

Abstract

Chinese cities have experienced rapid growth and restructuring in recent times. This paper examines the evolving residential and employment locations and the changes in the patterns of commute in Guangzhou, China. Tabulations derived from household surveys conducted in 2001 and 2005 show rapid suburbanisation of both residence and employment. Intra-zone traffic today dominates the commuting scene in both the central core and the suburbs. The mean commute distance and mean commute time have increased, but the increases were quite modest. Estimation of residential and employment density gradients reveal differential decentralisation of different population groups. Multivariate analysis indicates that commute distance generally increases with income and occupational status. Males in Guangzhou used to have appreciably shorter commutes than females; but the difference has decreased in recent years, suggesting convergence in commuting behaviour between the Chinese and western cases.