NIPC BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 13, 1997

Forecasts Indicate Moderation of Growth Trends

During the next twenty-five years, the decentralizing trend of the region's growth can be moderated with increased emphasis placed on maintenance of existing communities, revitalization of declining areas, and cost-effective new development. This is the message in the demographic forecasts for the year 2020 released by NIPC's Planning Committee on February 13. The county-level forecasts of population, households and employment are based on the Commission's determination in 1994 that the six-county area will grow to 9 million people (a 25 percent increase) and 5.3 million jobs (a 37 percent increase) by 2020.

The forecasts released by the Planning Committee suggest a deliberate change in the overall balance of growth in the metropolitan area. In recent decades, the region has experienced dramatic decentralization as population and employment in older communities have remained stable or declined while the newer suburban areas have grown rapidly. The new forecasts reflect some moderation of that trend, with renewed growth occurring in Chicago and the older suburbs while growth continues in the outer counties.

This departure from trends is based on the assumption that public policies supportive of reinvestment in mature communities and moderated outward growth will be implemented. That assumption was embodied in a policy statement adopted by the Commission in December to guide the preparation of the forecasts. The Commission found that

> there is support for modifying the rapid decentralization process in northeastern Illinois in the interests of environmental quality, prudent public investment, and the need to redress substantial areas of disinvestment. The Commission believes that the 2020 forecasts should assume the active implementation of public policy measures which can and will moderate the rapid physical decentralization of the region. While considerable development can be expected to occur on land currently used for agriculture, it is also reasonable to expect that steps are already underway or will be implemented which give greater support for (1) investment within existing communities, (2) redevelopment of disinvested areas, and (3) high quality new development in areas where development capacities are currently available or can be supplied in a cost-effective manner.

Within that overall policy position, NIPC has prepared two sets of forecasts. One (labeled "ORD/MDW" in the attached table) assumes that future air travel demand will be met at O'Hare and Midway airports. The second (labeled "SSA") assumes that a new south suburban airport will developed. Both forecasts will be carried forward until a decision has been reached on the development of the south suburban facility.

northeastern illinois planning commission

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MODIFIED TRENDS/BASELINE FORECAST ALTERNATIVES WITH AND WITHOUT SOUTH SUBURBAN AIRPORT

(Values Based on Quarter Section Aggregation)

	REGION	CHICAGO	SUB COOK	N/NW COOK	W COOK	S/SW COOK	SUB DuPAGE	KANE	LAKE	McHENRY	WILL
POPULATION											
1990	7,261,074	2,782,644	2,322,444	974,377	601,411	746,656	781,639	317,435	516,401	183,210	357,301
2020 ORD/ MDW	9,044,944	3,048,078	2,617,318	1,071,161	652,012	894,145	1,002,513	540,672	772,411	336,488	727,464
SSA	9,044,763	2,945,589	2,663,043	1,067,741	648,945	946,357	1,002,513	538,346	749,306	329,358	816,608
HOUSEHOLDS											
1990	2,620,271	1,025,014	854,508	364,507	226,355	263,646	279,345	107,267	174,013	63,044	117,080
2020 ORD/ MDW	3,376,745	1,167,593	993,613	420,707	242,540	330,366	367,254	193,853	278,883	122,628	252,921
SSA	3,377,244	1,132,007	1,009,555	419,206	241,313	349,036	367,254	193,001	270,492	120,023	284,912
EMPLOYMENT											
1990	3,845,085	1,482,381	1,293,652	656,969	348,231	288,452	530,322	145,205	228,606	65,526	99,393
2020 ORD/ MDW	5,280,067	1,737,460	1,763,829	880,280	428,816	454,733	815,239	223,609	389,528	117,023	233,379
SSA	5,280,059	1,697,332	1,759,887	838,480	404,635	516,772	815,239	214,623	351,346	98,359	343,273

The forecasts have been developed over a period of months and reflect a number of different inputs. Computer modeling of several alternative growth scenarios provided information on the probable consequences of limiting future transportation investment in combination with, first, policies to encourage redevelopment of mature communities, and second, observed location behavior of households and employers. The prospects for moderating past trends were the subject of two regional workshops in July and September 1996. Invited participants included elected and appointed officials of state, county and municipal governments and representatives of private and public interest organizations known to be actively interested in regional growth issues. Meetings were also held with representatives of nearly 200 of the region's municipalities to review preliminary forecast results and to secure up-to-date information on anticipated developments and annexation. Seven meetings to which the general public was invited were held jointly with the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) during November.

The forecasts will be used to test the conformity of proposed highway and public transportation networks with air quality requirements. This conformity testing, a necessary step in the preparation of the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), will be done by the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), which developed the networks. The "baseline" forecasts released by the Planning Committee relate to the network of existing and committed facilities. This is the system of highways and transit facilities which are in place or have been approved for funding. The CATS Work Program Committee has released for public review a test network which includes projects beyond those in the existing and committed system. After conformity testing, this "action" network will become the basis for the 2020 RTP. The Planning Committee directed NIPC staff to begin preparation of forecasts reflective of the "action" network. These are scheduled for completion in April. Revised municipal forecasts will be prepared at that time and sent out for review. Final forecasts will be endorsed by the Commission in the summer.

CATS and NIPC will hold a series of public meetings in March to seek public comment on the baseline forecasts and the test networks. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

Monday, March 10	Joliet Junior College, 1215 Houbolt Road, Joliet
Tuesday, March 11	College of DuPage, 22nd and Lambert Road, Glen Ellyn
Wednesday, March 12	Wauconda High School, 555 North Main Street, Wauconda
Thursday, March 13	CATS Offices, 300 West Adams St. Chicago

The three suburban meetings will be from 5:00 to 8:00 P.M. The downtown meeting will be from 5:00 to 9:00 P.M. The results of those consultations will be reported to the Planning Committee at its March meeting to allow minor revisions to be made to the forecasts early in the conformity testing process.

The Commission also expects to continue extensive public discussion of the policy initiatives which would be necessary in order to bring about the change in growth patterns indicated in the forecasts. The statement endorsed by the Commission in December identified seventeen policy tools which would need to be implemented during the forecast period in order to accomplish this moderation of the past trend of decentralized growth.

For further information, contact the following NIPC staff at (312) 454-0400 or FAX at (312) 454-0411: forecasts, Max Dieber; growth policy, John Paige; public meetings, Sandi Radtke.

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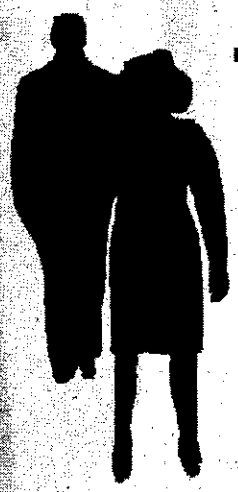

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THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1997
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