

NWX - US DEPT OF COMMERCE (US)

**Moderator: Gregory Pewett
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2:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome, everyone, and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants will be on listen-only until the question and answer session of today's conference at which time you may press Star 1 to ask a question.

Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, please disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn the meeting over to your host, Mr. Greg Pewett. You may begin.

Gregory Pewett: Thank you, operator, and good afternoon, everyone. As stated, my name is Greg Pewett and I'm a training specialist here at the U.S. Census Bureau. I'd like to welcome everyone joining us on this Webinar called, "Help Us Change the Way We Disseminate Data."

This is one of a number of Webinars that the Census Bureau offers, most of which can be found by going to the top of our Web page, Census.gov, and clicking on the word, "data," then training and workshops.

There you can find both upcoming Webinars and also recorded Webinars or you could just search the word, "training" in the Census search bar.

As for today's webinar, those of you who work with Census data probably know we've been working on a new data dissemination platform at Data.Census.gov and we're fortunate that one of the people key to that effort is our speaker this afternoon.

She'll be able to provide some updates on the new data platform and tell you how you can be involved in the process, but before I introduce today's speaker, I just want to mention a couple of administrative items.

For questions, we'll take those verbally at the end of the presentation. At that time, the operator will come on the line and provide instructions on how to ask a question.

We'll also have the chat box open if you want to send a question that way. To find the chat box, you can move your cursor to the top of your screen where you'll see a small dropdown window from WebEx, choose the chat panel.

We can't guarantee we'll be able to get to all the chat questions, but we'll try our best. Of course, you can also follow up with the contact information at the end of the webinar if we don't get to your question.

Last, towards the end of the presentation, we'll send through the chat box an evaluation link for you to fill out at your convenience. Your feedback helps us continue to improve the webinars, find out what works, what might not work so well.

If you don't get a chance to throw out the evaluation from the chat box though, don't worry. We'll also be sending the evaluation link tomorrow in a separate message.

So without further ado, please allow me to introduce our speaker, Miss (Ally Burlington-Gibson). (Ally) has worked with the U.S. Census Bureau since 2012 first as a data dissemination specialist and now, as part of the communications team for the Center for Enterprise Dissemination Services and Consumer Innovation, or CEDSCI.

(Ally) provides training and presentations on the bureau's project to streamline user's access, to Census Bureau data on Census.gov and gathers feedback from external stakeholders for an intuitive customer focus dated dissemination experience.

Our professional experience also includes community social work, managing state and federal grants and contracts and strategic planning with 15 years working in non-profits and the public sector.

So without further ado, (Ally), thanks for being here and the microphone is all yours.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Thank you so much, Greg. Good afternoon and thank you for joining today's webinar. Today I'll be talking about the future of data dissemination at the U.S. Census Bureau and specifically how you can be involved in helping us change the way we disseminate data.

This training session will include a brief look at the history of data dissemination, a conceptual vision of where we're headed and how we're transforming the way customers access our data.

We will also talk about specific types of feedback you as users can provide throughout journey to recreate the Census.gov search.

The Census Bureau's mission is to service the leading source of quality data about America's people, places and economy. We do that by honoring privacy and protecting confidentiality, sharing our expertise globally and conducting our work openly.

The first Census was taken in 1790 based on Article I, Section II of the Constitution shortly after the U.S. became a nation. Although, the Census Bureau did not exist until 1902, the work of data collection and dissemination began with the first Census and persists today with more than 100 surveys collected every year.

So today, we won't be able to look at our full history, but here we are going to focus on the Census Bureau's online history. As you can see, this timeline starts in 1994 with the launch of Census.gov.

It also shows a number of other tools added to the Web site through 2012. These are just some of the highlights. There are many, many tools running on Census.gov today. Roughly 37 as of last count last week.

But before we can truly talk about the future data dissemination, we need to take a quick look at the past and what brought us to our call to action to develop a new dissemination platform.

So this is a short timeline and we're really only focusing from the time the Bureau launched Census.gov through the launch of our open API, or Application Programming Interface in 2012, because we began to hear the call for a better way of doing things then.

The other way of framing what we just saw by taking a look at Census.gov today, which includes many of the tools and apps listed on the previous timeline, as well as, some new ones.

