

- Visitor Travel Surveys: Issues, Solutions, and Findings (*Gregory Newmark - Regional Transportation Authority*)

Metropolitan travel surveys traditionally focus on the household as the unit of analysis. While this approach has been relatively successful for a half century of travel demand modeling, it excludes important users of the transportation network, such as commercial vehicles and out-of-town visitors. Although much recent effort has focused on incorporating freight movements, relatively little work has examined the movements of visitors to a metropolitan area.

There is reason to believe that the travel behaviors of visitors are distinct from those of residents. The exclusion of information on this travel market is particularly problematic in places where the visitor volumes are substantial, such as Chicago, which drew 43.6 million visitors in 2011 (Bergen, 2012). The lack of knowledge of visitor movements necessarily hampers effective transportation planning and leads to missed opportunities to tailor the system to potential users.

This research seeks to begin to fill this gap. It explores the issues involved in conducting visitor travel surveys, considers solutions that have been implemented, and presents general findings about how visitors travel. Special attention is given to illuminating the relationships between visitors and transit systems.