



# REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION, INC.

*... a research and planning agency supported by voluntary membership to promote the coordinated development of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Region.*

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## NEWS RELEASE

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Association of American Geographers  
Waldorf-Astoria  
Jade Room - 9 a.m.

Addressing today's session of the American Association <sup>for</sup> of the Advance<sup>ment</sup> of Science sponsored by the Association of American Geographers at the Waldorf Astoria on "The New York Metropolitan Region of the Future," C. McKim Norton, Executive Vice President of the Regional Plan Association said, "Estimates recently made for our Association by Harvard University's New York Metropolitan Region Study indicate that the Region's population will expand dramatically in the next three decades from its present 16 million people to 24 million, or half again its present size. In the next generation, in other words, we may expect to add to the 22-county region a larger population than is now found in Chicago and its environs. None of this growth is expected to occur in the core of the Region, the New York City-Hudson County area. Instead, the Harvard Studies estimate the 8 million added people will be located in today's suburbia and exurbia.

"This rate of growth amounts to almost 300,000 people each year - more people than present-day Miami, Florida. It is predicted that our suburban areas will continue to grow in the manner in which they have grown

since the end of World War II. If this is the case, the expected growth in terms of housing and factories, shopping centers and office buildings, community facilities and transportation facilities will require no less than 2000 square miles of our Region's remaining open land. This means a doubling of the extent of the Region's urban development, as we know it today. It means that every three years we shall add to the Region the equivalent of today's Essex County including the Oranges, Montclair and all the other Essex municipalities. This is because of the new ways in which we are building urban settlement as the result of our automobile civilization.

"In 1900 each family in the Region used on the average only 1/8 of an acre of land for living, working and recreation. Today the Region's new growth is eating up raw land at the rate of one acre for each added family.

"This anticipated form of regional growth raises many problems. Probably the most acute of them is the vast network of highways which must be built to make it possible for such widely disbursed factories, shopping centers and homes to be linked together. Mass transportation by rail and bus is undoubtedly much more efficient than the automobile as a means of carrying people from home to work. Such means of transportation are only possible, however, where there are great concentrations of workers such as in downtown Manhattan or downtown Newark.

"A second and equally pressing problem will be the preservation of reasonable amounts of open space for recreation and conservation. The implications of the estimates of future regional development scattered across the countryside from Princeton to Poughkeepsie to the eastern parts of Long Island is one of an approaching shortage of land.

"Serious consideration should be given to reasonable alternatives to this projected pattern of regional growth. One such alternative is to

encourage new large areas of concentrated employment which can be served by rail and bus. For example, the development of the New Jersey meadows as a vast industrial area could add to the Region's core a usable land area larger than Manhattan Island. If the Meadows were developed as a great new center of employment served as they are by railroad and bus commutation facilities and intersected as they will be by new expressways, many square miles of the Region's land in its outer areas will be saved for other uses and the expenditure of millions of dollars of capital investment for unneeded highways will be avoided.

Any proposal of this magnitude which would lead the Region's development into a more efficient pattern than the Harvard Study predicts from present trends will require positive public and private leadership. It's always easier to let things take their course than to shape the future.

The greatest challenges before the New York Region today are how to mobilize private leadership and how to organize governmental machinery to grasp the opportunities for guiding the Region's expected growth. We appear to be in real danger of drifting into new patterns of development which will require needlessly costly public investments for transportation and other public services. At the same time the Region which we seem to be developing will be a much less attractive place in which to live and work than our present metropolis with all its faults."

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