



Regional Plan Association

... 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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REVISED MEADOWLANDS PROGRAM--LESS OFFICE SPACE,
MORE CONSERVATION--PRAISED BY REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION

Regional Plan Association today commended the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission for the revised master plan it adopted on November 8.

John P. Keith, President of the Association, said the recently released revised plan very substantially follows the recommendations Regional Plan made to the Commission last May. Dr. Keith pointed to three alterations in particular: The reduction of maximum office floor space from 22 million square feet to 4.5 million square feet; an increase in open space by 700 acres, from 5,400 to 6,100; regulations to prevent office buildings from lining the highways.

Dr. Keith stated that the new Meadowlands plan could lead to an improved social and economic environment for all of northern New Jersey. As a result of the changes, office growth, now projected to total 170,000 new jobs in the area by 2000, would be available to reinvigorate Newark, Jersey City, Hackensack and Paterson. Before the plan was revised, the Association had warned that a heavy reliance on office development in the Meadowlands would rob the surrounding cities of the potential private investment and employment opportunities necessary for their revitalization.

"The revision of the Meadowlands plan makes it possible to use increasing office jobs to stimulate downtown renewal," Dr. Keith warned. "It does not guarantee that the offices will go to the older downtowns. That will also take State intervention and the initiative of the cities, including: (1) the State developing its own Master plan for its capital improvement spending to benefit urban areas and turn back the tide of urban spread; (2) the State should provide guidelines for local municipal zoning for the location of major non-residential

facilities like office buildings, hospitals, department stores and colleges; (3) tax reform by the State legislature to eliminate property tax disparities among local communities, which now fosters "fiscal zoning" and tax-happy land development in suburban areas; (4) downtown improvement programs, initiated by the cities and fulfilled by business and State action.

"The next step needed to achieve the Meadowlands plan is to find some other way of handling the enormous volume of solid waste being dumped weekly into the marsh there. State law requires the Commission to dispose of 26,000 tons a week. In fact, it is much more. This is incompatible with the Commission's plan and with hopes for a new environment in the Meadowlands."

Regional Plan Association is a voluntary civic agency, supported by individual and corporate memberships, that has worked for improved regional policies since the 1920's, including a comprehensive approach to the development of the Hackensack Meadowlands.