

## HOUSING CHANGES IN METROPOLITAN AREAS--PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

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It's been close to ten years since the results of the 1960 Census of Housing were published. During the 1960's, very little current information has been available about the housing inventory. Users have often had to resort to estimates based on 1960 data which, as the decade progressed, became more "guesstimates" than estimates. A limited amount of housing statistics were, of course, provided by the Census Bureau during the intercensal years. For example, data on vacancy rates are provided in a quarterly series for the United States and the four regions. The Bureau has also provided data on second homes, mobile homes, characteristics of newly constructed units and their occupants, absorption rates for newly constructed multiunit structures, and a large body of statistics on construction. These studies, for the most part, are specialized and national in scope, providing very little information about the thousands of local housing markets that comprise the Nation's total housing inventory.

The ten-year waiting period is about to end. The planning of the census, including the extensive consultations held with users to determine subject content, the development and implementation of the field operations, and the preparation of computer programs and procedures to process the results--all of this has been accomplished. The 1970 data are now beginning to flow to the public.

Compared with the first census of housing in 1940, and with the censuses of 1950 and 1960, the 1970 census promises to meet the needs of users to a far greater extent than previously, with a large assist from advanced computer technology. In response to users, the 1970 printed reports will contain more data than were published in 1960 and earlier censuses. Similarly, the amount of unpublished summary data available on magnetic tape and microfilm in 1970 is substantially greater and more comprehensive than the corresponding tabulations of the preceding censuses. Let me cite a few examples. The block statistics program, essentially limited to cities of 50,000 or more inhabitants in 1960, is extended to cover all of the urbanized area around these cities in 1970. Data on the much needed rent-income ratios--the cost of housing relative to income--are published for the first time by census tract. Unpublished cross-tabulations of housing and household characteristics are available on summary tapes for counties and cities, including census tracts.

As of today, we have printed all of the preliminary housing reports, including the United States Summary. These reports present only preliminary counts of housing units. Selected 100-percent characteristics of the housing inventory are provided in the next series, the Advance Housing Reports, several of which have been released. By the end of January, we expect to release all of the Advance Reports. We have also

begun to review data showing 1960 to 1970 demographic and housing changes, to be released soon in a joint population-housing series on General Demographic Trends for Metropolitan Areas.

Now what do the early results tell us about the state of our housing?

1. The rate of housing growth for the Nation declined during the sixties.--The preliminary count of the 1970 Census of Housing indicates that the total for the United States reached 68.7 million housing units, an increase of about 10.4 million units, or 18 percent, since 1960. This compares with an increase of 12.2 million, or 26 percent during the fifties, and 8.7 million or 23 percent during the forties.

2. The greatest growth occurred in the suburbs of the Nation's metropolitan areas.--The trend toward suburban living is indicated by the sharp difference between the rate of growth for the central cities of the standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's), and for the suburban areas outside the central cities. Since 1960, the gain in the suburbs of the metropolitan areas was 5.8 million units, or 32 percent, in contrast to the 10 percent gain in the central cities, and the 13 percent gain in the nonmetropolitan areas.

The distribution of housing in 1970 by metropolitan residence is about the same as the corresponding distribution of the population. Two-thirds of the Nation's housing is in metropolitan areas in 1970--same as 1960. In 1970, there were 46.0 million housing units inside SMSA's, and 22.7 million outside SMSA's. For the first time, however, there were more housing units in the suburbs than in the central cities; there were 23.7 million units in the suburban areas and 22.3 million units in the central cities.

The term "suburban" or "suburbs" is used to define the area within the metropolitan area but outside the central city or cities. It is recognized that many large noncentral cities are, thus, included as "suburbs."

3. All States gained housing units.--All 50 States shared in the increase during the 1960-1970 decade, as was true during the fifties. California with its 7 million housing units replaced New York as the State with the greatest number of housing units. Relative increases ranged from 3 percent in West Virginia and Wyoming, to 70 percent in Nevada. Other fast growing States include: Florida, with a 43 percent increase; Arizona, 42 percent; Alaska, 34 percent; and Maryland, 33 percent.

