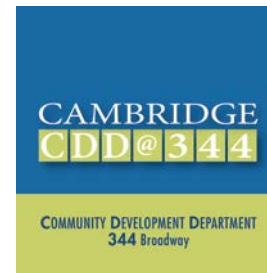


Producing Neighborhood Statistics with ACS Blockgroup Data

City of Cambridge, Massachusetts
Community Development Department



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From Factfinder to Publication

Search - Use the options on the left (topics, geographies, ...) to narrow your search results

Your Selections
 "Your Selections" is empty
 load search | save search

To search for tables and other files in American FactFinder:

- 1 Enter search terms and an optional geography and click GO

topic or table name state, county or place (optional) GO ?

topics race/ancestry industries occupations

-- or --

Select from Topics, Race and Ethnic Groups, Industry Codes, EEO Occupation Codes.

- these are added to "Your Selections"
- the Search Results are updated

- 2 Next, select Geographies (states, counties, cities, towns, etc.)

- these are added to "Your Selections"
- the Search Results are updated

- 3 Select one or more Search Results and click View



VLOOKUP

Lookup_value	<input type="text"/>	= any
Table_array	<input type="text"/>	= number
Col_index_num	<input type="text"/>	= number
Range_lookup	<input type="text"/>	= logical

Neighborhood Selector
 Select the neighborhood whose profile you'd like to publish from the dropdown menu.

Choose Neighborhood Index

-----> North Cambridge 11



City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Neighborhood Statistical Profile

Cambridge Community Development Department

2019

Small Neighborhoods = Small Sample Size

Cambridge neighborhoods range in population
(1,300 – 13,400 people)

Smaller populations = wider margins of error + less accuracy

Unexpected statistics that raise questions



To consider: Will reporting margin of error create communication issues with the general public?

Counts or Derived Statistics?

Counts can be misinterpreted as precise representations of reality

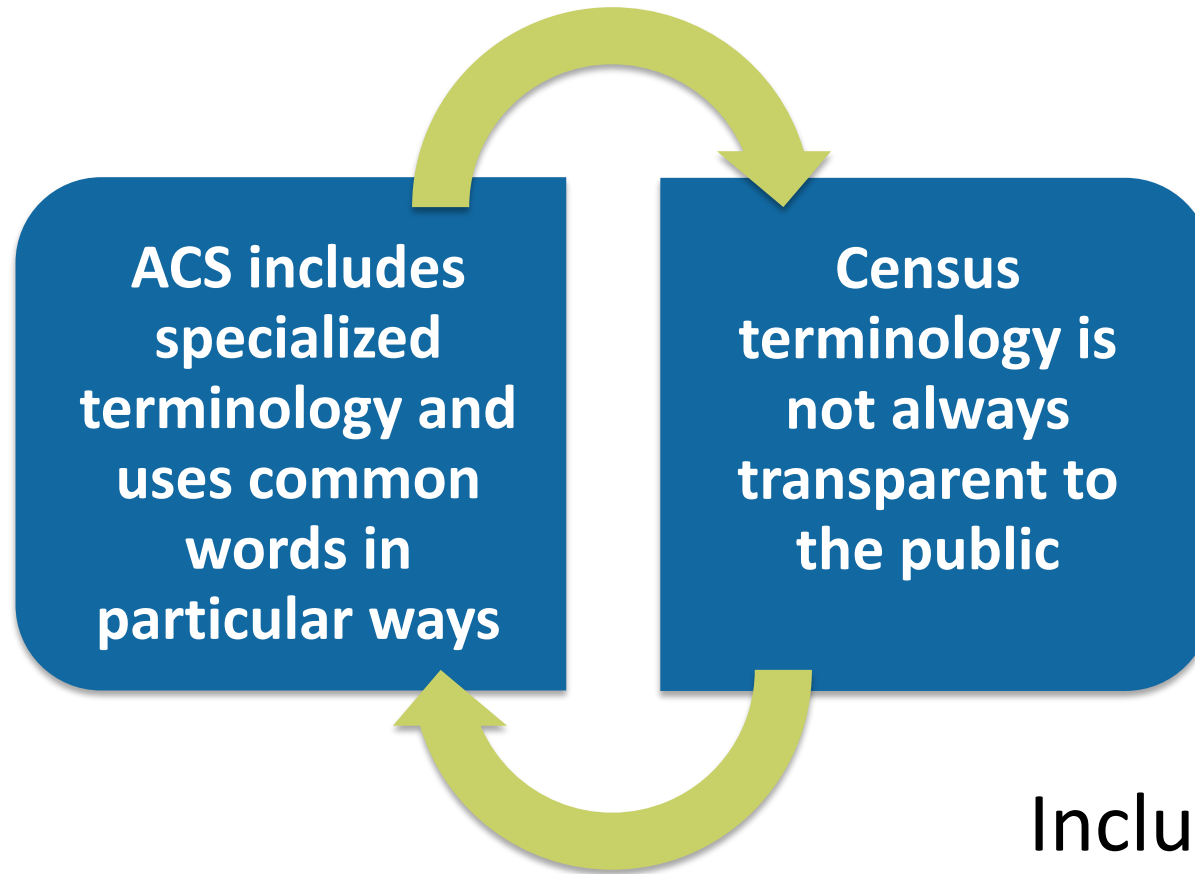
Discrepancies exist between ACS counts and other data sources

