

100-mile city by 1985, if...

By 1985 the Metropolitan Region surrounding the Port of New York will be a continuous city 100 miles across, broken only here and there by open space (see figure 1)—if present population trends, industrial location policies and residential zoning laws continue.

This conclusion of the Regional Plan Association research staff is based on the three-year, forty-man Harvard University research for the Association, which set out the basic forces of the Region's economy and the pattern of private and public decision-making affecting housing and industrial location.

The Association concludes that:

Population will grow 37.5 per cent from 1960 to 1985—6.1 million persons to a total of 22.2 million. This is a larger annual increase in population than the Region has had since the 1920's. (See figure 2.) It will be primarily by natural increase, not in-migration.

Projections by planning groups for the nation's other largest metropolitan areas suggest a faster *rate* of growth in seven out of ten, but *total* population increase is expected to exceed this Region's in only one—Los Angeles.

Outward from the city

All of the additional population will live outside of the present cities, and a substantial number of persons now residing in the Region's cities will move into outlying parts of the Region.

Vacant land in the Region is zoned almost entirely for one-family houses on half-acre lots or more. (See figure 3.) In a wide belt at the edge of today's urban development, zoned lot-sizes average much more than half-an-acre. If present zoning holds to 1985, the homes, roads and other facilities needed for the additional 6.6 million who will want to live in the Region outside of the cities will spread out to at least fifty miles in every direction from Times Square.

Because jobs and shopping are moving out of the cities as well as houses, there is no limit to the dis-

tance people can move from Manhattan, Newark, Bridgeport or the other cities of the Region. Unless there is a major change in public policies or in the pattern of personal and business decisions, nothing will stop the outward spread.

New tax and highway pressures

But jobs are moving outward much more slowly than residents, creating local tax pressures in the newly-expanding communities and a perpetual journey-to-work problem. For example, jobs will be increasing at a faster rate than population in the inner ring around New York City, but at a much slower rate than residents in the outer counties of Morris, Monmouth and Middlesex (New Jersey), Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Dutchess and Suffolk (New York), and Fairfield (Connecticut). In 1985,

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The spread-city, a new kind of urban development.

commuting from the outer to the inner ring, cross-wise in the inner ring, and outward from New York City will become heavy. And commuting into Manhattan will remain at least as heavy as it is now.

The new type of development differs sharply from earlier urban patterns in four ways: 1. It is far less dense, with most houses set on very large lots. 2. Unlike a suburb, it is not dependent upon a central city. 3. Furthermore, it lacks important centers of its own to which residential areas are naturally attached for work, shopping, services, recreation, education and religion. 4. Because residents are scattered and the places they want to go to are scattered, they must travel almost entirely by automobile.

A new kind of settlement: "Spread City"

Since this new type of development is neither city nor suburb, the Association coined a new word to describe it—spread-city.

There are many advantages in spread-city where it exists today. Although distances are great to most urban services (shopping, jobs, etc.) the time it takes to get to them is still not too painful because highways are uncongested and speeds relatively fast. A large percentage of bread-winners still go into the cities to work via public transportation, leaving roads relatively unjammed even in rush hours for those who are not going to a job center and must drive their own cars.

Furthermore, most of the Region is still not settled as sparsely as two families to an acre, so large shopping centers can be supported within reasonable distances even of the more thinly-settled neighborhoods. Also, a fairly dense network of limited-access highways exists in much of the inner ring surrounding Manhattan. Finally, the spread-city of today is near the outer edges of urbanization, so its residents have fairly easy access to open space.

However, if spread-city becomes the typical pattern for a belt twenty-five or more miles wide—as present zoning requires—disadvantages challenge the advantages. In "half-acre-city," distances will be too great to walk to school or the grocery store; public transportation probably cannot operate profitably except to carry the still-large number—but increasingly small percentage—who will work

in Manhattan, Newark and other existing centers. When everyone must go almost everywhere in his own automobile and when distances are much greater to typical destinations, far more money and land will have to be allocated to highways to avoid congestion.

Conceivably, spread-city may have too low density for the specialized goods and services of the city. At the same time, rural open space will be pushed farther from most residents of the Region.

