

1973 AND 1974 NEBRASKA POPULATION ESTIMATES

The U.S. Bureau of the Census estimates that 1,542,507 persons lived in Nebraska as of July, 1974. The increase from the state's 1970 census total is 3.8 percent. This article presents *provisional* region and county population estimates for 1974 and *revised* estimates for 1973. As in previous years,¹ these estimates were developed cooperatively by the Bureau of Business Research and the U.S. Bureau of the Census.² A more detailed analysis of the 1974 provisional estimates—particularly in relation to an earlier set of 1975 projections published in *Nebraska Population Projections* by the Bureau of Business Research in 1973—will be

presented in a future publication of the Bureau of Business Research.

REGIONAL PATTERNS

The 1973 and 1974 estimates for the 26 Planning and Development Regions in Nebraska (see map below and table, page 2) suggest that many areas of the state have experienced relatively small changes in total population since 1970. Over half (14) of the 26 regions showed a change in total population of within plus or minus 3 percent from 1970 to 1974. Eight regions increased by more than 3 percent; four regions declined by more than 3 percent.

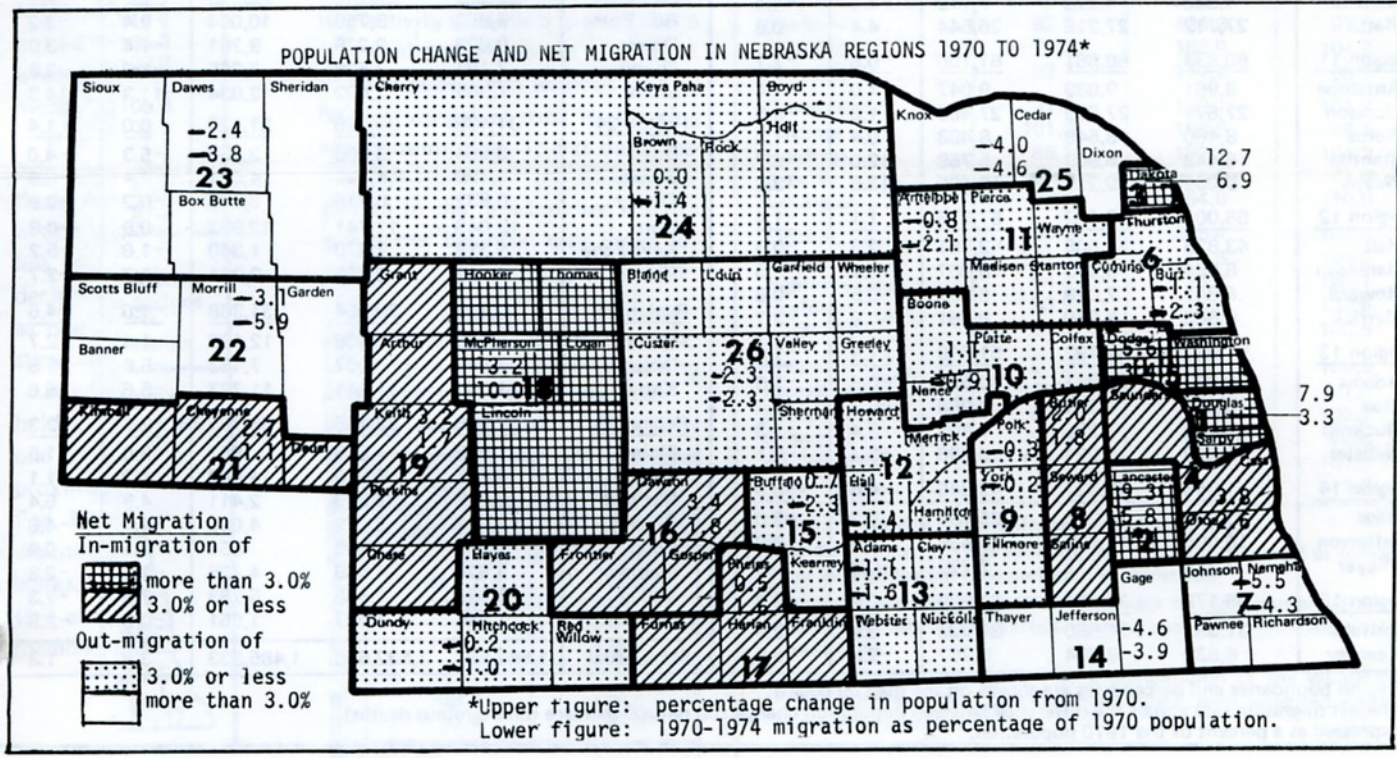
Regions 18 (North Platte), 3 (South Sioux City), 2 (Lincoln), and 1 (Omaha) continued to be the predominant growth areas of the state, having increased since 1974 by 13.2, 12.7, 9.3, and 7.9 percent respectively. Strong net immigration (10 percent of the 1970 population) has occurred in the North Platte region since 1970. Region 3 (South Sioux City) showed a net immigration of 6.9 percent. The Lincoln and Omaha regions received sizable numbers of immigrants, although the percentages—5.8 and 3.3 percent respectively—appear relatively small because of the large metropolitan bases.