Officeholders and the public raise questions about accuracy



Solution: Use derived statistics (percentages, medians, etc.) to make it clear that we're describing "characteristics" – not size.

Problematic “Industry” Jargon



Solution:

Include a glossary at the **front** of the publication.

Definition of Vacancy

ACS definition of vacant:
“no one is living in [the
unit] at the time of
interview.”

Discrepancy
leads to
misinterpretation
and confusion

Colloquial definition of
vacant in Cambridge: a
unit that is for rent or for
sale.



Solution: Report “Market Vacant” and “Other Vacant” numbers, which are more congruous with local public understanding.

College and Graduate Students

ACS includes college and graduate students living in a community in some statistics but not others



This may produce unexpected or confusing results for the general public



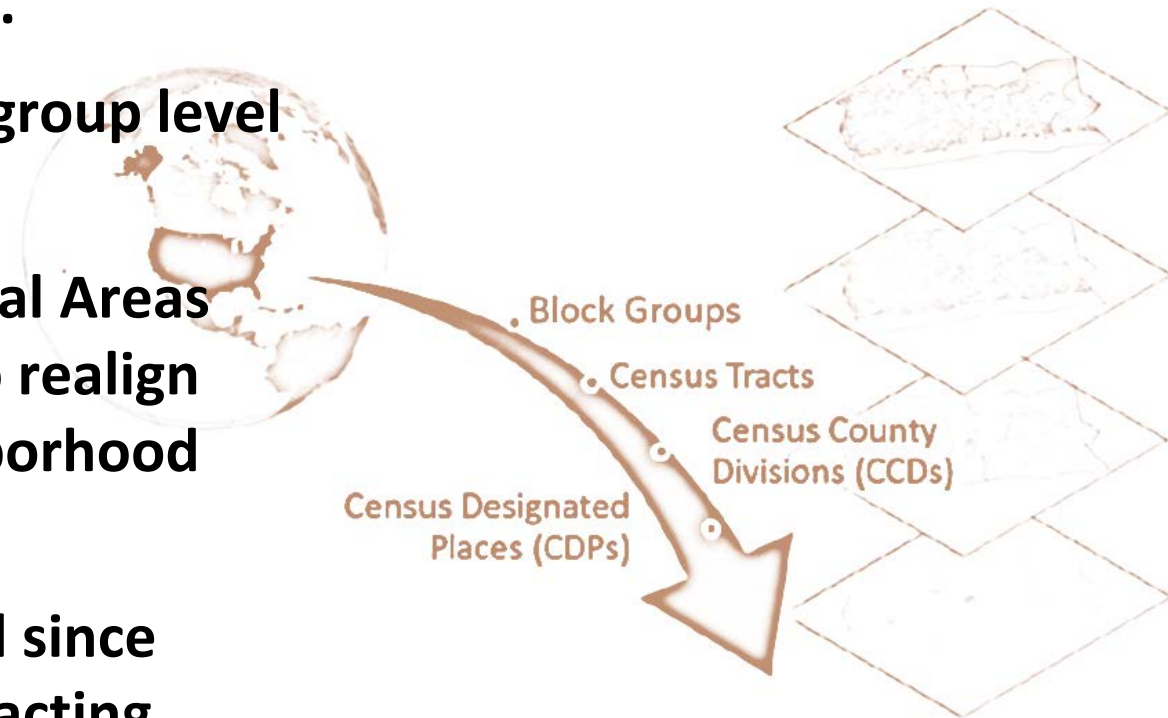
People may question the value of ACS data



Solution: Be clear about which statistics include students (and why), particularly students living in dormitories (i. e., Group Quarters).

Looking to the Future

- **Compiling neighborhood information from blockgroup data limits the range of information available.**
- **Many tables flagged as available at the blockgroup level are blank in practice**
- **Through the 2020 Census Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP) we are seeking permission to realign census tract boundaries to conform to neighborhood boundaries.**
- **Our neighborhood boundaries are unchanged since 1950s. We think we have a good case for retracting.**



Thank You!