Responses to the projections

These projections of present trends to 1985 were set out at the Sixteenth Annual Regional Plan Conference in October. Experts then met to assess their implications:

Zoning: Westchester's acting planning commissioner, S. J. Schulman, predicted increasing pressure for "a mixture of housing types in a community. . . . We are gradually seeing a breakdown of the hermetically-sealed-single-family-house-on-its-own-lot kind of zoning."

Zoning, he noted, is tightly tied to municipal finance, to a search for high-value, low-nuisance industries and resistance to high tax-using residents. Several other round-table members agreed that tax changes will have to precede zoning changes.

There was general agreement that zoning changes would be needed as the population increases and that only a Region-wide viewpoint would produce appropriate standards. Several participants, including municipal and county officials, called for zoning oriented to an area of several municipalities or perhaps to a whole county.

Transportation: All the transportation and planning agencies represented in the workshop—public and private, railroad and rubber-oriented—agreed that both rails and rubber are essential for the Region of today and 1985 and that some government support would be needed to maintain commuter rail lines. Everyone acknowledged that transportation shapes a region. The Philadelphia Region is trying to determine what would follow from each of five possible transportation networks. The new Tri-State Transportation Committee in this Region also will be concerned with land-use and transportation relationships.



Figure 1. The 100-mile city. Within the circle, all the land will be urbanized by 1985, according to Regional Plan Association projections based on population expectations and municipal zoning provisions.

Open Space: Legal and financial powers to set aside open space have increased dramatically at all levels of government recently. New York and New Jersey have expanded state parks and assistance for local parks. The 1961 Housing Act offers federal grants to states and localities to acquire undeveloped land, encouraging them to use open space to shape the urban pattern. The workshop called for state parks near the cities of the Region and more open space inside cities when they are renewed.

Urban Renewal: What does it take to renew a city effectively? Several workshop participants acknowledged that the federal urban renewal program has had only a small impact on cities thus far. William L. Slayton, U. S. urban renewal administrator, called the new Community Renewal Program an effective way to rebuild cities. CRP provides for neighborhood-by-neighborhood planning.

Louis Winnick, New York City Housing and Re-development Board research director, was skeptical that publicly-sponsored urban renewal ever would be big enough to make a major difference in land use. He felt, though, that the low-interest loans in the 1961 Housing Act might stimulate more middle-income housing in older cities.

Because the federal government is encouraging single-family-housing outside the cities by offering very favorable mortgage provisions, even intensified efforts to maintain the population and vitality of older cities will not slow the extension of spread-city, several participants felt. Mr. Slayton replied that coordination of federal urban policies was improving.

Sidney L. Willis, Jersey City's planning officer, said that a framework larger than the municipality is needed for effective urban renewal.

Industrial Location: "Land for industry 'ain't' where you want it," L. Clinton Hoch of the Fantus Company, a factory-locating concern, commented. Participants agreed that sites for large plants now can be found only in the outer ring of the Region. In total, however, more than enough land is zoned for industry, at least in the New Jersey sector of the Region.

John H. Nixon, director of area development, Committee for Economic Development, argued that the municipality is too small to plan effectively and suggested that the county is more appropriate.

Local Government Services and Finance: Mabel Walker, executive director of the Tax Institute, called for four fiscal steps toward more rational use of vacant land: (1) state elimination of local tax havens for industry, (2) greater equalization of local school burdens, (3) commuter taxes for central cities and (4) metropolitan-wide water, sewerage and similar services and charges.

The workshop identified several questions but provided no answers: Will the property tax be sufficiently flexible for the growing local expenditures demanded by new development to 1985? How much tax uniformity is needed in the Region to preserve for each area the economic function it performs best? Should states stimulate a streamlining of local government structure?

"It costs so little to shape events..."

In the main address of the conference, Peter F. Drucker, consultant to business in this country and abroad, author and chairman of the Department of Management, New York University Graduate School of Business Administration, made these remarks:

"... The way the metropolis uses space available to it determines very largely what kind of a structure it will have, how efficient it will be, how much it will cost to run it and how much one gets for each dollar of expenditure.

"There is no area in which it costs so little to shape events and in which it costs so very much to undo events as in land-use. . . .