Seven of the state's regions (6, 11, 20, 22, 23, 25, and 26) continued to experience net

(Continued on page 6)

¹ Ordinarily, county population estimates are generated separately using two methods: Component II and Regression. The official county estimates are then an average of the results of both methods, adjusting to agree with the state total population estimate. See *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, Nos. 427 and 460, for further details. The revised 1973 estimates, however, are averages of three methods: the two mentioned above and another set of estimates reflecting migration flows. The latter set resulted from special efforts of the U.S. Bureau of the Census to produce estimates for the Federal Revenue Sharing Program.

² These estimates will appear also in a future publication of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, P-26 series. Previous years' estimates were published in the March, 1974, February, 1973, and April, 1972, issues of *Business in Nebraska*.



POPULATION OF NEBRASKA REGIONS AND COUNTIES¹
REVISED 1973 AND PROVISIONAL 1974 COMPARED WITH 1970 CENSUS

Regions and Counties	Provisional July 1, '74	Revised July 1, '73	Census Apr. 1, '70	Percent Change '70-'74	Net Migration Rate ²	Regions and Counties	Provisional July 1, '74	Revised July 1, '73	Census Apr. 1, '70	Percent Change '70-'74	Net Migration Rate ²
Region 1	491,581	486,195	455,655	7.9	3.3	Region 16	26,800	26,368	25,931	3.4	1.8
Douglas	418,173	414,483	389,455	7.4	3.3	Dawson	20,254	19,970	19,771	2.4	0.4
Sarpy	73,408	71,712	66,200	10.9	3.5	Frontier	4,116	4,033	3,982	3.4	3.4
Region 2	183,571	181,003	167,972	9.3	5.8	Gosper	2,430	2,365	2,178	11.6	11.2
Lancaster	183,571	181,003	167,972	9.3	5.8	Region 17	25,488	25,301	25,373	0.5	1.6
Region 3	14,801	14,499	13,137	12.7	6.9	Franklin	4,682	4,472	4,566	2.5	5.0
Dakota	14,801	14,499	13,137	12.7	6.9	Furnas	6,922	6,819	6,897	0.4	2.6
Region 4	52,618	52,618	50,670	3.8	2.6	Harlan	4,182	4,317	4,357	-4.0	-1.7
Cass	19,673	19,652	18,076	8.8	5.8	Phelps	9,702	9,693	9,553	1.6	0.8
Otoe	15,175	15,470	15,576	-2.6	-3.0	Region 18	37,391	36,160	33,045	13.2	10.0
Saunders	17,770	17,496	17,018	4.4	4.4	Hooker	951	977	939	1.3	2.4
Region 5	50,779	50,045	48,092	5.6	3.4	Lincoln	33,630	32,622	29,538	13.9	10.4
Dodge	36,287	35,651	34,782	4.3	2.1	Logan	1,088	1,025	991	9.8	8.3
Washington	14,492	14,394	13,310	8.9	6.6	McPherson	647	608	623	3.9	2.2
Region 6	27,913	27,843	28,223	-1.1	-2.3	Thomas	1,075	928	954	12.7	11.9
Burt	8,859	8,863	9,247	-4.2	-3.7	Region 19	18,223	17,677	17,664	3.2	1.7
Cuming	11,780	11,960	12,034	-2.1	-3.8	Arthur	551	518	606	-9.1	-13.5
Thurston	7,274	7,020	6,942	4.8	2.1	Chase	4,307	4,164	4,129	4.3	3.9
Region 7	29,736	30,914	31,469	-5.5	-4.3	Grant	1,160	989	1,019	13.8	10.7
Johnson	5,436	5,675	5,743	-5.3	-3.8	Keith	8,975	8,733	8,487	5.7	3.5
Nemaha	8,120	8,655	8,976	-9.5	-9.4	Perkins	3,230	3,273	3,423	-5.6	-5.3
