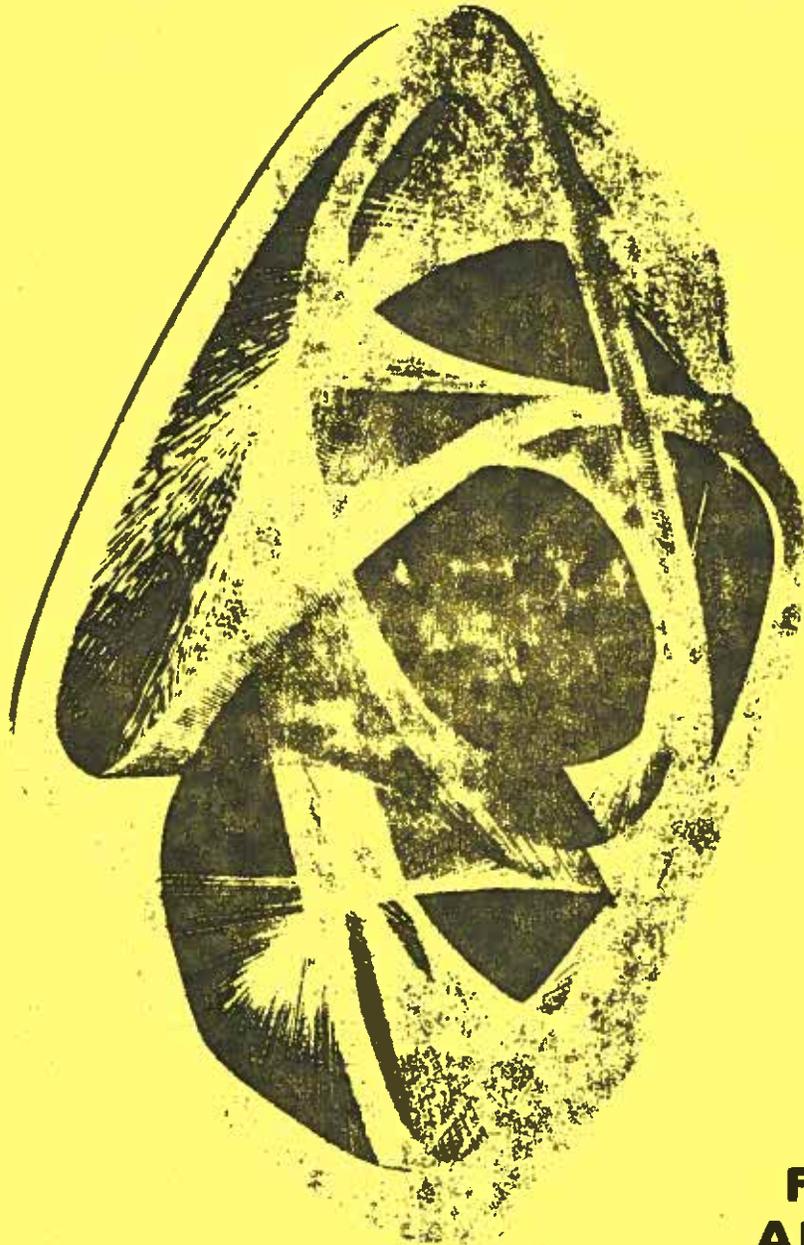


**THE COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN  
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS COUNTIES AREA**



**A  
REGIONAL  
ARMATURE\*  
FOR THE  
FUTURE**

*\*A supporting framework*

**NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS PLANNING COMMISSION**

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## A CONCEPT OF ORDER

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The effect of the policies described here will be a reasonable pattern of development. If these policies are followed, most new suburban growth would occur in development corridors consisting of land with convenient access to adequate systems of mass transportation, water supply, sewage disposal, and other essential facilities and services.

The policies encourage a complementary transportation system of expressways and rail lines (both rapid transit and commuter). In the central part of the urbanized area these facilities would form a grid pattern combining today's radial facilities with a system of circumferential ones. Radiating to the outer parts of the area would be railroads, expressways or both in close, parallel alignments. Additional transportation will be needed both as feeders to the existing radial facilities and as a means of better communication between new growth areas.

Major regional centers of activity including shopping centers, office buildings, universities, large hospitals, and industrial parks would be spaced at intervals close to the transportation and utilities network, within the development corridors. The central area of Chicago would continue to be the major center of the expanded region.