"The businessman has a tremendous stake in a balanced, comprehensive systematic approach to the problems of the metropolis. And the businessman in turn has a great deal to give, a great deal which no one else can offer."



Highways will have to increase many times to tie together the spread city, which must depend upon the automobile for all trips.

Next steps for Regional Plan Association

The Association's projections to 1985 set out what is most likely to happen if present public and private policies remain as they are. This does not need to happen if citizens of the Region want a different type of development.

Alternatives are being developed by the Association staff. When they are presented later in the year, the Association will assist citizen organizations, government units and business and labor groups to compare the alternatives, understand the human values attached to each, and debate the methods of getting the kind of Region they want.

New Jersey plans

More than 200 invited representatives of Northern New Jersey's business, civic, government, education and labor organizations met November 29 in Newark at the first New Jersey conference of Regional Plan Association.

Facing a faster population increase than the nation as a whole, according to Association research (see figure 2), the nine counties of New Jersey in the New York Metropolitan Region will be completely urbanized by 1985 if present development policies are followed. And the metropolis will spread into five adjacent counties. (See figure 1.)

Only half of the 2,000 square miles of Northern New Jersey are now urbanized, with most of Morris, Somerset, Middlesex, Passaic and Monmouth still rural. But the added 3.1 million expected to live in these counties by 1985 will use up as much vacant land for homes, work places and facilities as the 4.3 million now living in Northern New Jersey—if present land-use policies remain.

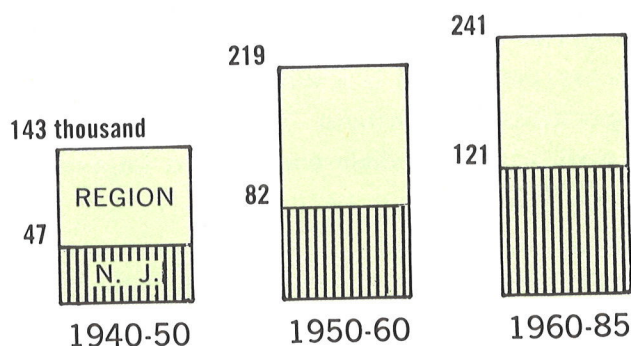
Three-fourths of all the vacant land in the New Jersey sector of the Region is zoned for single-family homes on half-acre lots or larger. (See figure 3.) The spread-city pattern described on page 2 will be even more extensive than elsewhere in the Region.

Capital costs of spread-city

Highways will be the primary capital cost of the newly-developing areas, to tie together the scattered parts of New Jersey's spread-city. Public expenditures will go up about 50 per cent over the quarter-century in the whole New Jersey sector of the Region, with somewhat larger rises in now undeveloped areas, slightly smaller in areas already built-up.

With the increase in per capita income expected over the period, the burden probably will be bearable, according to Association researchers, but the increase could affect land-use decisions. Municipalities will be even more inclined than now to seek sufficient industry to buttress their tax bases and to exclude residents who use more tax dollars in service than their housing returns.

AVERAGE ANNUAL POPULATION CHANGE



AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH

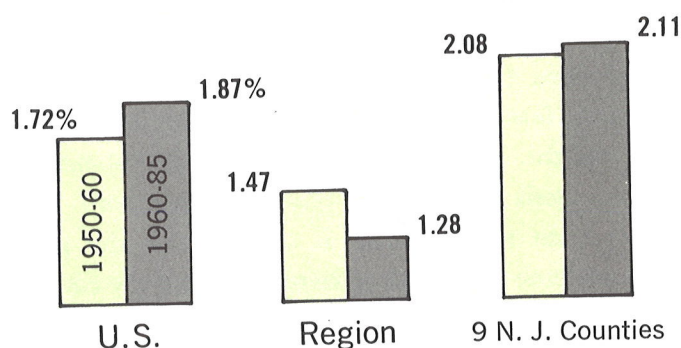


Figure 2. The upper graph compares the expected annual population rise for 1960-85 in the Region and in its New Jersey sector with annual increases in previous decades. The lower graph compares the annual percentage increase expected in the Region's population, 1960-85, with the anticipated growth rate in the nation and in the New Jersey sector of the Region.