4. The West continues to lead in rate of housing growth.--Although not as marked as the 43-percent increase during the fifties, the West had a 26-percent increase in housing units during the sixties, closely followed by the South with a 22-percent increase. The North Central and North-

east regions each had increases of 13 percent. In terms of numerical growth, the South experienced the largest gain (3.8 million units) during the decade; the Southern States with substantial increases were Florida (770,000) and Texas (665,000).

The final data in the Advance Housing Reports and in the series on General Demographic Trends for Metropolitan Areas for the States reviewed to date, do not necessarily herald national or regional trends. The observations that follow are based on summaries for a limited number of States. These early reports represent generally the less populated States with relatively smaller metropolitan areas.

The data for these reports indicate the following:

1. The rate of housing growth is greater than the rate of population change.--Housing is a stable commodity and as a rule does not readily disappear with the net out-migration of population from any one locality or area. In such instances, housing might remain vacant and on the market for some time, even though demand has fallen off considerably. Secondly, more and more housing is being used as second homes. In addition, household size is declining, reflecting the need for, and use of, more housing than in former years. The young adults and the elderly are forming separate households to a larger extent than in prior decades. In Maine, for example, one-person households comprised 17 percent of all households in 1970, compared with 13 percent in 1960.

Size of household declined in almost all States reviewed to date. In many cases, the decline occurred in owner as well as renter households. In a few States, the average number of persons per occupied unit remained relatively stable for owner households, but declined among renter households. In Delaware, for example, the ratio of "population per occupied unit" for owner households was 3.5 in 1960 and 3.4 in 1970. For renter households, these ratios were 3.2 in 1960 and 2.8 in 1970, reflecting the tendency of the young singles, young marrieds, and the elderly to live in rental dwellings. The 1970 statistics also indicate the continuing tendency of the smaller households to live in the central cities of the metropolitan areas.

2. The rate of homeownership continues to rise in the large majority of the States.--For many States, the increase occurred in both the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas; some showed no change or decrease in homeownership in the central cities. Owned homes continue to be more common in the suburban areas of the SMSA's, although in a few cases the higher rates occur outside the metropolitan areas.

A greater proportion of white households own their homes than Negro households. For example, in the Wilmington, Delaware SMSA, the homeownership rate for white households was 71 percent, compared with 50 percent for Negro

households; in the Jackson, Mississippi SMSA, the corresponding figures are 74 percent for whites and 49 percent for Negroes. The increase in homeownership is greater, however, among Negro households than among white households. In each of these SMSA's, the proportion of Negro owner occupied units rose from approximately 40 percent in 1960 to the 50 percent level in 1970. The change for white households was from 72 percent in 1960 to 71 percent in 1970 in the Wilmington SMSA, and from 71 to 74 percent in the Jackson SMSA.

3. The proportion of the inventory accounted for by single-family homes is declining, but is still relatively high.--Compared with 1960, there was a decrease in the proportion of one-family houses, in both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. This may be due, in part, to losses from the inventory of a relatively high proportion of one-unit structures and the construction of more multifamily buildings. To illustrate the decline of one-family structures in metropolitan areas, the proportion of single-family homes declined from 83 percent in 1960 to 73 percent in 1970 in the Phoenix, Arizona SMSA; from 82 to 75 percent in the Wilmington, Delaware SMSA; and from 78 to 74 percent in the Des Moines, Iowa SMSA.

As might be expected, there is a higher proportion of one-unit structures outside SMSA's than inside SMSA's. Within SMSA's, the proportion is higher in suburban areas than in central cities. In South Carolina, for example, housing units in one-unit structures comprise 60 percent of all units in the central cities, 83 percent in the suburban areas of the SMSA's, and 87 percent in the nonmetropolitan areas.

