

BY WILLIAM H. FREY

### The image of the long-commuting, gas-guzzling American is supported by newly released Census 2000 statistics, which show that three out of four workers drive to work alone and spend an average of 25.5 minutes en route.

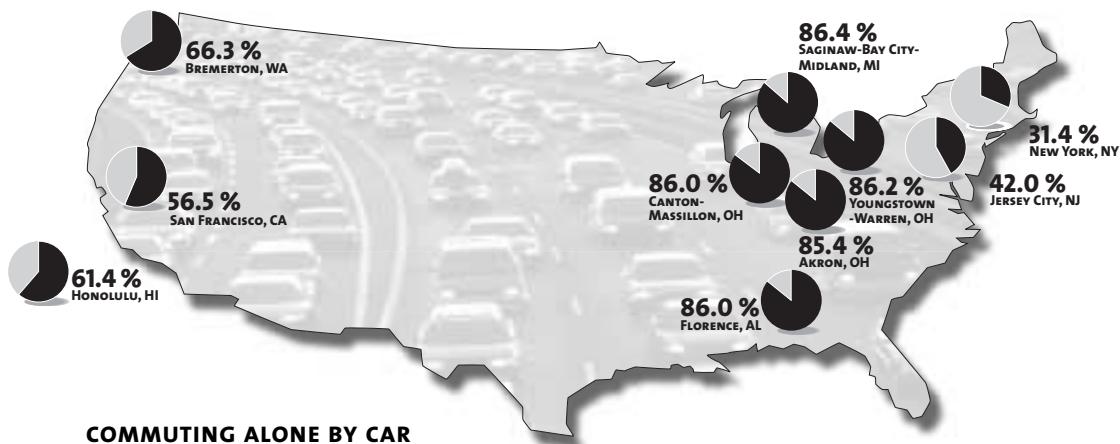
Many communities have increased their average commuting times over the 1990s – apparently the consequence of urban sprawl. Consider Merced, California, where workers increased their commute from 17 to 26 minutes over the decade. Commuters in Atlanta, America’s capital of sprawl, spend more than a half-hour in transit – within striking distance of gridlock centers like New York, Chicago and Washington.

Fewer than one in eight workers carpool. It will surprise many to learn that California metro areas stack near the top of the list in carpool participation. Even Los Angeles, freeway central, ranks above most other big cities.

Hardly anybody – 3 percent and declining – walks to work. But there are exceptions including State College, Pennsylvania, and, of course, New York City.

Telecommuting hardly registers on the radar. The few exceptions include Santa Fe, Boulder, Ashland (Oregon) and Santa Cruz. And even in these places it’s likely that many homebodies actually work at the local Starbucks, where they can find a broadband Internet connection.

Census 2000 didn’t ask whether respondents fly to work, but estimates can be gleaned from reports by those who work far from home. Los Angeles, New York, Chicago,



BRUCE SANDERS (ALL)



**LOS ANGELES**

<b>COMMUTERS WITH:</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>OUT</b>
NEW YORK	537	1027
MIAMI	50	168
CHICAGO	192	423
WASHINGTON DC	115	227




**HIGHEST PERCENTAGE  
WALKING TO WORK**

**AVERAGE = 2.9%**

	<b>PERCENT</b>
STATE COLLEGE, PA	12.4
JACKSONVILLE, NC	10.4
IOWA CITY, IA	10.0
NEW YORK, NY	9.3
BLOOMINGTON, IN	8.6

San Francisco and Washington lead the jet-set. For example, 1,027 LA County residents say they work in Manhattan, while 537 Man-

hattanites work in LA. Will the day come when telecommuting replaces long-distance commuting? Not likely, as long as face-to-face contact is essential – and of course, as long as the winter sun shines in Laguna Beach and trophy houses are for sale in the Hollywood Hills. 

**BILL FREY** is a senior fellow in demography at the Milken Institute and a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC.