Residential communities with their own local facilities would complete the development corridors, with the more intensive development including apartments, townhouses and small homes located close to mass transportation and business centers.

Open spaces such as major recreation parks, golf courses, cemeteries, agricultural and large lot residential areas would be the predominant land uses in the spaces between the development corridors.

Some of these development corridors will encompass the expanded satellite cities of Joliet, Aurora, Elgin and Waukegan. These and other corridors may be composed of smaller towns separated from one another by open space.

Illustration A provides an estimate of the general population distribution that would result if the recommended policies were followed. This map is not included as part of the adopted Plan. It is intended only as a graphic illustration of the development concepts underlying the residential policies in the Plan.

# GOALS AND POLICIES

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As a preface to the specific goals enumerated below, it is the overall objective of the Commission that maximum opportunity be attained for each person to improve his cultural, social and economic conditions and to contribute to the fullest extent of his abilities.

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ECONOMIC HEALTH	Maximum growth free from violent fluctuations in the area's production, employment and income.
ATTRACTIVE, HEALTHFUL AND CONVENIENT ENVIRONMENT	Greater convenience in our daily lives and higher standards of health, beauty and variety in our surroundings.
OPTIMUM USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES	A better adjustment between man and his total environment.

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The goals stated above are consistent with traditional American ideals. They are broad in scope and general in definition, yet they are specific enough to indicate the philosophical principles and guidelines used as a basis for developing this Plan. The Commission has examined several alternative patterns of regional growth to determine which of the alternatives provides the fullest attainment of goals.

The alternatives were tested against public opinion through meetings and public hearings held throughout the region. Other tests were made by specialists in transportation, natural resources and other aspects of urban development. Each plan was ranked according to its relative success in achieving area goals. For example, the goal of economic health can be achieved in part through a more convenient relationship between the location of employment centers and the places where people live. Each growth pattern was tested to determine how it will meet this goal. The predicted outcome of the recommended policies will be relatively fewer miles of travel in 1990 as compared to the other alternatives tested.

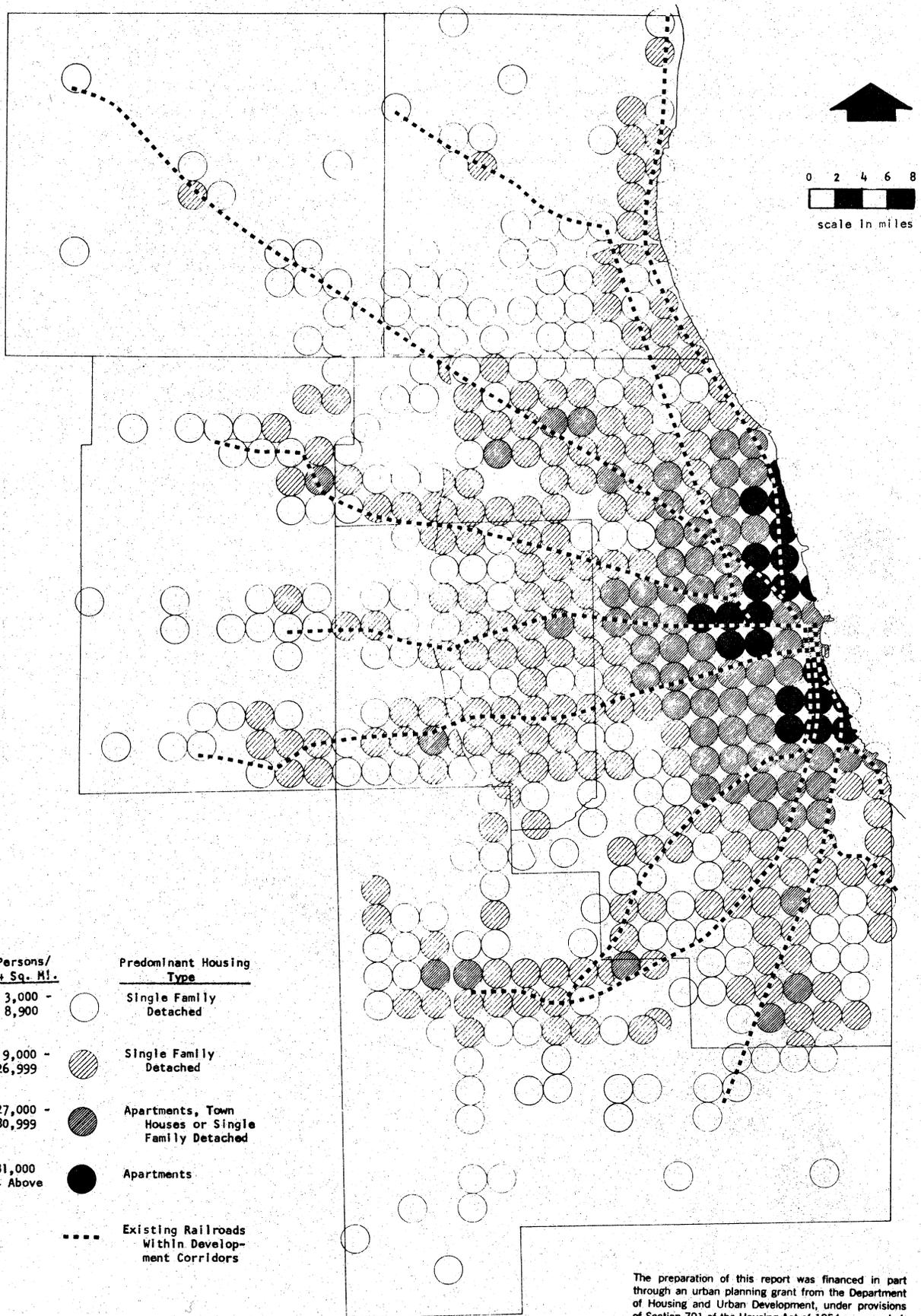
The following pages describe the recommended development policies required to bring about that pattern of regional growth judged most consistent with the stated goals. They are designed to supplement, complement and in some cases alter the many forces now at work shaping the future of Northeastern Illinois.

