

The U.S. Census Bureau's Planning Database and Forthcoming Updates

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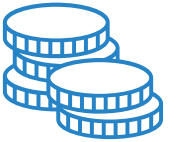
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Overview

- The Planning Database (PDB): Background, introduction, and examples.
- Unique variables on FY23 (fiscal year 2023) Planning Database (July 2024).
- New features on upcoming FY24 Planning Database (Summer 2025).

What Is in the Planning Database (PDB)?

- “Greatest hits” of American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates and 2020 Census variables.
- Types of variables:
 - Population (sex, age, education, poverty).
 - Household (language, relationship, income).
 - Housing unit (tenure, number of units).
 - Census operational (response rates, return rates).
- We calculate the percentages for each estimate.
- Available at census tract ($n > 85,000$) and block group ($n > 242,000$) level.
- Available as a comma-delimited file (CSV) or through the Census API.



What Is in the Planning Database (PDB)?

- The PDB is the only published source for metrics such as:

...ACS Self-Response Rate.

...Census Operational Statistics.

...the Low Response Score (LRS).

Broad Scope of Uses

Research

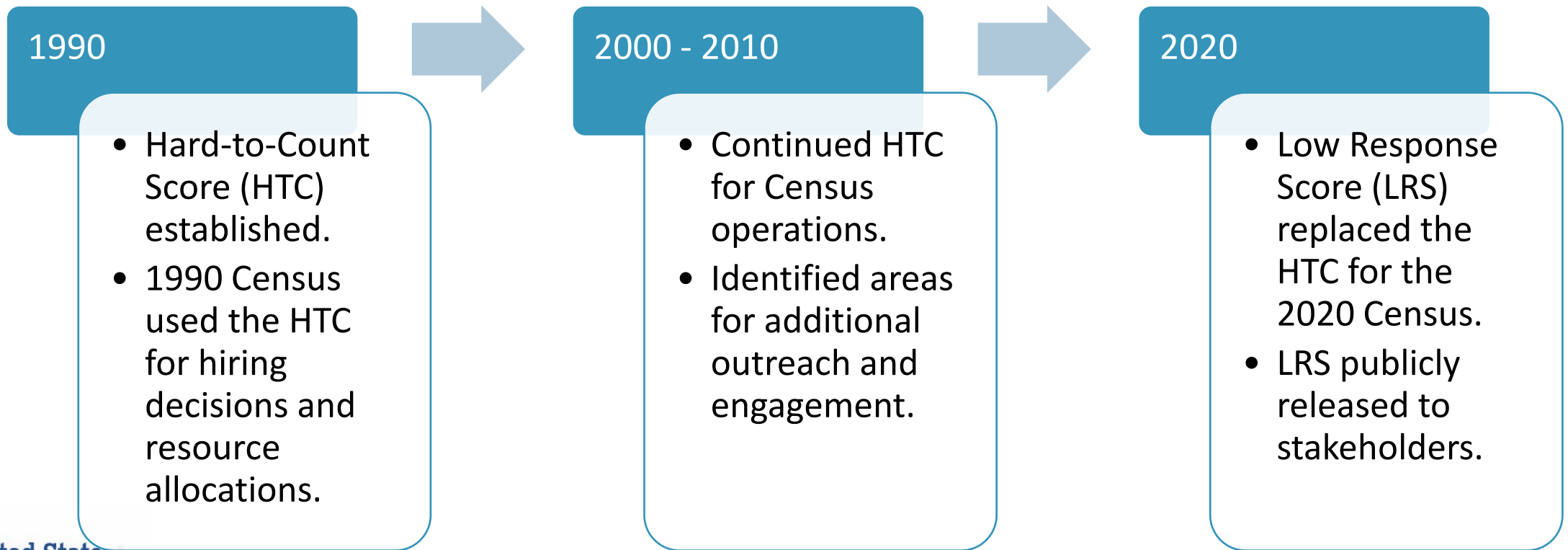
Development

Planning

- Examining expected survey completion rates at lower levels of geography.
- Linking PDB data with spatial map data to create thematic maps.
- Generating reports, cross tabulations and simple analyses.
- Identifying areas for special outreach and promotional efforts.
- Planning interviewer-administered surveys and censuses.
- Teaching statistics, data science, sociology, demography, etc.

History of the Planning Database (PDB)

- Planning for field resources, tailored communication, and partnership campaigns during census and survey operations.



Why Use the Planning Database?