Pawnee	4,251	4,316	4,473	-5.0	-1.9	Region 20	20,662	20,727	20,698	-0.2	-1.0
Richardson	11,929	12,268	12,277	-2.8	-1.8	Dundy	2,811	2,926	2,926	-3.9	-3.0
Region 8	37,452	37,059	36,730	2.0	1.8	Hayes	1,493	1,543	1,530	-2.4	-4.0
Butler	9,203	9,142	9,461	-2.7	-2.3	Hitchcock	3,883	3,917	4,051	-4.1	-3.9
Seward	15,834	15,424	14,460	9.5	8.3	Red Willow	12,475	12,341	12,191	2.3	0.8
Saline	12,415	12,493	12,809	-3.1	-2.4	Region 21	20,033	18,853	19,504	2.7	1.1
Region 9	28,206	28,110	28,290	-0.3	-0.2	Cheyenne	10,850	10,630	10,778	0.7	-0.5
Fillmore	8,153	8,055	8,137	0.2	1.9	Deuel	2,581	2,760	2,717	-5.0	-5.0
Polk	6,375	6,343	6,468	-1.4	-0.4	Kimball	6,602	5,463	6,009	9.9	6.5
York	13,678	13,712	13,685	-0.1	-1.3	Region 22	44,775	45,080	46,208	-3.1	-5.9
Region 10	49,928	49,556	49,374	1.1	-0.9	Banner	959	1,006	1,034	-7.3	-10.0
Boone	7,708	7,874	8,190	-5.9	-5.9	Garden	2,887	2,896	2,929	-1.4	-1.5
Colfax	9,622	9,547	9,498	1.3	1.4	Morrill	5,728	5,949	5,813	-1.5	-2.6
Nance	4,886	4,916	5,142	-5.0	-4.4	Scotts Bluff	35,201	35,229	36,432	-3.4	-6.7
Platte	27,712	27,219	26,544	4.4	0.6	Region 23	28,472	28,658	29,174	-2.4	-3.8
Region 11	60,634	60,661	61,100	-0.8	-2.1	Box Butte	9,853	9,759	10,094	-2.4	-3.2
Antelope	8,961	9,039	9,047	-1.0	-1.4	Dawes	9,623	9,279	9,761	-1.4	-3.0
Madison	27,672	27,899	27,402	1.0	-0.5	Sheridan	7,191	7,528	7,285	-1.3	-2.8
Pierce	8,460	8,549	8,493	-0.4	-1.3	Sioux	1,805	2,092	2,034	-11.3	-14.3
Stanton	6,449	5,909	5,758	12.0	9.7	Region 24	31,138	30,795	31,123	0.0	-1.4
Wayne	9,092	9,265	10,400	-12.6	-13.8	Boyd	3,554	3,666	3,752	-5.3	-4.0
Region 12	68,000	68,402	67,276	1.1	-1.4	Brown	4,198	4,150	4,021	4.4	3.9
Hall	43,836	43,508	42,851	2.3	-0.9	Cherry	6,832	6,716	6,846	-0.2	-2.9
Hamilton	8,654	8,905	8,867	-2.4	-3.5	Holt	13,043	12,741	12,933	0.9	-0.8
Howard	6,841	7,029	6,807	0.5	-0.6	Keya Paha	1,318	1,270	1,340	-1.6	-5.2
Merrick	8,669	8,960	8,751	-0.9	-2.7	Rock	2,193	2,252	2,231	-1.7	-2.7
Region 13	51,063	51,792	51,619	-1.1	-1.6	Region 25	30,123	30,054	31,368	-4.0	-4.6
Adams	30,372	30,941	30,553	-0.6	-1.9	Cedar	12,025	11,806	12,192	-1.4	-2.7
Clay	8,325	8,391	8,266	0.7	0.3	Dixon	7,037	7,007	7,453	-5.6	-5.8
Nuckolls	7,154	7,236	7,404	-3.4	-3.3	Knox	11,061	11,241	11,723	-5.6	-5.6
Webster	5,212	5,224	5,396	-3.4	-0.1	Region 26	32,996	33,455	33,763	-2.3	-2.3
Region 14	41,946	42,327	43,946	-4.6	-3.9	Blaine	872	838	847	3.0	1.5
Gage	23,633	24,223	25,731	-8.2	-8.0	Custer	13,927	14,216	14,092	-1.2	-1.1
Jefferson	10,595	10,532	10,436	1.5	3.2	Garfield	2,528	2,532	2,411	4.9	5.4
Thayer	7,718	7,572	7,779	-0.8	0.3	Greeley	3,811	3,922	4,000	-4.7	-4.6
Region 15	38,178	38,454	37,929	0.7	-2.3	Loup	863	825	854	1.1	0.9
Buffalo	31,339	31,580	31,222	0.4	-2.9	Sherman	4,620	4,589	4,725	-2.2	-2.8
Kearney	6,839	6,874	6,707	2.0	0.6	Valley	5,329	5,446	5,783	-7.9	-7.3
						Wheeler	1,046	1,087	1,051	-0.5	-2.9
						State Total	1,542,507	1,532,606	1,485,333	3.8	1.3

¹Region boundaries and percentages are shown on the map on page 1.