Importance of older centers

In addresses to the conference, H. Bruce Palmer, president of Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company, David L. Yunich, president of Bamberger's, and Clayton S. Cronkright, general manager of area development for Public Service Electric and Gas Company, emphasized the importance of strengthening older centers to serve the growing Region and slow the bulldozing of rural land. They saw some hope that new forces might change the present spread of urbanization: (1) new tastes in living arrangements, (2) increasing percentages of the total population in one- and two-person families (adults before and after child-raising), who seem to

favor city living, and (3) a hesitancy of industry to move far from the old centers before workers move out and of workers to move out while jobs are still a long commute away.

Dwight R. G. Palmer, New Jersey's highway commissioner, emphasized in a speech that all forms of transportation in Northern New Jersey must be improved, with immediate emphasis on improving commuter rail service.

Reactions of conferees

Conference participants, meeting in small workshops, reacted to these predictions and projections as follows:

RPA's projections of massive population growth and swift urbanization of land were generally accepted as reasonable. Some questioned whether long-range projections could be reliable; one person commented that not enough persons could afford half-acre lots so present zoning would fall of its own weight. But others concluded that planning on the basis of the best possible projections was better than no planning at all and felt the projections serve to involve citizens in setting the course of New Jersey development.

Nine of the ten workshops clearly labelled the picture of 1985 undesirable. In one workshop, some praised the advantages of spread-city living, but its problems were not thoroughly explored. One group felt it desirable to keep out some of the people who are expected to want to live in the Region (though nearly all will be our own children).

Policies for a better growth pattern

But most participants looked for levers by which the new jobs and population could be channeled to build a more livable and efficient Region. Among levers discussed in the workshops were these:

1. Transportation is most important in shaping the Region's growth. Most urgent is improved rail service; perhaps even more important for the long run and far greater in cost are needed improvements in cross-New Jersey arteries.
2. Urban renewal should be intensified. "The renewal of Newark is of great importance to the people of Morris county." "Smaller cities like Passaic can be taught that their faces can be lifted, too."