So as you can see, some of our most frequently tools including American Fact Finder, Quick Facts, Census Business Builder, My Congressional District, My Tribal Area, the Population Clock, and the newest place for (unintelligible) and government data, the Opportunity Project.

Traditionally since the launch of the Website in 1994, the Census Bureau developed tools organically based on the wants and needs of specific groups of data users.

This methodology served to be our well for a number of years and allowed our customers to access the specifics they needed. There was an issue though. Despite winning various awards through setting a certain standard for government innovation, the Web site was beginning to get overwhelming.

That's when the Bureau heeded its call to action. Essentially after years of disseminating data on Census.gov and developing tools organically to address the needs of customers and users groups, we realized we needed to be more strategic in our approach.

As the Census Bureau Mission states, we are the source for quality data about the nation's people, places and economy, and we make that data available through a plethora of apps and tools, but customers have expressed frustration finding our data online and knowing how best to use it.

So it's kindly improved the process. How are we doing that? We are working to improve the customer experience through an enterprise or Census Bureau wide approach to data dissemination on Census.gov.

What is enterprise dissemination you may ask? Well, to us it means a few things. Mainly we're looking to accomplish these goals. A centralized repository for data, meta data and software, a customer-oriented easy to use platform for accessing all Census Bureau data and a translation for many tools to a streamline efficient user search experience, which will provide a one-stop shop for all of our data content and easy access to the Census API.

The diagram on the right shows you a before and after to provide a visual of what I just described. These are rough interpretations of data collection and the dissemination process.

Right now, we're still operating in our before environment with visitors accessing data from Census.gov to a variety of desperate tools and endpoints.

As development of the new dissemination platform takes place and becomes fully operational, then we'll move into the after environment where table services, mapping services, visualization services as well as other Census.gov content is accessible through a single search mechanism.

To accomplish this transition from our before scenario in the previous slide, we need a strategy to move from the many tools on Census.gov to just one dissemination platform.

Because this is such a large undertaking, let's take a look at our vision and scope over the next few years so you get a sense of how this transition will impact the various tools you may currently be using to access our data.

There's a lot of information on this slide. So before we walk through the different stages of transition, let's do a quick run-through of what the icons represent.

On the bottom of the screen you'll see a variety of different shapes and these represent the different data tools currently available on Census.gov. The blue rectangle represents Census Business Builder, or CBB, the purple rounded rectangle represents Data Ferret, or D.F., the green oval is for Quick Facts, represented by the Q.F., the orange triangle is for American Fact Finder, or AFF, and the red hexagon represents other tools on Census.gov.

Next, you'll see the big blue star to represent the new data dissemination platform being worked on now and then you'll note the red technology platforms that are underlying each of those shapes in our very first environment.

So here, you can see four major stages of the work that's being done to enhance the customer experience and data dissemination overall on Census.gov.

Phase 1, build a stable preview environment. Throughout 2017, we have been working to ensure the preview platform, Data.Census.gov, becomes a solid, stable and standard based data dissemination environment.

Other dissemination tools retain their own technology platforms as well as their look and feel at this time.

Stage 2, begin transitioning capabilities. In mid-2018, Data.Census.gov will become production-ready and transitions from a preview platform to the

underlying search for Census.gov; hence the arrow from Data.Census.gov to Census.gov.

It also becomes the primary dissemination platform for data you may be used to finding on the American Facts Finder and you can see the Facts Finder is transitioning into the star.

Throughout 2018, transition will focus on moving Fact Finder data into the new platform, then additional tools will begin to transition. The technology platforms underlying these tools shown in red will begin to disappear as transition of these tools into the new platform continues through 2019.

Stage 3, completing capability transitions. By 2020, collected capabilities from different tools will be migrated and those tools will no longer possess their own platforms.

You can see in the diagram that the smaller red platforms have now disappeared altogether in the third stage. By 2021 once the transitions are complete, a new dissemination platform will enter full production mode. All tools will protect - portray the Census.gov look and feel reflective by the blue stars; however, some tools may still have legacy and development, maintenance and funding aspects.