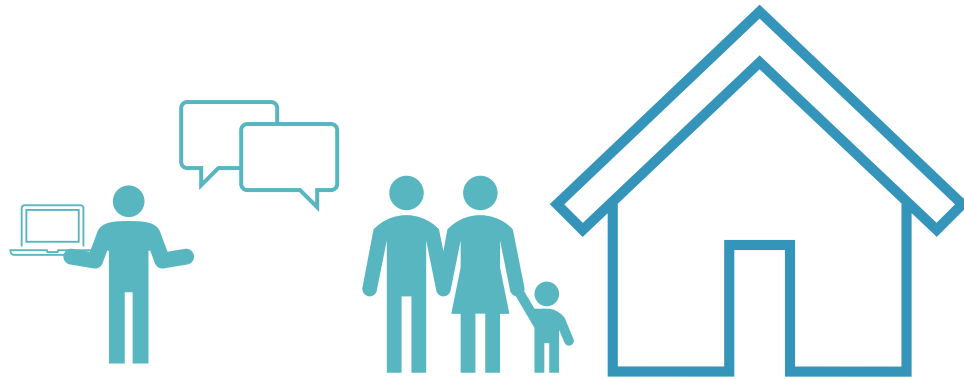
- Easier to download than full ACS files.
- Contains most popular ACS 5-year census tract and block group aggregated estimates.
- Estimates are matched to decennial Census estimates for each geography.
- Contains unique operational statistics not available anywhere else.
- Updated annually with the latest ACS data.
- The ROAM application makes the PDB even more accessible.

Future FY24 Release (Summer 2025)

- Will contain a new intermediate version of the LRS.
- Will crosswalk Connecticut geographies in planning regions to 2020 decennial variables (e.g., percent rural).

Example: Households That Speak English Less Than “Very Well”

- What if you want to identify areas that may need support for a language other than English?
- Find block groups in the area that have a high percentage of housing units where no one over the age of 14 speaks English “very well.”
- What language is spoken in these block groups?



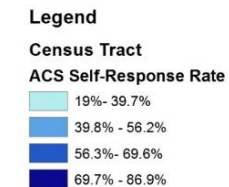
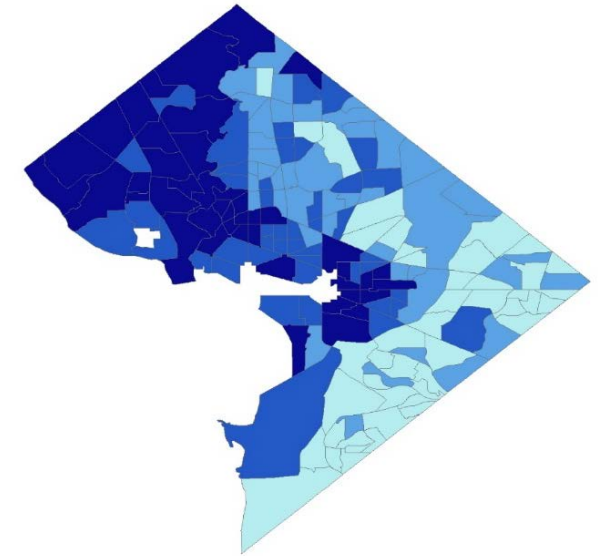
Language Needs for Block Groups in Harris County, TX

Block group	No one age 14+ in the house speaks English “very well”	Spanish is spoken at home <u>AND</u> no one age 14+ in the house speaks English “very well”
482012230022	94.22% (± 21.21)	94.22% (± 19.67)
482012224012	91.24% (± 17.11)	91.24% (± 16.83)
482015332003	88.61% (± 9.64)	86.91% (± 9.47)

Unique Variables on the FY23 Planning Database (Released July 2024)

ACS Self-Response Rate

- 5-year self-response rates for internet, paper, or phone to the ACS, available only at the tract level.
- This is the percentage of households in the tract that responded by internet, paper, or phone to the ACS, aggregated over 5 years.
- It is ONLY available on the PDB, not on <data.census.gov>.
- Important things to know:
 - These rates do not include group quarters.
 - No rates for Puerto Rico at this time.
 - No rates for tracts below a minimum number of households.





Source: FY2023 Planning Database

2020 Operational Statistics Variables

- The PDB includes many operational statistics from the 2020 Census, such as:
 - Bilingual questionnaire housing unit count: the number of housing units in Self Response enumeration areas and Update Leave enumeration areas (where a census taker drops off the census invitation) that received bilingual English/Spanish materials.
 - Internet self-response rate: the percentage of housing units providing a sufficient internet self-response.
 - Return rate: the percentage of *occupied* housing units that responded to the census on their own (online, by phone, or by mail).
- The operational data *do not* contain noise-infused counts.