ZONING OF VACANT LAND

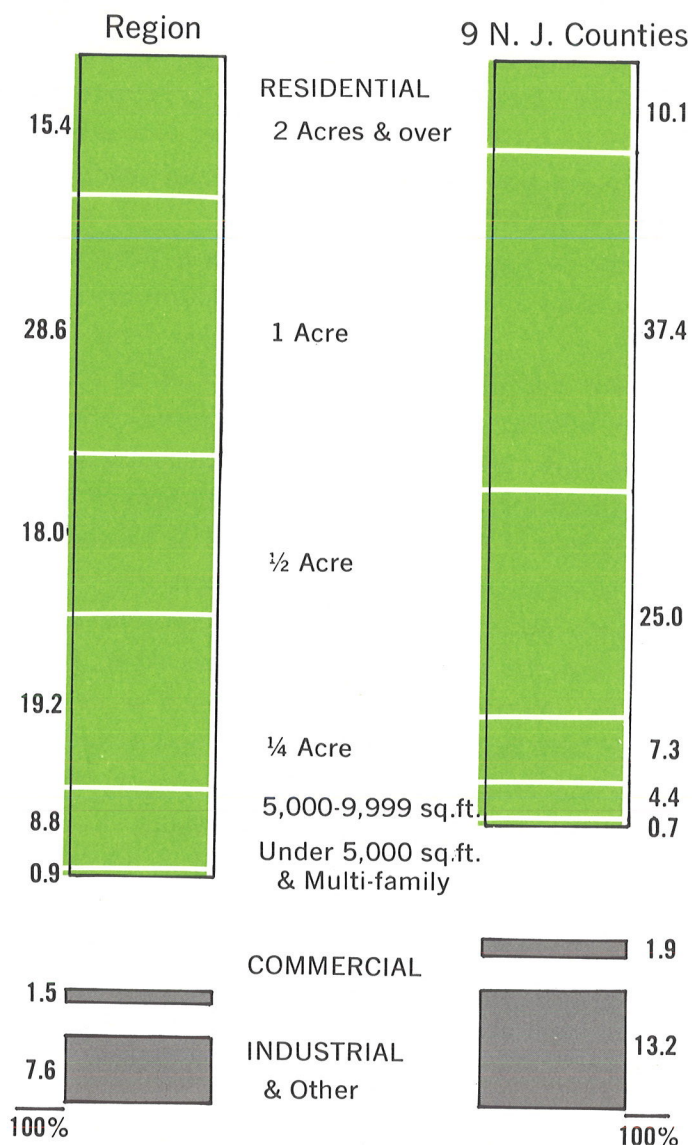


Figure 3. About three-fourths of the vacant land in the Region and about 96½ per cent in the New Jersey sector is zoned by the Region's 550 municipalities. The percentage of this land in various zoning categories is shown above. A half acre is 21,780 square feet.

3. County planning should be strengthened and/or planning districts established covering groups of municipalities.
4. Intermunicipal cooperation should be extended. Perhaps state incentives are needed to encourage joint action.
5. The future disadvantages of land-use trends and the advantages of having some relatively dense centers should be explained to the public.
6. Physical planning must be tied to fiscal plan-

ning. New Jersey relies very heavily on municipal property taxes. We should examine the impact on the way land is used.

7. Large areas of the Meadows should be developed for industry. This new industrial center could act as a magnet to slow the swift urbanization of land. The Meadows also seems an efficient location for industry from the viewpoint of the Region and the industries themselves.
8. The Region should be aware of the kind of economic functions it is particularly suited to perform and should enhance its advantages and eliminate barriers to the attraction of appropriate business and the performing of these activities effectively.
9. We should reserve more open space both to guide urbanization and to provide outdoor recreation for the burgeoning population.

The workshops also cited causes for the personal and public decisions that are leading to the swift bulldozing of Northern New Jersey:

Neighborhood and school deterioration in the cities plus the lure of space and home-ownership in the suburbs make outward movement seem desirable. Federal housing policies and highway building make it possible. Tax and zoning policies of "too-small" municipalities and unbalanced transportation (deterioration of rail service) are eliminating alternatives to the spread-city pattern.

The New Jersey Committee of Regional Plan Association, headed by Cesar J. Bertheau, chairman of the board, People's Trust Company of Bergen County, will consider these comments in developing an immediate and long-range program for improved land and transportation policies for the New Jersey sector of the Region.

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The New Jersey Meadows—within sight of Manhattan. Regional Plan Association's New Jersey Committee will work toward appropriate development of this last large open area in the Region's core.

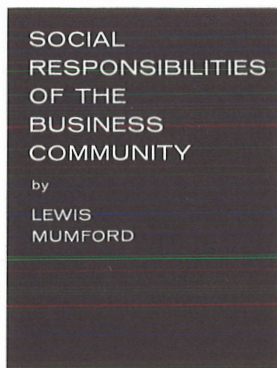
REGIONAL PLAN BOOKSHELF

Financing Government in a Metropolitan Area: The Cleveland Experience by Seymour Sacks and William F. Hellmuth, Jr., New York: The Free Press, 1961. 387 pp. \$10.00.

This is the first compilation of *all* the information on government finance in a metropolitan area that is needed for an accurate picture of the area's past and a reasonable appraisal of its future. Data for *all* the local governments in the area are on a comparable basis. Effects of population change and intra-area differences are analyzed and comprehensive fiscal projections for ten years presented.

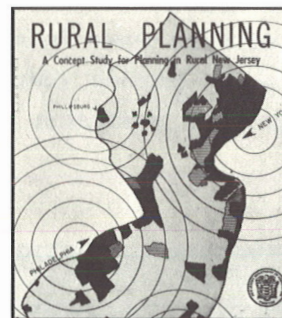
Social Responsibilities of the Business Community by Lewis Mumford. An address of April 24, 1961. Available from the Baltimore Life Insurance Co., Baltimore.

Citing Amsterdam and Venice as great cities built by enlightened merchants willing to invest in beauty and quality, Mr. Mumford urges businessmen to "make our cities both biologically livable and humanly lovable." "Your job and our job today," he said, "is to retain urban complexity as against the isolation and segregation of suburban dispersal, and to widen the scale of operations without surrendering to congestion and without over-mechanizing and eventually, dehumanizing the component parts."