You can see though that the transition during this timeframe is depicted by one large centralized platform and a common look and feel for dissemination tools overall.

Stage 4. In 2022, full operating capability is achieved. All aspects of dissemination tools are present in the new Census.gov data dissemination

platform eliminating legacy development, maintenance and funding processes.

Of course, keep in mind that these are projected timeframes and so we may see some variation moving forward, but this gives you the big picture overview of our vision and scope for the next few years as we continue to develop the new dissemination platform on Census.gov.

So you've seen a little bit about how this will affect things on the front end of Census.gov in our current tools and apps, now, let's take a look at the underlying platform and how our new dissemination environment will work.

It really starts with our API, our Application Programming Interface, which you see at the heart of this diagram. A new dissemination platform, which is the preview site, or Data.Census.gov, is depicted on the bottom half of the page where you see platform.

Ultimately, Data.Census.gov will go away and the platform will become the search for Census.gov. Here, you can see the hardware data inputs at the bottom of the screen which will allow for data services, metadata services and geospatial services to be better accessible through the API.

These underlying services in the API itself are central to the Census.gov search. Through the Census.gov search, we will be better able to provide data and content readily based on inputs from data users, which in turn will allow them to get data the way they want and need it.

Cable services, mapping services and visualizations will be customizable and will allow for shared content, the creation of new apps, and a more fluid approach to accessing all that the Census Bureau has to offer.

Before we move on, let's talk about the API for a moment. API, again, stands for Application Programming Interface and basically, it is a way of formatting our data to receive requests and send responses directly.

Having Census Bureau data accessible this way does a couple of things for us. First, it allows individual users greater flexibilities in the way they can access and display our data because they're not constrained by any presentation or display formatting.

For example, right now if you were to access poverty-related data from the American Fact Finder, you would be limited to the way the data's pre-packaged within the tables through that tool, but accessing data through any API does not require the presentation material and hence, users will have more ability to configure data to their liking.

Second, accessing data through an API gives developers a method for ingesting pure data without presentational material either through their own API's or other third-party applications.

This pure data can then be consumed by their applications and transformed into a variety of new and innovative products. To be sure, this is a very different way of doing things through the Census Bureau and it goes a long way in terms of open government data because it provides you with the same access and ability to use our public data and documentation that developers inside the Bureau have.

And now that you've seen and heard about the issues we are trying to address in terms of the way we disseminate data, let's talk about how you can be involved in the process.

First, in proving our customer or user experience depends on you. User Experience, or U.X., refers to a person's emotions and attitudes about using a particular product, system or service.

It includes the practical, experiential, effective, meaningful and valuable aspects of human computer interaction and product ownership. Additionally, it includes a person's perceptions of system aspects such as utility, ease of use and efficiency.

Of course, user experience may be considered subjective in nature to the degree that it is about individual perception and thought with respect to that system.

User experience is dynamic as it is constantly modified over time due to changing usage circumstances and changes to individual systems, as well as, the wider usage context in which they can be found.

And thanks very much to Wikipedia for helping us for this definition. So basically, this means as we continue through the various stages of development we need to hear from you to ensure we're headed in the right direction.

Of course, we can only improve our user experience or our customer experience if our customers are involved. The first thing you can do is visit our preview Web site.

Data.Census.gov is open to the public and we need you to visit and let us know what you think.

Here you see a shot of our landing page and you can see that we are really emphasizing research by prominently featuring the search bar right at the outset.

That's exactly what we want you to try out when you visit the preview site. Specifically, we're interested in knowing how the search works for you. Here are some things to keep in mind as you are searching and reviewing the site.

First, how do you like the search? Do you like the look and feel? Does it provide the answers you expected to when using it? We would also like to hear how you prefer to search for data overall.

Do you prefer looking at topics first or are you more interested in starting with places? When you search, do you like to type in full questions or are keywords and phrases more your style?

Are you someone who prefers to start broad with a search and get more specific or do you like to search for something specific and then look at the bigger picture or broader subject?

Once you've had an opportunity to use the search on Data.Census.gov, please email us your feedback at CDSCI.feedback.census.gov. We would love to hear the following: What you searched, what you found when you searched, what you had expected to find, and whether the search met your expectations.