2020 Operational Statistics Variables

Geography	All housing units	
	Self-response rate mean 	Return rate mean 
Tracts	65.48%	72.96%
Block groups	66.35%	73.59%

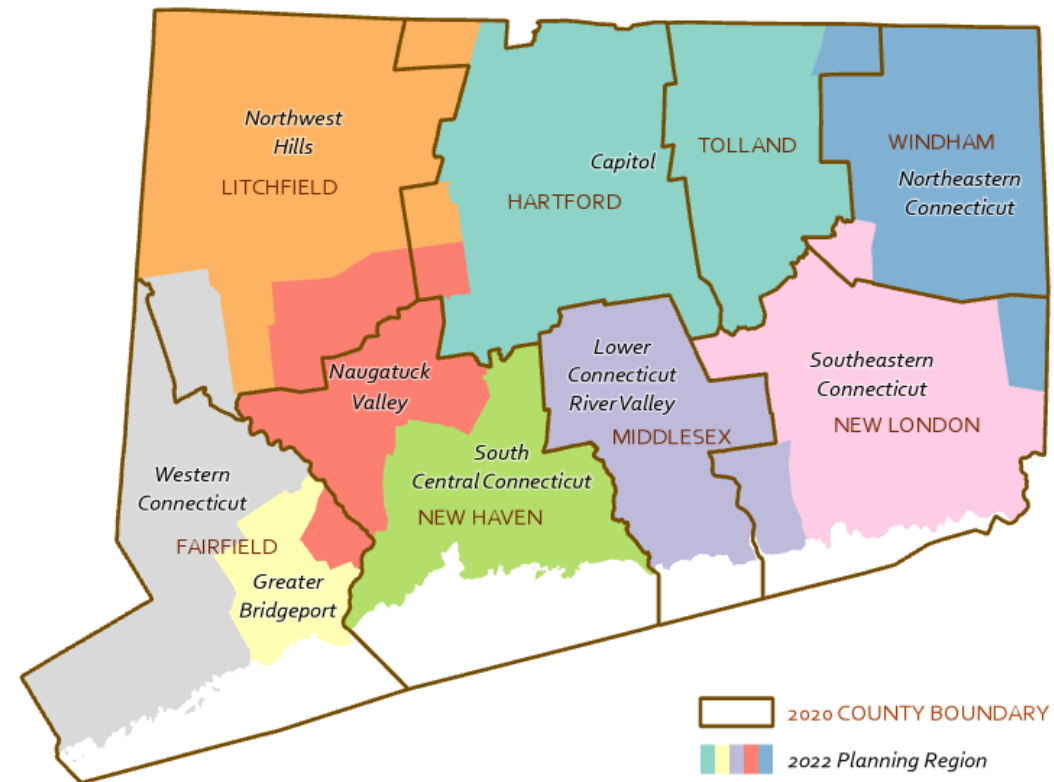
Self-response for *occupied* housing units only

Source: FY2023 Planning Database

New Features on the Upcoming FY24 Planning Database (Expected Release Summer 2025)

2020 Census Variables for Connecticut Planning Regions

- CT data products use planning regions instead of counties for the first time in 2022.
- 2020 Census variables (e.g., percent rural) only reported for the former counties.
- FY24 PDB:
 - Crosswalks 2020 Census counties to the new planning regions on the 2022 ACS 5-year file.
 - Users can compare 2020 Census and recent ACS variables within the same tracts and block groups.