²The net migration rate equals the difference between population change and natural increase (births minus deaths) expressed as a percent of the 1970 population.

MONETARY VARIABLES AND ECONOMIC POLICY

Total spending by consumers, businesses, and governments affect the general level of economic activity. Decisions to spend depend in large part upon not only the level of current income but also the availability and cost of money and credit. Some economic policy makers, therefore, propose "tightening money and credit" in a period of inflation—especially when the general level of prices is advancing at a rate faster than the level of money income—and "loosening money and credit" in a period of deflation. Deflation is somewhat inconsistently thought of by some as a decline in prices, and by others as a fall in employment or a rise in unemployment. Regardless of the concepts being used, economic policy makers look with varying degrees of confidence to the monetary agencies and authorities for action to "cool off" an overheated (inflationary) economy or "warm up" a cold, sluggish (stagflationary) economy.

Few policy makers are so naive as to think that an economy that has a large degree of both inflation and stagnation (the popular term is stagflation) can be dealt with only by monetary actions. Even in the case of monetary actions the condition of inflation calls for one type of action while that of stagnation calls for another. Certainly in a period of stagflation those responsible for monetary policies are faced by a dilemma. A particular action may, therefore, be agreeable to some while at the same time disagreeable to others—depending upon who is passing judgment. Economic affairs are not "either-or" situations.

In that which follows a brief explanation will be offered of certain monetary variables and the actions that monetary agencies or authorities take. The responsibility for fostering a flow of money and credit that facilitates orderly economic growth and a stable dollar has been delegated, not mandated, to the Federal Reserve System (hereafter Fed). Our emphasis, therefore, is upon the Fed as the agency of primary concern.

The Fed, although sensitive to conditions underlying both inflation and stagnation, is usually presumed to give top priority either to the maintenance of stable prices or, as in recent times, to the curtailment of price-level rises—even though it cannot help but be cognizant of the need for increased employment. Thus it is easy to find comments that question the sensibility of "tight money" during a period of increasing unemployment.

It is not possible, of course, to separate economic variables into two distinct classes: those affected by monetary actions and those not so affected. One certainty in economic policy making is that there is an interrelationship among all variables. Nevertheless, not only those responsible for making private investment decisions but also those trying to understand such developments as changing price and employment levels must have an understanding of the nature of monetary actions.

A commercial bank that is a member of the Fed is required to hold a fraction of its demand and time deposits as "reserves" at one of the Federal Reserve Banks. Nearly 40 percent of the approximately 14,000 national and state banks are members of the Fed. More important, nearly 85 percent of the demand and time deposits in the nation's commercial banks are held by the member banks. Control of the reserves by the Fed is, therefore, an important element in its ability to affect the lending operations of the member banks.

The difference between total reserves and the required minimum is called "excess reserves." When member-bank borrowings from the Fed are deducted from excess reserves the result is termed "free reserves" if the figure is positive, and "net borrowed reserves" if negative. The free reserves govern to a major degree the ability of member banks to sustain the buildup in demand deposits that emanates from new loans. Thus the ability of the Fed authorities to vary the fraction of deposits required as reserves (often referred to as the reserve requirement or reserve ratio) is one tool of monetary policy.

A complete understanding requires a look behind the "reserve measures" to factors supplying or absorbing the reserves. The sum of three items—total Reserve Bank credit, gold stock, and Treasury currency—equals the sum of the following items: currency in circulation, Treasury deposits, foreign deposits and other deposits at the Federal Reserve Banks, other Federal Reserve liabilities and capital, and member bank reserves. Increases in the first three items supply reserve funds and decreases in them absorb reserve funds. The reverse is true of the other items. In establishing its credit policy, the Fed takes into consideration the movements of each of those items that affect reserves. Other than the reserve requirement, the Fed controls *directly* only two components of Federal Reserve credit: its holdings of U.S. government securities and bankers acceptances and its loans to member banks.