The most important advantage of these policies is that they were designed together to provide a consistent and coordinated effort toward the accomplishment of goals.

Racial bias and defacto segregation exist in Northeastern Illinois. To the extent that any form of discrimination exists—either on the basis of race, religion or national origin—it will prevent the achievement of the above goals. We recognize that appropriate legislative and private action is necessary to assure full and equal opportunities to all groups in all parts of the region.

NIPC References:  
The Plan Study:  
Methodology

ILLUSTRATION A - POTENTIAL DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION, 1990



The preparation of this report was financed in part through an urban planning grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, under provisions of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954 as amended.

# RESIDENTIAL POLICIES

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- 1 *Housing suitable for all family sizes and income levels should be available to meet consumer demands within each developing sector of the six-county area.*
- 2 *Intensive residential developments including apartments, townhouses, and small homes should be located within development corridors close to mass transportation and business centers.*
- 3 *The possible role of "new cities" should be analysed in terms of their potential for relieving growth pressures on existing suburban communities, their impact on the central city, and other advantages and disadvantages.*
- 4 *The housing market in all parts of the area should operate without discrimination due to national origin, race or religion.*
- 5 *Every effort should be made to improve the quality of existing housing and to maintain a high standard for new construction.*

## Residential Comments

In 1960 there were 1.9 million households in the six-county area. By 1990 there will be an estimated 3 million. The mixture of new housing types (apartments, townhouses and free standing homes) and particularly their location within the area, will have a strong influence on the achievement of the area goals.

The future residents of the six counties area will require a mixture of housing types to suit their age, family size, income, and tastes. In order that each family and individual may find suitable housing at a location convenient to jobs, recreation, and other places of importance in the daily routine, it will be necessary to encourage a variety of housing in both the central portion of the urbanized area and the development corridors.

Locating intensive housing within the development corridors as close as possible to mass transportation and business centers would serve several goals and objectives: economic health, social mobility and convenient environment. A rule of thumb, maximum distance to the nearest mass transportation should be a ten-minute drive on a major street. Sites within walking distance of mass transportation are preferred.

The term "new cities," as used here, means largely self-sufficient new communities designed for a population of 100,000 or more, and providing a wide range of housing, jobs and services. Such new cities may provide a means for accommodating new growth and thus relieve some of the growth pressures on existing communities.

Discrimination limits the ability of all persons to find homes convenient to job opportunities, recreation and education. The goals in this document will be more fully realized if the housing market does not discriminate on the basis of national origin, race or religion.