4. The percentage of the total inventory accounted for by mobile homes or trailers increased markedly during the past decade.--In the State of Kansas, for example, mobile homes or trailers represented 3.1 percent of the inventory in 1970 and 1.6 percent in 1960, or about a 100-percent increase over 1960. Increasing use of mobile homes occurred both inside and outside metropolitan areas. There are, however, relatively more mobile homes outside SMSA's than inside SMSA's. Further, there is a greater proportion of mobile homes or trailers in suburban areas than in the central cities.

Of the States reviewed so far, Nevada has the highest proportion of mobile homes, 11 percent, followed closely by Alaska, 10 percent, and North Carolina has the highest number, 86,000.

It should be noted that, by definition, mobile homes and trailers are included in the housing inventory only if occupied.

5. Relatively fewer units lack the basic plumbing facilities, reflecting code enforcement as well as inventory losses and gains since 1960.--In several States, the proportion lacking plumbing facilities inside SMSA's declined to about the 2-percent level--in some cases, under 2 percent. There were also significant declines in

the proportion of units lacking plumbing facilities outside SMSA's. For example, in the non-metropolitan areas of Delaware, this proportion declined from 32 percent to 14 percent; in New Hampshire, the corresponding percentage dropped from 24 to 9.

In 1970, units lacking the basic plumbing facilities were still more prevalent outside SMSA's than inside SMSA's. In South Dakota, for example, 14.8 percent of all units outside SMSA's lack some or all plumbing facilities; the proportion inside SMSA's is 5.6 percent.

6. The percentage of housing units with more than one person per room--often used as an indicator of crowding--declined during the sixties in both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas.--All States reviewed to date showed declines in "crowded" units. In many States, housing with more than one-person per room in 1970, was more prevalent in the nonmetropolitan areas, although in a few, "crowding" was greater in the suburban areas.

7. As may be expected, housing costs in terms of property values and rents have gone up considerably in all geographic areas--in the central cities, in the suburbs, and in the nonmetropolitan areas.--In Delaware, for example, the median value of owner-occupied single-family homes in metropolitan areas rose from \$13,200 in 1960 to \$18,000 in 1970; the corresponding median contract rent was \$66 in 1960, compared with \$98 in 1970.

Value and rent data, for 1960 and 1970, are expressed in current dollars (the dollar value at the time of the respective censuses). Any comparison must take into account the inflation which occurred over the past decade, as well as the inventory additions and losses since 1960. Demolitions and other losses tend to remove low-priced units from the housing stock while newly built homes tend to concentrate at the upper levels of the price scale. (Counts and character-

istics of additions and losses to the housing inventory will be provided in Volume IV of the 1970 Census of Housing, covering the 1960-1970 period, for the United States and 15 large SMSA's.)

8. The 1970 census data on vacancy rates highlight the fact that housing statistics reflect a series of different local markets.--There does not seem to be a consistent pattern. The data show increases in the vacancy rates for some States, decreases for others, and both increases and decreases within the same State. On a national basis, data on vacancy rates in our Current Housing Reports on Housing Vacancies, Series H-111, show that both the homeowner and rental vacancy rates for the United States have declined, compared with 1960. These reports reveal very clearly, however, that any change since 1960 is not necessarily a "straight line" change over the 10-year period. Reflecting many factors affecting the housing market, such as the volume of construction and the availability of funds, the vacancy reports show that homeowner and rental vacancy rates were fairly stable until about the mid-decade, and declined since then to the current levels.

This presentation is only a brief preview of the findings from the 1970 Census of Housing, available at this time for a limited number of States. The release of all of the Advance Reports and the series on General Demographic Trends for Metropolitan Areas will provide an early detailed documentation, based on the 100-percent items, of the changing characteristics of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan housing for each State and for each SMSA and its central cities. The complete 1970 census results, 100-percent data as well as those based on a sample, will be published shortly in the regular census volumes.

1/ 1960 Census of Housing, Volume IV, Part 2-1, Components of Inventory Change, 1957-1959 components.

2/ Toilet and bathing facilities for exclusive use and piped hot water.