It is primarily by purchasing securities in the open market that the Fed is able to supply reserves to member banks. Conversely, open-market sales reduce member-bank reserve funds. If, for example, reserves are plentiful the member banks are able to expand their loans and investments. This, in turn, increases demand deposits, which are the major portion of the nation's supply of money. If reserves are reduced below the required minimum, banks may borrow temporarily from the Reserve Banks. The interest charged to the member banks—commonly called the discount rate—is the cost of such borrowings. Both open-market operations and the interest rate on loans to member banks are important tools of monetary policy.

The Fed may not get the supply of money and credit to change according to its desires. There is considerable elasticity in the supply of money and credit. When expansion is desired, reductions in the reserve requirement, purchases of securities in the open market, and reductions in the discount rate by the Fed may only result in a build-up of free reserves. The supply of money may not be increased via increases in loans and demand deposits. It is an old saying that one cannot "push a string." Likewise, an attempt to curtail the supply of money and credit by decreasing the free reserves by actions opposite to those above may be thwarted by the commercial banks also selling securities or borrowing from the Fed. The "string" that controls the money supply also has some "give" when being pulled.

The ability of the Federal Reserve System to meet successfully its commitment to foster an appropriate flow of money and credit is not at all a certain ability. Rational criticisms of the Fed's policies and actions must be based, however, upon an understanding of the monetary variables. This is not only one of the primary requisites for economic policy making, but also one for evaluation of such actions as are being taken currently.

E. L. HAUSWALD

Review and Outlook

It is a strange situation that the December figures, as compared with last year, are higher than the November ones on the same comparison—except for the dollar volume of manufacturing and the physical volume of agriculture. Compared with 1967, however, all the December indexes are lower than the November ones—except for government activity. It appears, therefore, that the December slump was not as severe in 1974 as it was in 1973. It was a slump, nevertheless, and carried us further down the slope of recession toward depression. The comparison with 1973 in December, however, was not as good for the United States data with respect to most of the industries, so the first observation above applies to the state only.

It is true, that even if viewed as a depression, the situation was really not too bad in December. The physical volume figures (dollar volume figures discounted for the inflation in prices) both for the state and for the nation are still about 20 percent above those for 1967. Not a single industry in Nebraska, and only construction in the nation, were below the 1967 average in these physical volume data. The dollar volumes, however, were still very high, due to inflation.

In Table 5, we find that consumer prices were still rising, although the rate of increase was leveling off somewhat, and that agricultural prices were declining—especially in Nebraska. Also, for the first time in recent years, the wholesale price index had started to decline. The tension (Continued on page 5)

Notes for Tables 1 and 2: (1) The "distributive" indicator represents a composite of wholesale and retail trade; transportation, communication and utilities; finance, insurance, and real estate; and selected services. (2) The "physical volume" indicator and its components represent the dollar volume indicator and its components adjusted for price changes using appropriate price indexes—see Table 5, page 5.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS: NEBRASKA AND UNITED STATES

1. CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR				
December, 1974	Current Month as Percent of Same Month Previous Year		1974 Year to Date as Percent of 1973 Year to Date	
	Nebraska	U.S.	Nebraska	U.S.
Indicator				
Dollar Volume	106.8	108.8	110.8	111.0
Agricultural	81.2	99.4	102.6	108.3
Nonagricultural	113.7	109.3	112.7	111.2
Construction	115.0	96.8	99.0	99.0
Manufacturing	125.4	114.0	126.0	119.7
Distributive	109.8	107.8	110.8	108.6
Government	112.6	109.2	108.4	108.6
Physical Volume	98.3	96.8	101.5	99.0
Agricultural	87.9	103.3	105.7	101.6
Nonagricultural	100.4	96.5	100.8	98.9
Construction	100.4	84.5	87.3	87.5
Manufacturing	103.6	95.2	105.5	100.5
Distributive	97.9	96.1	99.9	97.8
Government	107.0	105.1	103.6	104.2

2. CHANGE FROM 1967		
Indicator	Percent of 1967 Average	
	Nebraska	U.S.
Dollar Volume	198.2	189.2
Agricultural	192.6	219.6
Nonagricultural	199.4	188.1
Construction	217.8	165.0
Manufacturing	228.6	189.3
Distributive	187.4	187.1
Government	202.8	196.2
Physical Volume	121.1	118.6
Agricultural	109.2	122.9
Nonagricultural	123.5	118.5
Construction	120.3	91.1
Manufacturing	131.2	113.4
Distributive	120.6	120.4
Government	125.9	131.3