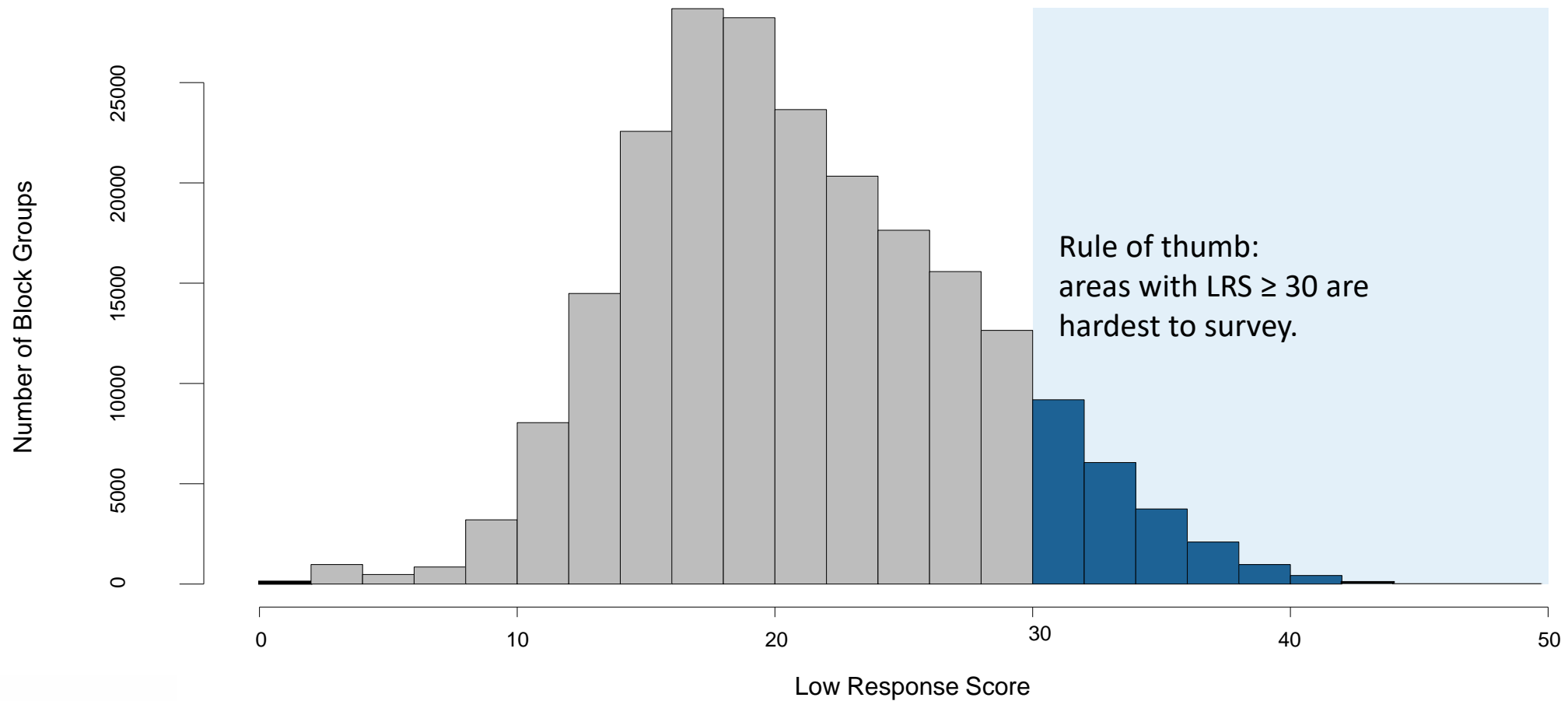


Source: Authors, based on info from the *Federal Register* ([87 FR 34235](#)), June 6, 2022.

What Is the Low Response Score (LRS)?

- Successor to the Hard-to-Count score:
 - HTC is ethnographically oriented and identifies areas difficult to enumerate.
 - LRS is a model-based approach and identifies areas predicted to have low self response.
- Predicted rate of low or non-response to the Decennial Census:
 - Based on OLS regression of 25 PDB metrics upon 2010 Census mail return rate.
 - Values range from 0-100 percent (lower values are better).
 - Methodology: Erdman and Bates, 2017.
 - LRS is updated annually with latest ACS 5-year estimates on the PDB.

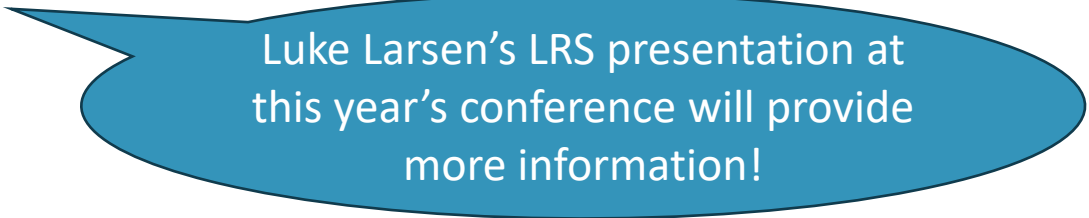
National Distribution of Block Group LRS



Source: Erdman and Bates, 2017.

