

about which little is known currently, that merit the attention of the Department. To accomplish these objectives, studies that utilize recently released data, such as the Census 2000 long-form data or other Census products such as County Business Patterns, are needed.

(B) Eligible Activities: Topics in Urban Research

This part lists major topics and questions on which HUD seeks information. HUD is interested in high-quality research that offers a unique contribution to the literature on urban economic and social change. The proposals may include descriptive studies, analytical studies, or both. These studies may identify or measure the factors associated with particular outcomes and the underlying causes of particular outcomes. The impact of existing policies may be described and analyzed. The proposals should highlight the policy implications of the potential findings of the proposed research, particularly with respect to policies that have been successful in urban areas. The methodology to be applied to the studies may include statistical techniques, econometric estimation, application of geographic information systems (GIS) techniques, case studies, a critical review of the present state of knowledge, and meta-analysis of existing studies. In each case, the methodology must reflect the state-of-the-art in the respective discipline. The final report for each empirical study will include a succinct discussion of the scholarly literature related to the issue being analyzed; this literature review will provide background for the methodology of the proposed study and a useful context for identifying the analytical and policy contributions of the study. The Department is interested in a wide variety of research topics. These topics are:

(1) Urban Economy

HUD is interested in research that would help explain the necessary conditions for a thriving urban economy as well as which local and federal policies encourage balanced or sustainable growth. Such research could support, for example, Strategic Objective 4.1, "The number, quality, and accessibility of jobs increase in urban * * * communities," and Strategic Objective 4.2, "Economic conditions in distressed communities improve." Possible topics include but are not limited to the following questions:

- *Economic development:* Are there any particular industries that are key to economic development? What are the implications of different types of agglomeration economies (*i.e.*, scale economies, economies of localization) for urban growth? What is the role of tax incentives in economic development? Are there geographic spillovers of economic development? To what extent does growth in the suburbs lead to growth in center cities? What is the impact of economic development on poverty? What role have faith-based institutions played in effective community development initiatives?

- *Economic change:* What have been the trends in employment, income, and wealth in center cities?

- *Labor markets:* What does recent data tell us about the significance of spatial mismatch between jobs and residents? What are the trends in unemployment among youth in cities? What is the impact of job growth on unemployment in cities? What has been the impact of welfare reform, urban development, and other fiscal policies on urban labor markets?

- *Housing and mortgage markets:* What is the impact of economic growth and other urban trends on the supply of affordable housing? What is the impact of gentrification on the economic welfare of the pre-existing residents of a neighborhood? What is the relationship between housing tenure and other variables such as employment status? What have been the dynamics (construction, rehabilitation, and transformation) of the rental housing stock of cities? What are the long- and short-run relationships between income growth and rents? What is the recent evidence on the causes and consequences of homelessness? What has been the impact on urban economies of the substantial increase in affordable lending during the 1990's? What problems do inner-city residents face in obtaining financing? What role do mainstream lenders play in inner cities?

- *Urban Public Finance:* What is the extent of the fiscal disparities among urban and suburban local governments? What is the impact of fiscal conditions on economic growth and vice-versa? What are some of the determinants of fiscal health? How have some of the fiscal innovations of the last decades affected the public finances of cities?

(2) Urban Demographics

HUD would be interested in research that reveals both the characteristics of cities' populations as well as the spatial patterns of real estate development.

- *Population characteristics:* How has the proportion of elderly, immigrants, minorities, and female-headed households changed over the last ten years and why? What are the demographics of population growth, or decline, in cities? What would be the projections of population growth in cities based on observed trends?

- *Urban growth:* What is the role of migration (both foreign and domestic) in the growth of urban centers? What are the most recent causes and consequences of suburbanization? To what extent are minorities relocating to suburban areas and why? What is the degree of interdependence between suburbs and cities?

- *Patterns of population density:* What has been the change in the spatial distribution of population and why? Is there a significant relationship between the density of population and other variables such as housing affordability, economic growth, or fiscal health? What is the role of subcenters in the urban economy?

(3) Urban Issues

HUD is interested in research concerning social and economic issues that are unique to urban areas as well as social problems that are particularly concentrated in urban areas.

- *Education:* Which policies have been successful in improving inner-city schools? What is the extent of spending inequalities in education? What has been the trend in education levels required for employment in cities? What is the impact of education on poverty? What role do colleges and universities play in the economic development of cities?

- *Crime:* What are some of the social and economic variables that appear to influence crime in cities? What is the cost of crime in terms of metropolitan and urban growth? What are the relative impacts of different social and criminal justice policies on crime rates? How are property crime and violent crime different with respect to all of the above questions? How is crime in cities different from crime in the suburbs?

- *Poverty:* How has the income distribution of urban centers changed? What have been the recent trends in urban poverty, especially in the concentration of poverty in cities? What are the explanations for these changes in urban poverty? What is the trend of gaps between inner city-suburban social indicators?

- *Transportation and commuting patterns:* What have been the recent trends in commuting times and distances in cities? How are these trends related to mode of transport and