Of course, if it did not meet your expectations, let us know how you think we could improve. Of course, we look forward to getting a variety of feedback throughout the development process and one thing to keep in mind is that while our hope is to address all the feedback shared with us in time, we will first focus our attention on the things that users emphasize most.

And because we wanted to give you more time to explore the Web site, this actually brings us to our last slide. Thank you for your participation in today's webinar.

We are grateful for your interesting in being involved and how we improve the search experience on Census.gov and are very much looking forward to your feedback. This presentation today was intentionally made brief to give you some time to explore Data.Census.gov on your own and we hope you'll take a few minutes to do that.

We will be conducting webinars in the coming months to look at other aspects of our development and the next one will likely take place in early March. So please keep an eye out if you'd like to learn more about our focus at that point and how you may be able to be involved then.

If you have questions about today's session, we can take a few now and you can also contact us with general feedback at CDSCI.feedback@census.gov or you can reach out to me with specific questions.

Again, thank you so much and we will be able to take some questions now.

Coordinator: Thank you. We'll now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press Star 1. You will be prompted to record your name. Please be sure to unmute your phone. Let's see. And if you would like to ask a question, please press Star 1 and we will pause for just a moment to allow those questions to start coming through.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): So while we're waiting for the first question to come in, we actually had a question come through chat. So I'll go ahead and review that.

It says, "How will new users find out about distinctions between Census versus estimates, how to compare between two or different sources of similar information?"

So as we're developing the new platform, one of the things we realized is that we need to have our source information in every different piece of data that's there.

And so when we are displaying, for example, Census data from the Decennial Census 2010 or a few years when we're looking at 2020 data, that will be made clear by the source directly connected to a particular data topic and/or if you're looking at a table, it will be made clear there as well.

When we are looking at Census data as opposed to estimates, for example, from the American Community Survey, one of the key ways that you can differentiate between these two is that you'll often notice an MOE, or Margin of Error, related to estimates. And so you will see that as well.

Coordinator: We do have a question on the phone lines.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Okay. Great. Go ahead and then we'll have a couple of additional ones from chat.

Coordinator: This first question comes from (Jennifer Bouterie). Your line is open.

(Jennifer Bouterie): Yes, hi. I have about three questions. So do you want to just take one at a time or just one and then we'll go back and forth?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Yes, let's just do one at a time. We'll go back and forth.

(Jennifer Bouterie): Okay. One of the things that not all of you - I'm a librarian...

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Okay.

(Jennifer Bouterie): ... and I'm also particularly interested in the Census of governments and that the unit level data where the Census is not set up for actually getting down into that micro level data, will this new system be able to support such large files or is it going to be only aggregated data?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): So Census of governments data and other similar data is a look - we are looking at ways to incorporate that. We want to be sure that we are really serving as sort of a one-stop-shop to Census data.

Over the course of time, and it might take a little while, as you saw, we have sort of a five-year plan in place right now. We will be doing the bulk of data that's currently available on the American Fact Finder first and then getting into some of our other data subjects.

Now, as far as the level of granularity for a given data set for a program is very much dependent on that program in and of itself and the geographies that are supported in terms of the way we can provide the data due to issues of confidentiality and the like.

So some of that is still to be determined, of course, and one of the things that we are doing is working very closely with the data providers internally meaning those folks who are the subject matter experts for a given survey like in this case the Census of governments that you've mentioned.

(Jennifer Bouterie): Okay. And there is no confidentiality when we're talking about the Census of governments? That's why the data sits so big and it's not available really anywhere externally on any ideal Web site?

My other question is also related to the API. Without a structure such as American Finder or some other platform like that, not all students are going to be able to go in and read the code books and be able to pull out that information.

I am assuming you still provide - you're going to still provide a data structure in which they can pull information into and see what's there.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Yes, correct, and one of the things we were very intentional about today was not to provide a demo of the platform because we very want - very much want people to go in and try it out for themselves, but certainly you're right about that.

We don't anticipate that folks will come to the site and begin searching and suddenly know what to do with API data. Instead, we are drawing from the API to provide faceted filter searching and for those folks who want to access the API certainly they can do that; however, for the common user, the notion is really how do we simplify data access to give them meaningful statistics that are much more readily consumable and not so navigation-based?

