

THE ROLE OF THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK IN POPULATION CHANGE
AROUND THE DAVENPORT-ROCK ISLAND-MOLINE URBANIZED AREA
1950-1980

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed population changes in an area surrounding the Davenport-Rock Island-Moline urbanized area of Iowa and Illinois. The role of limited access highways constructed in the study area between 1950 and 1980 were of particular interest in assessing these changes. The presence and size of incorporated places, and distance from the urbanized area were other factors evaluated for their relationship to population change.

Both statistical and cartographical methods of analysis were employed in the study. Townships, rather than counties or county-equivalents, were selected as the basic units of analysis. This approach allowed population patterns to be examined in greater detail.

Highways and Population Change

Study findings revealed that the construction of limited access highways in the study area did not result in significant population increases along them. In a more general sense, however, townships with major highways of any kind (including limited access, U.S., and some State highways) did exhibit greater population growth than townships with no major highways. This influence of major highways on population growth declined through the study period, however.

Distance and Population Change

Careful interpretation of the statistical and cartographical analyses concerning the relationship between distance from the Davenport-Rock Island-Moline urbanized area and population change suggests that population growth took place within the urbanized area

in the 1950s, while in the 1960s and 1970s, expansion out of the urbanized area took place. These findings are in agreement with patterns of U.S. population redistribution put forth in other studies.

Incorporated Places and Population Change

Of the three factors considered in this study, incorporated places appeared to play the greatest role in promoting population growth and redistribution in the study area. In the 1950s, the influence of incorporated places was confined to townships with incorporated places, but by the 1960s and 1970s, this influence had resulted in population increases in townships adjacent to those with incorporated places. Again, these findings agree with other studies concerning population change over the past three decades, i.e., urbanization trends, characteristic of the 1950s, have been replaced by decentralization trends. The peripheral growth around incorporated places is indicative of this decentralization.