3. NET TAXABLE RETAIL SALES OF NEBRASKA REGIONS AND CITIES (Adjusted for Price Changes)

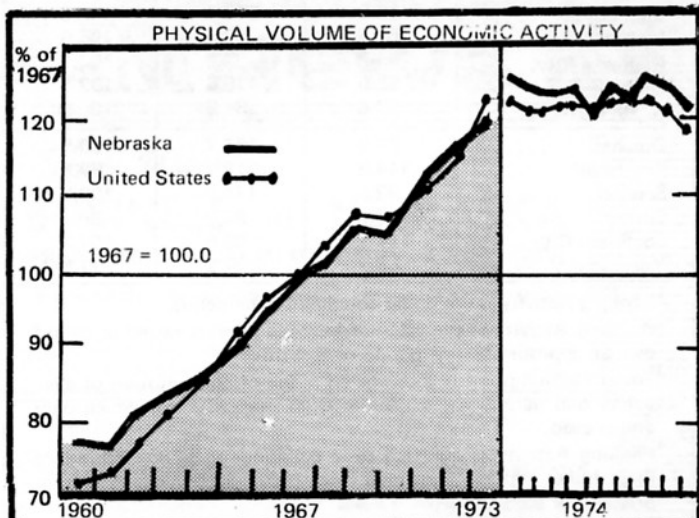
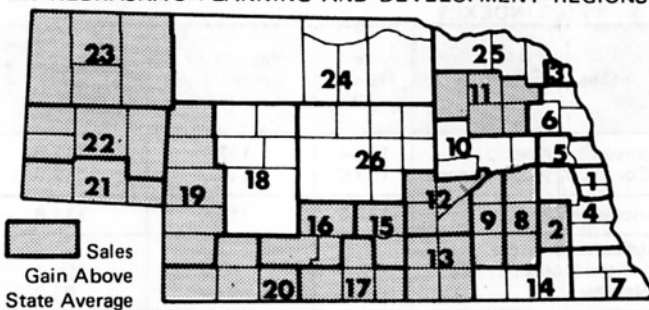
Region Number ¹ and City	Sales in Region ²		
	Dec., 1974 as percent of Dec., 1973	Dec., 1974 as percent of Dec., 1973	Year to Date '74 as percent of Year to Date '73
<i>The State</i>	102.4	101.2	100.4
1 Omaha	104.0	103.7	97.4
Bellevue	102.9		
2 Lincoln	105.6	103.8	101.0
3 So. Sioux City	100.2	95.1	98.9
4 Nebraska City	102.4	98.1	97.6
5 Fremont	104.6	99.5	99.0
Blair	104.2		
6 West Point	93.3	75.9	91.5
7 Falls City	93.6	86.8	93.4
8 Seward	101.1	100.3	101.8
9 York	105.7	111.2	107.1
10 Columbus	107.9	100.7	99.9
11 Norfolk	106.7	100.7	102.8
12 Grand Island	109.9	106.2	106.4
13 Hastings	108.0	105.6	106.2
14 Beatrice	92.3	87.9	99.0
Fairbury	100.9		
15 Kearney	106.7	105.2	104.5
16 Lexington	108.3	103.0	107.3
17 Holdrege	104.3	99.6	104.5
18 North Platte	101.8	99.0	97.1
19 Ogallala	106.0	115.5	116.2
20 McCook	107.3	102.7	105.3
21 Sidney	83.1	97.7	106.8
Kimball	103.9		
22 Scottsbluff	106.3	108.4	105.6
23 Alliance	102.9	95.5	102.2
Chadron	97.3		
24 O'Neill	93.4	82.2	97.4
25 Hartington	99.9	83.3	95.5
26 Broken Bow	95.3	88.8	97.2

¹ See region map below.

² Sales on which sales taxes are collected by retailers located in the state. Region totals include motor vehicle sales; city totals exclude motor vehicle sales.

Compiled from data provided by Nebraska Department of Revenue.

1974 YEAR TO DATE AS PERCENT OF 1973 YEAR TO DATE IN NEBRASKA'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGIONS



(Continued from page 4) that we have predicted in these columns between the forces of inflation and those of depression is beginning to have its effect, with inflation losing out. However, the tax reductions and increased government spending now being promoted in Washington may turn the tide the other way, back to inflation and away from depression. It is hard to say which is worse for the country. The general opinion appears now to be that in the short run the conditions of recession, which may develop into depression, are worse, but in the long run the conditions of inflation are worse.

December's retail sales figures, based upon the sales tax returns, are much less depressing than they were for the month of November, as shown in our last issue. This reinforces the idea, given above, that in the state the December comparison with a year ago was not as bad as the November one. This was Christmas business, yet the figures indicate that the 1974 holiday trade was better than in 1973. These sales data have been discounted for changes in the price level, and indicate the amount of sales in physical terms.