And what I mean by that is how do people come onto our Web site and simply start searching and then get some statistics related to the search they've made, for example, if they typed in poverty, some of our key statistics related to poverty would be presented as opposed to needing to access the American Facts Finder or one of the various other tools and then know what to do from there. Does that make sense?

(Jennifer Bouterie): Yes. One of the other nice things about what was previously there that I went - well, while you were talking I went into the Data.Census.gov site is that if - like I put in school spending and I just go school around - enrollment. There was absolutely nothing else indicating that it's not in there yet. It is available in other sites.

And one of the things I liked about what the old system did is also provide that background, that historical, that the forms and all of the other meta material related to the data.

Will this - the new platform having that incorporated or will you have to go into - if you wanted to get to that meta information to go into another database?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Yes. So the new platform will have data, meta data and software all combined into one, right, because like you, many people also like some of that other sort of background information and the data that underlies what they see displayed in table format or otherwise.

So yes, the notion really here is to open up our access to make it more readily available, not more difficult. And in terms of moving forward when folks knowing what data is available in the platform, right now we do provide this specific release note for each of the releases that we're making to indicate which data sets are currently available in the platform.

There's also a note at the top of the page just to remind you folks that it is a preview and, again, as we continue through development because we have so much data at the Census Bureau, certainly we won't have everything yet developed.

So yes, do anticipate that it will take some time, but you can always refer to our release notes to see precisely which data are included in the platform during any given release.

(Jennifer Bouterie): And my last question is also relating to historical data. One of the things that everybody would love to be able to have is to be able to take one, you know - one set, one table and be able to go back and forward and it - is this going to be starting from this point forward or are you also going to incorporate older data and how are you going to handle changes in, like, the instrument and the survey or are you just going to keep it like it is now that each individual survey is presented as its own set and it's up to us to be able to link historical data?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Wonderful question and one that we receive a lot and quite honestly, we are still determining how best to move forward with the historical data. So that is very much a TBD or a To Be Determined at this point.

Yes, we know that people want to be able to readily access that historical data. We've just got ensure that we're able to provide it in a way that's most efficient and user-friendly.

(Jennifer Bouterie): Thank you. I have some more other esoteric stuff that I'll probably contact...

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Actually, you can email me.

(Jennifer Bouterie): I will. Bye-bye.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Thanks so much for your questions. Operator, do we have other questions?

Coordinator: You do. Our next question comes from (Yukum Nicolai). Your line is open.

(Yukum Nicolai): Yes, my question is how are household income data compiled and verified?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Hi, (Yukum). So we typically provide our household income data from the American Community Survey. Since we are very much focused on the new platform, today I hadn't necessarily anticipated such a question, but the way that a survey is - is conducted is basically that it goes out to 3-1/2 million households every year and data is published from the survey for every county and city in the U.S. starting in the fall of each year and continues through the winter.

In terms of the specifics around the survey and the household income question, I can certainly take your question offline to give you some more details if you'd like and we can do that either by email or you have my phone number right here as well.

(Yukum Nicolai): Okay. Thank you. And I would propose that the information is also verified through the (unintelligible) that each individual is required by law to provide to the IRS.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Great. Thank you so much for your feedback. Certainly, administrative records are being looked at for our upcoming census and that's something that we're widely interested in as well.

(Yukum Nicolai): Thank you.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Operator. Sure. Thank you. Operator, are there additional questions?

Coordinator: Yes, our next question comes from (Steven Jonah). Your line is open.

(Steven Jonah): Thank you. (Ally), are there a certain amount of research use of sensitive data with facts retrieving data via Fact Finder and Data Ferret as well? And I know there's no perfect way to do this, but you've kind of gone from this organically grown system that maybe is a bit unwieldy now and now, you seem to be going after this super integrated all-in-one system.

And again, there's no perfect method. With that said, the current message you can kind of be a query, search through with your three menus and kind of slowly, but surely drill down to what you're after knowing that you're not missing a bunch of files or tables.

What I see now with DataCensus.gov is wide open search, it's like you all trying to be Google, you know, a super open search versus - more of a query database system.