**CHICAGO**

COMMUTERS WITH:	IN	OUT
NEW YORK	256	328
LOS ANGELES	423	192
MIAMI	152	78
WASHINGTON DC	58	139

**MANHATTAN**

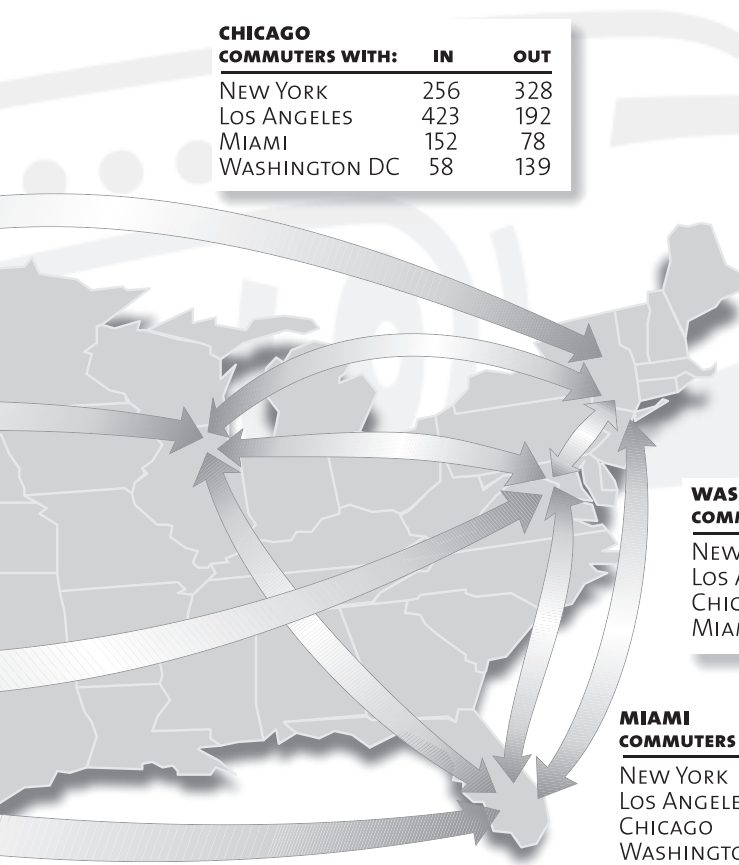
COMMUTERS WITH:	IN	OUT
LOS ANGELES	1027	537
MIAMI	364	168
CHICAGO	328	256
WASHINGTON DC	283	358

**WASHINGTON DC**

COMMUTERS WITH:	IN	OUT
NEW YORK	158	143
LOS ANGELES	227	115
CHICAGO	139	58
MIAMI	98	0

**MIAMI**

COMMUTERS WITH:	IN	OUT
NEW YORK	168	364
LOS ANGELES	168	50
CHICAGO	78	152
WASHINGTON DC	0	98



**BIGGEST INCREASES IN COMMUTING TIME**

AVERAGE = 3.1 MINUTES

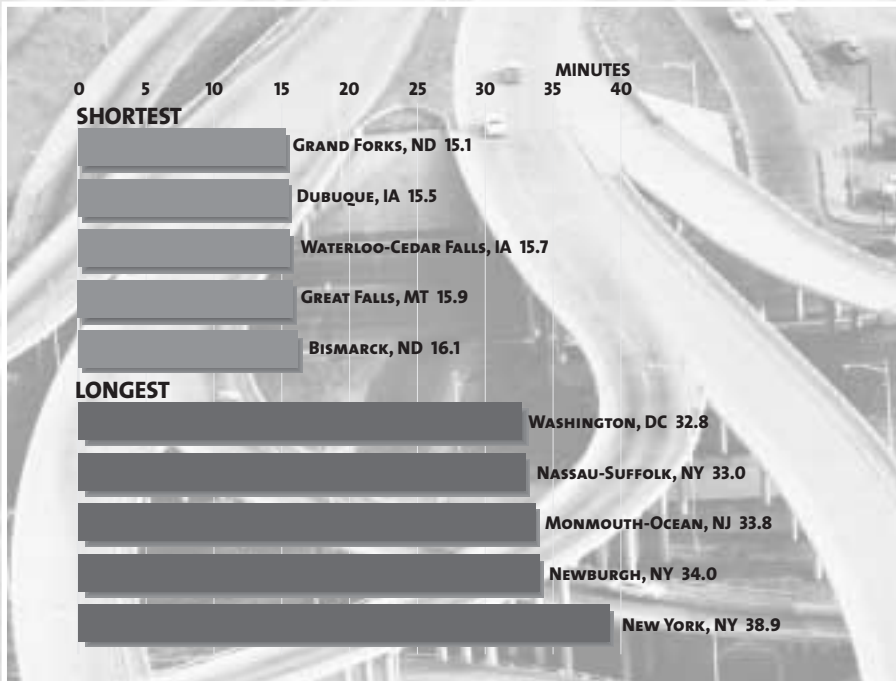


**HIGHEST PERCENTAGE TELECOMMUTING**

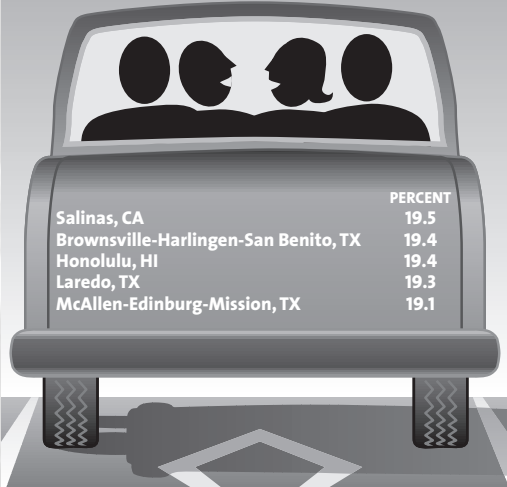
AVERAGE = 3.3%

CITY	PERCENT
SANTA FE, NM	6.9
BOULDER-LONGMONT, CO	6.4
MEDFORD-ASHLAND, OR	5.6
SAN LUIS OBISPO CA	5.6
ST. CLOUD, MN	5.5

## LONGEST AND SHORTEST COMMUTES



## HIGHEST PERCENTAGE CARPOOLING AVERAGE = 12.2%



## HIGHEST PERCENTAGE TAKING PUBLIC TRANSIT AVERAGE = 4.7%