A significant proportion of the area's urban, suburban and rural housing is currently in substandard condition. The goal of an attractive and healthful environment requires action toward improving the current housing stock and insuring that future housing construction for all income groups will meet reasonable standards and not be prone to deterioration.

NIPC References:  
Population  
and Housing  
Housing  
Quality

# OPEN SPACE POLICIES

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- 1 *Large permanent areas of open space\* should be maintained between each of the several development corridors.*
- 2 *Major open spaces and especially regional parks (including State parks and county forest preserves) should be located where the several benefits of conserving plant, animal, water, air, mineral, esthetic and historical resources may be realized in combination.*
- 3 *Lands unsuited for intensive development due to flooding, unstable soil conditions, or where the provision of essential public services and facilities is difficult, should be maintained in suitable open space use.*
- 4 *Future development along the Lake Michigan shorelines, and other lakes, rivers and streams should make provision for the maximum use of these areas for public recreation.*

## Open Space Comments

Urbanization takes place at the expense of open space. Yet the growing population demands and needs more space for recreation and more of the area's natural resources related to open space.

On March 3, 1971 the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission adopted the Regional Open Space Plan as an element of the Comprehensive General Plan for northeastern Illinois. It deals with those open space areas recommended. It recommends the quantities, locations and selection criteria for lands to be acquired by public agencies. The Regional Open Space Plan proposes that in order to meet the present and future recreational needs in northeastern Illinois, 220,000 additional acres must be acquired as regional park land by 1995.

The Plan locates major recreation areas between the corridors of development and as close to the heart of the urbanized area as space permits. This does not preclude the preservation of regional parks elsewhere in the region. The Lake Michigan shoreline, for example, must be put to the highest public use with major emphasis on recreation.

From today's agricultural and vacant land will come the future golf courses, cemeteries, quarries, arboretums, small airfields, plant nurseries and residential estates which are necessary parts of regional growth. In the Plan these uses of land, too, are located mainly between the development corridors. Open space here will be close to population concentrations. By utilizing space in the wedges between development corridors, this policy will help to direct new intensive urban development toward the commuter rail and rapid transit lines. Action will also be needed to preserve existing open space currently in private recreational use, where future need is evident.

In order to achieve the greatest return for each dollar invested in public open space, it is essential that land with potential for natural resource conservation as well as recreational use be selected. Additional dollar savings may be realized if land unsuited for intensive urbanization due to the character of the soil or drainage are retained as open space, public or private. Prime open space areas have been selected in the Regional Open Space Plan on the basis of accessibility, natural resource benefits and impact on the pattern of urban development.

\* "Open Space" includes both public and private land with a low ratio of building coverage to total land area. Examples include parks, conservation areas, golf courses, cemeteries, farms, residential areas with two or more acres per dwelling unit, and some institutions.

### References:

Regional Open Space Plan:  
An Element of the  
Comprehensive General Plan  
for Northeastern Illinois

# TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

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- 1 *The construction of regional transportation facilities should be used as an important means of shaping the entire land development pattern of the area.*
- 2 *Provision for shared expressway and rail facilities or closely parallel rail and expressway routes should be continued so that within the development corridors there will be a choice of travel mode.*
- 3 *More opportunities for interchange should be established within the rail network and between rail and road facilities.*

## Transportation Comments

Transportation systems, while they are generally designed to serve the pattern of developed land, also have a strong impact on land development. Thus a new expressway often leads to new industrial, commercial and residential development. The mutual interaction of land use and transportation points up the importance of closely relating policies dealing with land development and the transportation system.

A significant feature of the area's transportation system today is that it includes three strong networks: rapid transit, commuter rail, and expressways. The recommended land development policies affirm the desirability of strengthening all elements of the transportation system and combining the best features of each element for greater travel convenience, efficient use of existing investment, and savings in land and construction costs.

Greater continuity must also be provided within and between the several transportation networks. Examples of this policy include existing park and ride facilities; the proposed facilities for quick pedestrian access from the Loop station of the Chicago and North Western Railroad to the Lake Street "L"; and the proposed central area transit distribution system.

By comparison with other alternatives considered, the proposed development policies will reduce the total amount of travel and encourage greater use of public transportation. Greater use of the commuter rail and rapid transit systems should lead to improved service and facilities, which in turn should encourage even greater use. Increased use of rail and bus transportation should relieve traffic congestion on highways so that all elements of the transportation system will operate more efficiently.