So it kind of scares me to be honest.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Okay. Was there a question in that?

(Steven Jonah): And - yes, and is that what you're after, like, a Google interface?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): So...

(Steven Jonah): Or do you see any problem in it - will I be able to do that systematically or very systematic step-by-step query process to get where I want to go without missing a bunch of tables with this new system once it's done?

I don't see that right now with the - with what you have up presently.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Okay. Well, first, thanks for your feedback and...

(Steven Jonah): Thank you.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): ... I heard a couple of things there that I'd like to address. First, I think it probably is worth noting that one of the reasons this project was undertaken with that there was actually a data dissemination task force. It's been a few years ago now that really worked with customers very directly to determine how do we want - how can we best help you find the data that you're looking for.

And so through a variety of different feedback focus groups and so on, at that point the process really began. And one of the things that was coming across sort of loud and clear is people want to be able to come in and type in a search plain language.

So that's really how we begun the process. Additionally, one of the things we know is that the majority of users of Census.gov are first-time users. And so we have to sort of hit that sweet spot of how do we get first-time users who may never have seen any of our data to come in and be able to access some things that will in fact be useful to them.

Of course, we know that we also have super users and folks like you who are connected to our data already perhaps know what you like to search and how

you'd like to see it and are more experienced so doing and we do fully anticipate to have both a simple search bar, as well as, an advanced search mechanism.

Both of those things are being worked on now and that's actually why this webinar on how you guys can help us really hit your needs is so important because search is the key thing that we're looking at right now.

So if you know that there are specifics in the way that you would like to go through the search process, if you can send an email to that effect, that would be fantastic.

(Steven Jonah): All right. Thank you. Yes, I just - the open searches I think it's, you know, a great goal. There's just so much data there that, you know, a simple search results in, you know, 5,000 results. It's hard to do.

But anyways, yes, I'm - my encouragement is to still allow the more systematic query methods to be available once you get this done. Thank you so much.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Sure thing. Thanks for your comments and your question.

(Steven Jonah): Sure.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Are there still questions, operator?

Coordinator: Yes, our next question comes from, and I apologize if I say your name incorrectly, I believe it's (Punjab Andari), your line is open.

(Punjab Andari): Yes, thank you. I have somewhat of a similar question about systematic versus Google Search type of thing. Let me just give you an example of something that I was looking for and I was having trouble and still do.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Okay.

(Punjab Andari): For example, I'm looking at data at the lowest level of geography that might be available. We are the decennial centers versus what might be available (unintelligible) say via ACS, the survey-based data.

So, you know, for example, age, race (unintelligible) I'm going to qualify this as one-dimensional information is I believe available at Census.gov (unintelligible) the decennial census, but if I wanted to figure out is age, my income cross-tab of population of household is available? I don't find it easy to figure that out.

And then (unintelligible) and I don't know how (unintelligible) or should I be going to the Data.Census.gov? But that seems like completely Google type of stuff and I wouldn't know what I'm missing.

So how can (unintelligible)?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): A couple of notes on what you said. So first, yes, there are definitely different levels of geography and the lowest level of geography will be determined by the particular data set that you're looking at.

So, for example, Census data goes down to the block level; although, not for all subjects, and American Community Service or American Community Survey Data goes down to the block group level.

With that said, while you are attempting to do any sort of cross-tabulating of your data, that is not yet available on Data.Census.gov.

And because you have very specific needs, I would definitely recommend that you email me and we can talk more about it and I can help to walk you through that if you don't mind taking that offline.

(Punjab Andari): Okay. The email I should be using is the one which is - okay. I got it. Yes.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Okay. Great. Thank you.

(Punjab Andari): Okay.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Operator, we do have a couple of questions that have come through chat if we can take those for a moment.

Coordinator: Absolutely. We don't have any other questions on the phone line right now. So while you're asking your questions if you would like to ask a question on the phone line, please press Star 1.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Thank you. OK. So one of the questions I see here asks will the new platform allow users to incorporate user collected data into the various census maps instead of downloading census data and then create new maps with both the census and user collected data?

So a question like this is one that has come up pretty regularly, right, because we know that a lot of people like to use the census-based geographies as well as our data and there is a lot of interest in being able to do what you've described.