The areas south of the Interstate in central and western Nebraska, plus Omaha, Lincoln, and Scottsbluff, showed the most favorable retail situations. The northern tier of areas did not do quite so well. These areas are the most affected by the difficulties of the livestock business.

In Table 4 the banking figures, although still below December of 1973 in physical terms, are not as far down as they were in November. Although the McCook figure of 151.5 percent appears to be out of line, it has been checked out and either there is an undetected mistake or some large transaction(s) accounts for it.

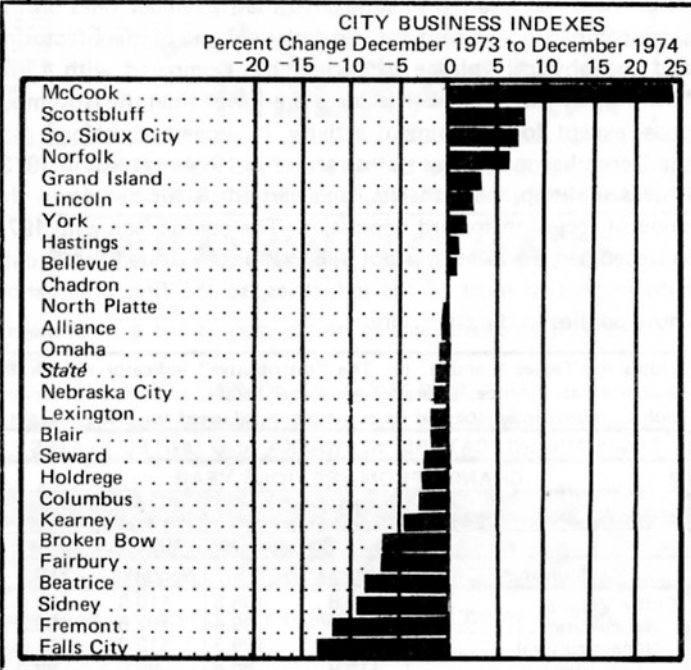
The building activity data were up, as usual, for most cities. As always, these are rather erratic, ranging in December from a drop to only 25 percent of last year's level to a rise of 589 percent, in spite of having been "spread"—a process in which the value of building permits is carried over into succeeding months to more nearly represent the actual construction activity. Because of their fluctuations, the building activity data have hitherto been excluded from our computation of the city business indexes. A way has been found, however, to include them without unduly disturbing these indexes.¹ The new weighting used is: banking activity, 4; retail sales, 4; power consumption, 1; and the transformed building activity, 1. This transfers half the weight previously given to power consumption to the new building activity figures. This, we believe, gives a better balanced city index for the chart.

E. Z. P.

¹The figures given have been transformed by the equation $Y = 1 + \log X$, X being the figure in the table, and Y the figure used in combining building activity with the other city data indexes to obtain the overall city index.

5. PRICE INDEXES			
December, 1974	Index (1967 = 100)	Percent of Same Month Last Year	Year to Date as Percent of Same Period Last Year*
Consumer Prices	155.4	112.2	111.0
Commodity component	153.0	112.7	112.0
Wholesale Prices	171.5	118.0	118.6
Agricultural Prices			
United States	178.6	96.2	106.3
Nebraska	176.3	92.4	96.2

*Using arithmetic average of monthly indexes.
Sources: Consumer and Wholesale Prices: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Agricultural Prices: U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Source: Table 4 below.

4. DECEMBER CITY BUSINESS INDICATORS			
The State and Its Trading Centers	Percent of Same Month a Year Ago		
	Banking Activity ¹ (Adjusted for Price Changes) ⁴	Building Activity ²	Power Consumption ³
<i>The State</i>	94.9	131.8	100.8
Alliance	90.1	589.1	112.7
Beatrice	88.2	58.4	104.2
Bellevue	95.1	108.4	107.6*
Blair	90.1	592.4	102.3
Broken Bow	88.8	99.9	103.0
Chadron	100.5	114.3	104.4
Columbus	86.0	220.2	98.5
Fairbury	85.6	424.8	97.6*
Falls City	71.4	168.9	104.9
Fremont	83.7	117.2	68.2*
Grand Island	97.0	108.1	101.7
Hastings	101.0	163.5	86.1
Holdrege	88.1	192.1	104.2
Kearney	85.4	41.5	91.6
Lexington	82.4	54.0	110.0
Lincoln	100.2	345.4	102.6
McCook	151.5	47.6	105.6
Nebraska City	94.8	25.2	100.1
Norfolk	93.9	118.6	132.6
North Platte	97.6	34.5	100.6
Omaha	93.9	156.7	100.5
Scottsbluff	114.8	210.4	97.3
Seward	92.5	174.0	102.2
Sidney	96.0	93.8	96.5
So. Sioux City	114.1	33.0	107.3
York	88.7	57.2	117.8