(The two paragraphs which originally followed below have been superseded by an account of a more recent action by the Commission in the area of transportation planning.)

On October 21, 1971 the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission adopted the Regional Transportation Interim Plan and Program, amended, as an additional element of the Comprehensive General Plan for Northeastern Illinois. The adoption of the Interim Plan took place after a public hearing on September 9, 1971. It is a composite of four transportation studies, namely the Chicago Area Transportation Study, the Lake County Transportation Study, the Fox River Valley Transportation Study, and the Joliet Area Transportation Study.

The Interim Plan includes four major categories of transportation: Public Transportation, Highways, Aviation Facilities and Freight.

While it covers the eight-county bi-state region, the adoptive action by the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission applies only to the six counties in Illinois. Two specific amendments were included in the adoption of the plans as follows:

1. The Norfolk and Western, the Golf, Mobile and Ohio and the Penn Central commuter operations continue to be shown as part of the mass transportation plan and that every possible means be explored for continuing and strengthening these facilities before they are abandoned.
2. The Commission reserves approval of one or more final locations for future major jetports until the magnitude and character of a specific proposal is known and appropriate comprehensive measures evaluated.

The term "Interim" has been used to signify that this document is only a first step in the current process to develop a more fully coordinated up-to-date plan. The planning process directly involves the Chicago Area Transportation Study, the City of Chicago, the Lake-Porter County Regional Transportation and Planning Commission (Indiana) and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission.

# POLICIES FOR REGIONAL CENTERS

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- 1 *New regional shopping centers should be located within development corridors with direct pedestrian access to public transportation facilities.*
- 2 *New major centers of employment should be located on sites within development corridors.*
- 3 *New, intensively used public and private institutions and centers for health, education, recreation, or cultural activities should be located within development corridors on sites convenient to mass transportation facilities.*
- 4 *Sites meeting the above location criteria but currently occupied by obsolete, vacant, or dilapidated structures should be rehabilitated or redeveloped.*

## Regional Center Comments

A current trend in location of suburban industrial, commercial and institutional development is to select sites that can be reached only by private automobile. The recommended policies are designed to make the trip to work, to the major shopping center and to other service centers more convenient for more people by locating these centers and work places near regional public transportation. This best serves the interests of the employer and merchant as well as those of the employee, customer, student, patient, and visitor.

The trip by rapid transit or commuter rail is actually a three part journey: (1) home to station, (2) station to station, and (3) station to final destination. If the distance from station to final destination can be covered in not more than ten minutes, by some form of public transportation, or by a five-minute walk on shopping trips, the entire trip may be competitive with the alternative (available to some) of using private automobiles.

Within the City of Chicago and its near suburbs, industry should develop in corridors served by railroad and major highways and in major industrial concentrations such as at Lake Calumet, near O'Hare Field, the McCook-Hodgkins area and the Summit-Bedford Park area. Outside the central city, major employment centers should be planned to provide feeder bus service (10-minute distance or less) to passenger rail or rapid transit stations.

A special concern of these policies is the future of the traditional unplanned business district, now suffering from competition with planned centers. These policies should stimulate the revitalization and modernization of some of the unplanned business districts by giving them a larger share of the retail market. In older business districts served by public transportation but lacking room for expansion, consideration may be given to the use of air rights over the railroad tracks.

A principal feature of the recommended plan is that the Chicago central area will continue as the most important center of employment, shopping, and cultural attractions within easy reach of all residents. This is vital to the economic, social and cultural welfare of the entire Midwest region.

NIPC References:  
Commercial Structure  
Industrial Development

# NATURAL RESOURCE POLICIES

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- 1 *Urban development should not exceed the capabilities of the natural resources. Such factors as water supply, drainage, stability of soils, and the capacity of the land, air, and water to absorb waste materials safely should be given prime consideration in development decisions.*
- 2 *Intensive urban development should be directed so as to avoid flood plains, protect ground water deposits, and preserve lands particularly suited for multi-purpose resources management programs.*
- 3 *Land specially suited for valley or upground reservoir use should be set aside for such use. Certain streams and other water areas should be preserved in a natural state, even protected from treated waste disposal use.*
- 4 *Special steps should be taken to protect areas containing valuable sand, gravel and limestone deposits from intensive urban development until the deposits have been fully exploited. The appropriate reuse of such lands after the resource has been depleted should be planned in advance.*
- 5 *Immediate steps should be taken to reserve suitable lands for present and future refuse disposal needs and to plan the ultimate reuse of these lands.*
- 6 *All available means should be used to conserve water resources and to improve and maintain the quality of the region's air and water resources.*

## Natural Resource Comments

The limited land, air and water resources of the area should be conserved as a heritage for future generations. With urbanization has come the contamination of the natural environment. This contamination can and should be minimized through the adoption of this Plan with its several natural resource policies.