As you may be aware, there are a couple of tools that allow for users to upload their own (shaped) files for example. So we're talking about Census Business Builder and the On the Map tool for employment data.

We have not yet determined what that level of ability or capability will be. Certainly, that is a capability that we have heard several times. We know people do want to have some flexibility in terms of uploading their own data shaped files and the like.

That is still to be determined, but I would certainly recommend that you email to CDSCI.feedback if you would like to see that in the platform.

It looks like we also have a question that asks will all the table reference numbers still be available perhaps in source notes? Yes, all the table reference numbers will still be available. We have absolutely no desire to get rid of those in our new platform.

Of course, we want to be sure that you are fully aware of where your data are coming from.

There's a question here will you be providing an API guide? On Data.Census.gov, currently we do not have that. Are we going to provide that? That is another question that has in fact been raised.

Certainly, I think it could be useful to many users especially folks who may not have previously accessed the Census' API. So we will definitely take that into consideration.

And we're going to pause for just a moment because it looks like we have a couple of additional questions on chat. Operator, do we have any others on the phone?

Coordinator: We do have a question on the phone line. It's from (Steve Duker). Your line is open.

(Steve Duker): Hi. I was wondering, and I asked this question on chat, I've been trying to - I have students who need to find Census-tracked level data for, like, population or educational level or something like that.

And so when I go to do a search and click on the show filters and select geographies, if I go to Census tracks, it doesn't list the states and, of course, therefore it won't actually put a Census track in there because I don't have a state or a county.

Is that - is this project far enough along so that it should be at that point when I can do that or where are we at on that?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): So one of the major things we've been working on is mapping in our geo special aspects and at this point when we last reviewed just maybe a day or two ago looking at exactly that type of question, a tracked level data was not yet available. So that is still forthcoming.

(Steve Duker): Okay. So in the future though we should be able to do that?

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): In the future, yes.

(Steve Duker): Okay. That's the main thing I wondered. That's - I do this - do library instruction sessions for classes that use this a lot. In fact, I've even created online instructions for students and - to do the Census track level search.

So I do that a lot.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Great. Thank you.

(Steve Duker): So good to know.

(Ally Burlington-Gibson): Sure thing. It looks like we have various housing data or household data questions. One here says will there still be a way to download separate household and person data in order to link it?

By that, I assume you are talking about doing some cross-tabulation of data and the notion is that, yes, we do need to look at the methodologies for which we can incorporate our micro data.

Again, that will be a little bit further down the line as we are continuing to pull in additional capabilities from some of our other tools, but certainly that is being looked at.

Another asks I use a very specific slice of housing data and I would - wait a minute. Not that one. I'm sorry. Will the new platform in API potentially support data scraping and/or direct access for Web services like ArcGIS on the line?

We're not quite there yet. Currently, we don't yet have that capability in mind and that doesn't mean that we won't get there. Of course, as you had seen on the vision and scoping slide, we have several years of work to do. Obviously,

we know that a lot of our data customers do a lot with ArcGIS and certainly there are different considerations for that as well.

Gregory Pewett: Okay. Well, this is Greg from the training branch and we think this is a good time to bend the webinar here. We've gotten through most of the chat questions. If your question was not answered, the contact information is up on the screen. Feel free to send (Ally) a message there through email.

And we want to thank everyone for taking some time out of your day today to join us. We hope you'll get involved or stay involved and working on this new data platform with us.

And (Ally), thank you for your work on this platform and for taking the time out of your busy schedule to talk with us this afternoon. I just want to mention that the slides, the transcript of today's webinar and the recording itself will be available on the Census Bureau training page and again, that's at Census.gov, then click data at the top of the page and then training and workshops.

And this Friday we should be able to get that all posted up. Tomorrow you'll probably receive an email asking if you could fill out an evaluation. If you didn't get a chance to do that today, we'd appreciate you filling that out tomorrow.

So once again, thanks for joining us. We hope you'll also on our training site keep track of what's coming up in terms of webinars and thank you very much and have a good afternoon.

Coordinator: Thank you. That concludes today's conference. Thank you for participating. You may now disconnect.

END