly one-half of the low income respondents (annual family income less than $8,000), 33 percent of the respondents from eastern Omaha (east of 42nd Street), and 41 percent of the respondents with less than twelve years of education considered "reduced fares" as the most important inducement to regular ridership. "Improved quality" was ranked as least important. Table 1 depicts response rates by age, sex, income and area of residence.

TABLE 1
UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS WOULD YOU REGULARLY USE
PUBLIC BUS TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM WORK?

	Number of Respondents	Reduced Fares	More Frequent Service	Service Closer to Your Home & Work	Improved Quality
			(Percent of Respondents)		
Total Public	528	15	20	59	6
Men	228	15	21	56	8
Women	300	15	20	60	4
Under 35 Years of Age	189	14	19	62	5
35 - 55	219	10	23	60	7
Over 55	120	27	18	51	4
East Section of Omaha	155	33	21	43	3
Central	119	11	33	47	9
West	144	1	16	75	8
Bellevue	37	8	11	76	5
Council Bluffs	73	14	14	71	1
Under $8,000 Family Income	103	49	17	34	0
$8,000 - $12,000	185	12	21	63	4
$12,000 - $20,000	146	4	21	67	8
Over $20,000	84	1	18	67	14
No Response	10	0	50	50	0
Less Than High School Complete	74	41	16	43	0
High School Complete	172	20	19	59	2
Some College	282	5	23	63	9

Total Subsidization (No-Fare Ridership)

Seventy-two percent of the respondents expressed opposition to local government subsidization of bus transit service to permit no-fare ridership. However, 70 percent of the low income residents, 59 percent of the respondents with less than twelve years of education, and 43 percent of the residents of eastern Omaha are in favor of bus subsidization. A general pattern of greater opposition was noted among the better educated, higher income suburbanites (see Table 2).

TABLE 2

WOULD YOU BE IN FAVOR OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT TOTALLY SUBSIDIZING BUS TRANSIT TO PERMIT RIDERSHIP WITH NO FARE?

	Number of Respondents	Yes (Percent of Respondents)	No
Total Public	528	28	72
Men	228	29	71
Women	300	28	72
Under 35 Years of Age	191	33	67
35 - 55	217	17	83
Over 55	120	41	59
East Section of Omaha	154	43	57
Central	120	23	77
West	144	12	88
Bellevue	37	30	70
Council Bluffs	73	38	62
Under $8,000 Family Income	103	70	30
$8,000 - $12,000	187	22	78
$12,000 - $20,000	146	18	82
Over $20,000	84	8	92
No Response	8	25	75
Less Than High School Complete	73	59	41
High School Complete	171	37	63
Some College	284	15	85

Car Pools Versus Bus Ridership

When asked: "Would you personally prefer to participate in a car pool to riding the bus?" the majority (60 percent) answered yes. No significant response differences are evident by sex, education levels, or residential location. However, younger people are more eager to participate in car pools than older persons and low income persons are less eager to participate in car pools than high income persons (see Table 3).

TABLE 3

WOULD YOU PERSONALLY PREFER TO PARTICIPATE IN A CAR POOL TO RIDING THE BUS?

	Number of Respondents	Yes (Percent of Respondents)	No
Total Public	523	60	40
Men	226	60	40
Women	297	60	40
Under 35 Years of Age	187	66	34
35 - 55	218	60	40
Over 55	118	49	51
East Section of Omaha	152	55	45
Central	119	61	39
West	144	64	36
Bellevue	36	64	36
Council Bluffs	72	58	42
Under $8,000 Family Income	101	53	47
$8,000 - $12,000	185	61	39
$12,000 - $20,000	145	57	43
Over $20,000	84	71	29
No Response	8	50	50
Less Than High School Complete	73	55	45
High School Complete	171	58	42
Some College	279	62	38

Description of the Poll

Telephone interviews with 528 persons in the Metropolitan Transit Service Area were conducted between January 19, 1974 and January 26, 1974. The interviews were conducted only with persons who "drive to and from work on a regular basis." Probability sampling techniques were employed in the design and execution of the sample plan and results may therefore be projected to the metropolitan area population.

CENTER FOR APPLIED URBAN RESEARCH

Introduction

Performing the role of a research arm of the College of Public Affairs and Community Service, the Center is a visible manifestation of the University's effort to meet the challenge of urban society in the 70's. The goal of the Center is to strive to obtain involvement both by the staff at the Center and other UNO faculty members in research focused on urban problems.

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