Fundamental to these policies is a recognition of the magnitude of urban growth pressures. It is estimated that 50 per cent of the land in the six counties area will be urbanized by 1990.

The policies for urban development (residential, transportation and regional centers) have been created with due regard for protecting and preserving the area's natural resources. The provision of a wide choice of housing types will help to retard the trend toward greater land consumption per capita for urban development. The relative reduction in travel demand and the heavy emphasis on mass transportation will help limit the volume of air pollution from automobiles.

Since the initial adoption of the Comprehensive General Plan in 1968, the Commission has made further progress in defining the needs of the region with respect to water supply, wastewater, storm drainage, and solid waste disposal. On March 3, 1971, the Commission adopted the Regional Wastewater Plan which has since been certified by both the state and federal environmental agencies as the official plan for the north-eastern Illinois region. The Commission is also making progress toward the completion of regional plans for the other three subject areas cited above. The time required to complete these initial long-range plans will depend upon the future financial resources of the Commission and therefore cannot be predicted at this time.

### NIPC References:

The Water Resource:  
Planning Its Use  
Technical Report No. 4

Managing the Air  
Resource  
Technical Report No. 6

Refuse Disposal Needs  
and Practices  
Technical Report No. 3

## PLAN UTILIZATION

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(the following is not part of the recommended plan)

Responsibility for the utilization of this Plan in guiding the future development of the region will be shared between the various public agencies serving as operating units of government—and the units themselves, the municipalities, counties and the State. These units now exercise a wide range of statutory powers which influence future patterns of development within their jurisdictions.

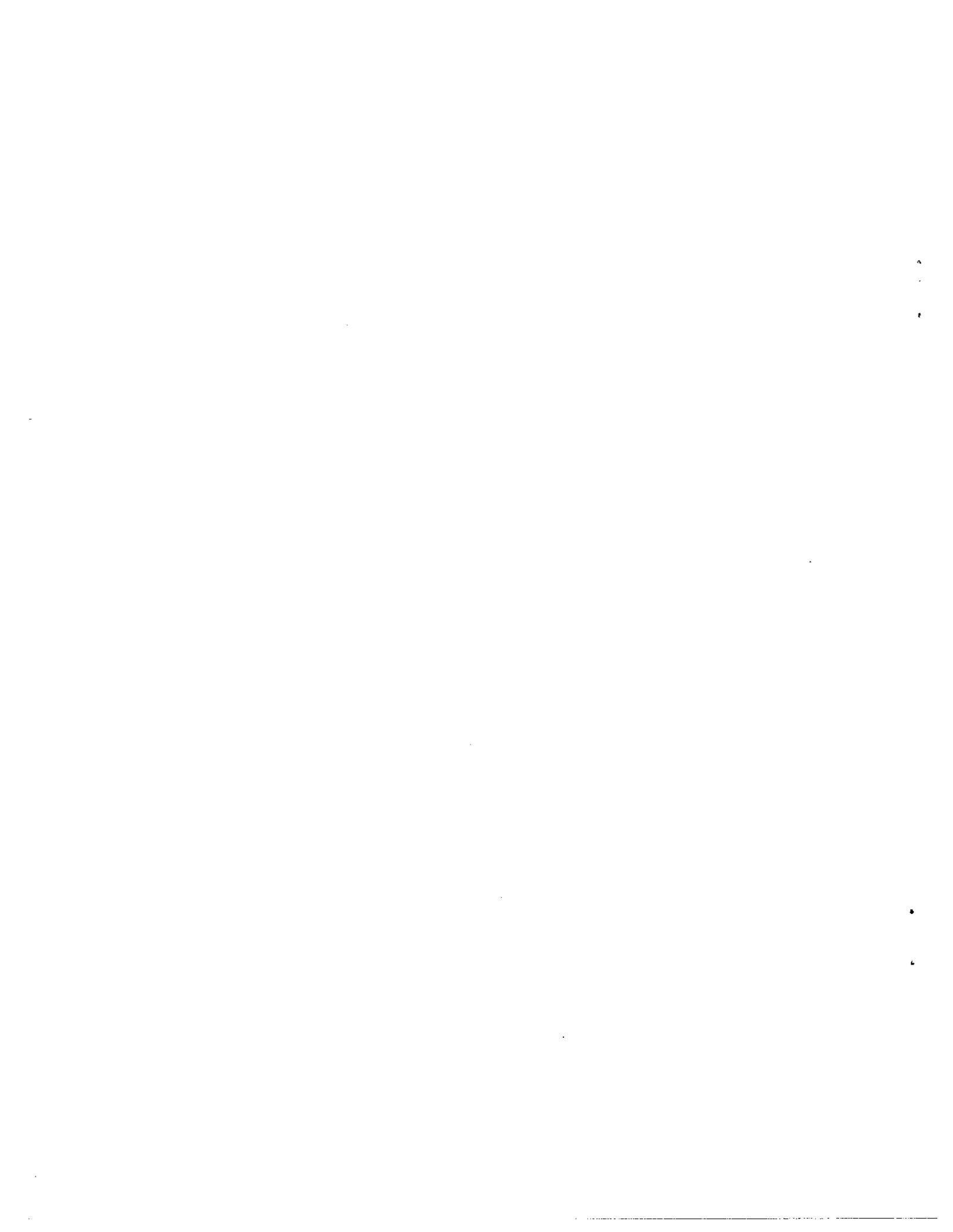
State and regional operating agencies have considerable influence on the structure of urban growth through the planning and construction of major transportation and utility systems and the acquisition of public parks and forest preserves. These facilities provide the basic physical framework around which the region develops.