Governmental Structure, Organization, and Planning in Metropolitan Areas: Suggested Action by Local, State, and National Governments by the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 722 Jackson Place, N. W., Washington 25, D. C. 1961. 83 pp.

The Commission was established by Congress in 1959 with representatives of executive and legislative branches of city, county, state and federal governments. Steps are recommended for state and federal action to simplify government structure and facilitate intergovernment cooperation. The alternative, according to the Commission: wholesale assumption of metropolitan area functions by the federal government.



Rural Planning: A Concept Study of Planning in Rural New Jersey. Rutgers University Planning Service, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1961.

New planning techniques to preserve natural resources and rationalize urban growth on the rural fringes are based on a study of the type of land being urbanized in New Jersey and the effectiveness of zoning and subdivision controls.

Status of Adopted Planning Proposals in the Greater Bridgeport Region. Report No. 1, August, 1961. Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency, Room 301, Professional Building, White Plains Road, Trumbull, Connecticut.

The goals and procedures of the regional planning agency for Bridgeport, Fairfield, Monroe, Stratford and Trumbull and a description of the area.

The Village in the City. The Lavanburg Foundation, 120 Broadway, New York 5, 1961.

A brochure describing a model "commons" which the Lavanburg Foundation plans to build in the heart of a New York housing project.

Nation seeks open space

1961 "will probably go down as the breakthrough year in the saving of open space," William H. Whyte, Jr. reported to the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission. He cited large open-space acquisition programs approved in New York (\$4.50 per capita), New Jersey (\$10) and Wisconsin (\$11), strengthened local authority to acquire open space, constitutional amendments lowering assessments on open land, beginnings of residential clustering, and approval of federal open space funds.

Some successes

Open space has political appeal, Whyte noted—even beyond the expectation of legislators who sponsored the bills. He emphasized techniques for maintaining open space short of public purchase, not only for economy but also because they leave the land in use rather than sterilized.

Several successful plans to cluster homes on small portions of large tracts—leaving the rest of the tracts in their natural state—are described by Whyte. Open land, trees, natural contours, vistas and natural drainage will be saved and building costs cut sharply. Whyte noted that where cluster zoning has been accepted in place of large lot zoning, it was initiated by the community itself; where it failed, it was initiated by a builder, and citizens suspected his motives.

Buying and restricting use

Whyte favored region-wide planning but reported that so far local open space purchases have suited the needs of the whole region. He urged stronger state planning pending metropolitan planning units.

In protecting open space, the community should begin with the flood plain, Whyte asserted. It usually is the best place for recreation and the worst place for development from the viewpoint of the resident and the community.

Invest first in open land near urban areas—and acquire the needed land quickly while it is still open, Whyte concluded.

A new legal technique is proposed in the *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, December, 1961. It would keep lands open and in use without either unfair penalty or windfall to the owner. One or the other is possible under several current methods of keeping land open without purchase, according to the researchers. The study urged that a municipal and regional agency jointly select parcels to be kept open, have them appraised, restrict their use, pay the owner immediately for any loss from present use under the restrictions, and pay the loss from possible future use only when the property is sold at public sale. The owner is guaranteed the value set when the use was restricted whenever he sells.

Sandy Hook, Cape Cod parks acquired

Two Regional Plan Association recommendations were followed recently: a Cape Cod National Seashore Park and a Sandy Hook, New Jersey state park. Limited access highways to Sandy Hook are needed now, the Association suggests.

Arden House, II

A second Regional Plan Association conference for business leaders will be held at Arden House, Harriman, New York, February 11-14. Selected corporations will send key officers; they are primarily large manufacturers with utility, advertising, stockbroker, publishing, retailing, and engineering firms also represented. Last year's Arden House group urged the Association to present regional development data to a wider audience of corporate executives.

Economic forces and trends in the 22-county metropolitan area will be examined in talks and workshops. Decisions affecting the Region's productive efficiency and living conditions will be analyzed in transportation, housing, taxes, industrial location and local government structure.