Intermediate LRS

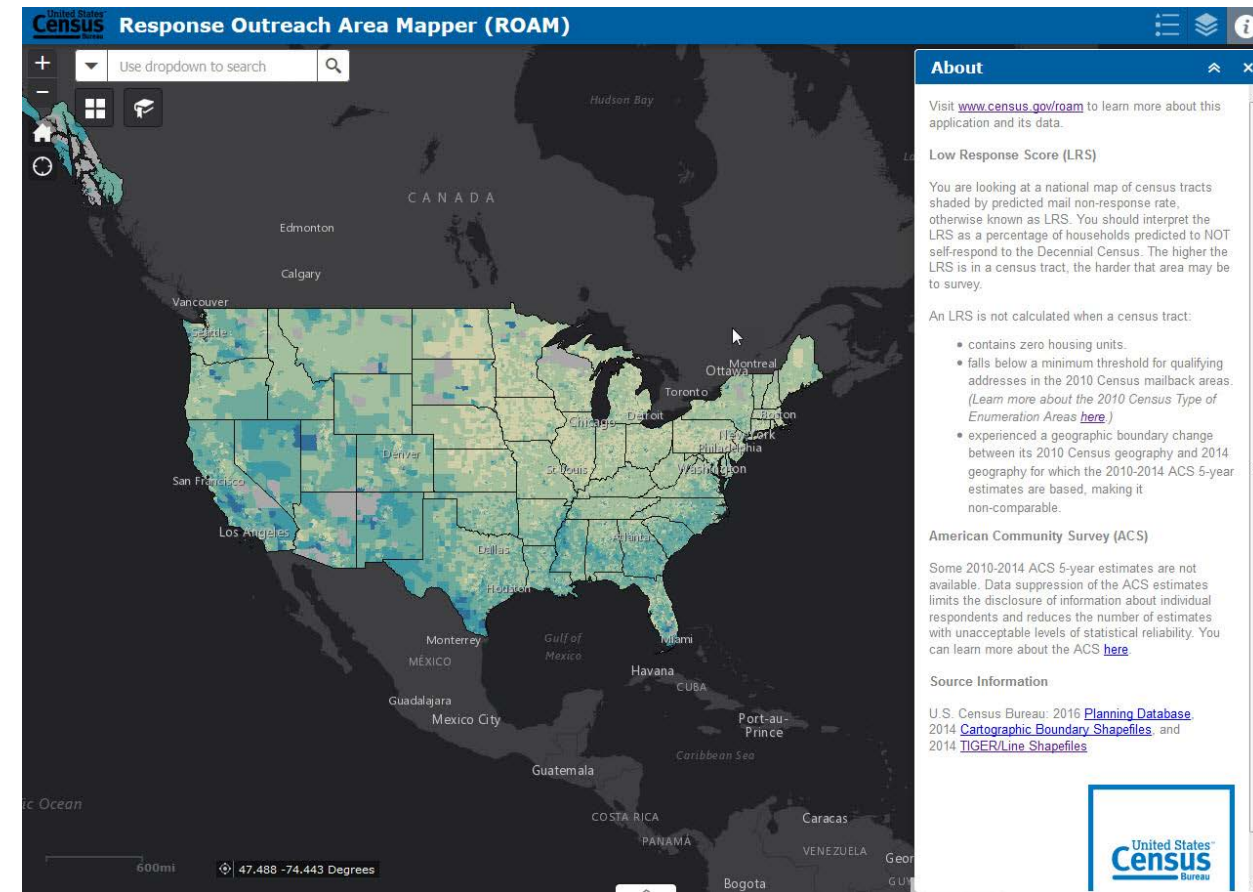
- Census Bureau's LRS Working Group:
 - Focused on updating the LRS model with new features and more recent data to improve predictive accuracy in preparation for future decennial planning.
- FY24 PDB will include an “intermediate” LRS, which updates the 2010-based LRS model to produce 2020-based LRS predictions as soon as possible, while further research continues.
 - A more comprehensive modeled variable will be released in later PDB vintages.



Luke Larsen's LRS presentation at this year's conference will provide more information!

Response Outreach Area Mapper (ROAM)

- The ROAM interactive viewer will be updated with the FY24 PDB:
 - ROAM is a web mapping application for users to identify, locate, and learn about hard-to-count census tracts.
 - Accessible through a web browser (no download required).
 - Will include intermediate LRS.



www.census.gov/roam

Questions or Comments?

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*QR code to the Census
Planning Database website*