Counties and municipalities have the power to prepare their own master plans, through which they, together with private interests, can develop detailed applications of the regional plan to their own jurisdictions. In addition, the counties and municipalities have extensive authority for cooperative activity, through which to insure that their actions are not in conflict with those of their neighbors.

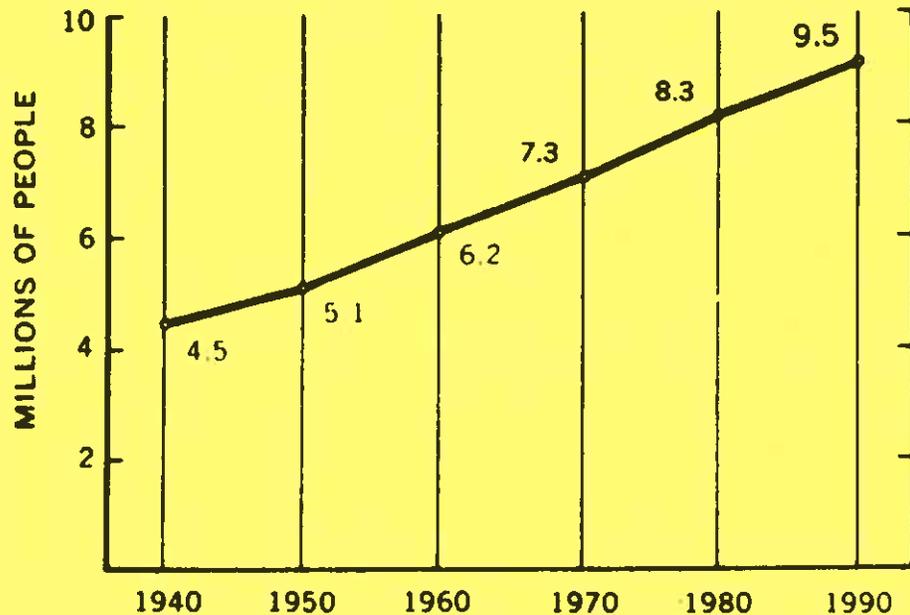
Recommendations for the use of these various powers will be presented in the Commission's report on utilization of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Commission will provide assistance through its research and planning advisory programs. It will also continue to review and revise the Comprehensive Plan in light of further development and emerging needs and opportunities in the region, in order to maintain the Plan's usefulness as a guiding and coordinating instrument.

NIPC References:  
The Plan: Utilization



## NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS POPULATION



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