¹Banking Activity is the dollar volume of bank debits.
²Building Activity is the value of building permits issued as spread over an appropriate time period of construction.
³Power Consumption is a combined index of consumption of electricity and natural gas except in cases marked * for which only one is used.
⁴Banking Activity is adjusted by a combination of the Wholesale Price Index and the Consumer Price Index, each weighted appropriately for each city.

Source: Compilation by Bureau of Business Research from reports of private and public agencies.

(Continued from page 1) outmigration while experiencing natural *increases* (an excess of births over deaths) that were not great enough to offset the number of outmigrants. The result was a decrease in their total populations since 1970. In the southeastern corner of the state, outmigration also occurred but was accompanied by a natural *decrease* in the population from an excess of deaths over births. These two developments combined to cause population losses in Regions 7, 9, and 14. Region 17 also experienced a natural decrease from 1970 to 1974, but its in-migration was sufficient to offset the excess of deaths over births and cause a slight net gain in population.

COUNTY PATTERNS

Regional population patterns tend to average out the changes occurring in the individual county components of each region. It is desirable, therefore, to examine developments at the county level. Estimating and interpreting the county-level changes is less certain since random fluctuations and quirks in the demographic indicators occur. These may cause misleading changes in the estimates—especially in the case of small counties. Also, estimates for all counties are especially difficult to explain during a time when the economy is undergoing a period of stress, which may influence the behavior of the data series, and during a time when major demographic changes (such as falling birth rates and changing age structures) are occurring nationwide. Despite these difficulties, several developments are indicated by the 1974 estimates.

As one would expect, the percentage changes in county populations showed a wider range (from 13.9 to -12.6 percent) from 1970 to 1974 than did the regional averages. For the majority of the 93 counties in Nebraska (53), total populations changed within 4 percent to -4 percent for this four-year period. Seventeen counties showed growth of between 4 and 12 percent, and another 17 counties decreased in population from 4 to 12 percent. At the extremes, 5 counties grew by more than 12 percent between 1970 and 1974, whereas only 1 county declined by more than 12 percent.

The rapid growth of Region 18 since 1970 is primarily the result of the 13.9 percent growth of Lincoln County, the fastest growing county in the state. Developments which may be contributing to the county's rapid growth include expansion of the transportation industry, ongoing railroad construction projects,

and recent construction work on a power plant. The population indicators for Kimball County suggest an increase in the total population of about 9.9 percent, with the growth having occurred primarily since 1973. This increase reflects, in part, a Federal government construction project that is renovating several defense installations in the area and attracting additional people to Kimball County.

As has been the case in recent years, most of the increase in the total population of Nebraska (over 90 percent) has occurred in the metropolitan areas—Douglas, Sarpy,³ Lancaster, and Dakota counties. The Omaha area alone (Douglas and Sarpy counties combined) gained 35,926 persons from 1970 to 1974, about 61 percent of the total state gain. Growth in the Lincoln SMSA represented 27 percent of the state's total population increase. In contrast, the 89 nonmetropolitan counties' combined share of the state's net gain was only 9.4 percent.

Of the counties with declining total populations from 1970 to 1974, many were relatively small in size—resulting in large percentage changes—or were the locations of institutions of higher education experiencing falling enrollments. Since 1970 enrollments at Wayne and Peru state colleges have declined substantially, contributing to the decreased populations in Wayne (-12.6 percent) and Nemaha (-9.5 percent) counties. The 1971 closure of John J. Pershing College in Gage County likewise has been a factor in the county's 8.2 percent loss of population since 1970.

SUBCOUNTY ESTIMATES

It is expected that, in the next several months, the subcounty estimates produced in connection with the Federal Revenue Sharing Program will be released. For Nebraska, population estimates were made for the 538 incorporated places and 476 minor civil divisions in the state. At the time the subcounty estimates become available, the Bureau of Business Research will be glad to provide them to interested users of population data.

VICKI STEPP

³The rather large downward revision of Sarpy County's provisional 1973 estimate (76,312) was an outcome of the special census conducted in the county by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The official certified population on October 2, 1974, was 73,479, and that bench mark was used to obtain the revised 1973 estimate (71,712) and the provisional July, 1974, estimate (73,408).

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