

# Metropolitan Area Approach to Comprehensive And Coordinated Transportation Planning

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Although metropolitan transportation planning has improved through the years, and is probably at an all-time high as far as urbanization is concerned, there are still certain important elements that have not been dealt with adequately. Experience in the Chicago metropolitan area has brought some of these elements to light. These are defined, their implications are indicated, and suggestions are made for their inclusion.

• THE SUBJECT OF THIS PAPER is the relationships of highway functions and programming to metropolitan area planning. They are increasing in scope and appear to be taking on greater importance in new and changing situations.

Statewide highway systems exist in all regions of the United States and comprise a national highway system. Large-dimensional as these highway plans are, focused as they are on meeting highway needs and serving the important purposes of highways, they do not necessarily fit well and serve fully other transportation needs and other, nontransportation needs of the states, the regions, and the nation.

The broad transportation requirements of the nation as a whole clearly are not met fully by a national highway transportation system. There are several other national transportation systems and services that meet parts—other than highways—of the nation's transportation requirements. There are railways, airways, waterways, and pipelines that, together with highways, comprise national, state, and local transportation facilities and services, serve the national interest and jointly meet its requirements, however adequately or insufficiently, as the case may be.

Each person at this meeting has a specialty, and whatever it may be—administrative, professional, research, technical, in the public area or the private sector—is, being a specialty, partial.

The specialties are related, sometimes closely, sometimes loosely. Today, modern conditions require that these specializations be associated, or coordinated. The economy, in this pluralistic society, is highly specialized. For example, there are steel, electrical and insurance cities; food, fiber and timber territories; predominantly native born or foreign born but inevitably "mixed" cities and regions are found in the continental society. Yet, these and much more are associated, or coordinated, in the generalized image of America and in the culture term "American."

Population growth and area expansion generate need of housing, education, recreation, transportation facilities, and services. Income, jobs, and job training cannot be disassociated from technological change and its implications. Taxation and fiscal implications of these create problems of staggering proportions. Both the private sector and the governments face together the present conditions and attempt somehow to estimate and project the future changes.

In facing them, researching them, analyzing them, in formulating policy positions required for programming, the necessity to "associate the specialties" appears to be gaining in recognition by the decision-making ranks of the nation's life at the level of the national, state, and local governments; in command posts of commerce and industry; and in the universities and the professions.

The metropolitan area approach appears to offer a vantage and a posture whereby

growth, development and change at local levels may be dealt with more effectively, with appropriate roles of states at that level and with the federal government at the national level. Urban transportation is not a purely local matter. It is integral with other important community functions and altogether have state and federal "relatedness." The problem is not divisible today and is not soluble by adding up separate, piecemeal actions or "solutions." A metropolitan area approach may suggest some useful answers, both in "associating the specializations" (and the specialists) and in demonstrating ways to generalize them in a manner contributing answers to community problems being pursued widely today across the country.

### A METROPOLITAN AREA APPROACH

It will be useful to list some of the growth and development problems universal in cities and urban regions throughout the United States today—most acute and difficult of solution in the large and fast growing industrial states, and most pressing in the metropolitan areas of those states.

At the level of municipal and county governments, there are

1. Tax problems—fiscal inadequacy.
2. Planning and regulating orderly and efficient growth.
3. Achieving coordination in growth and development with contiguous or closely related jurisdictions, especially in metropolitan areas.

At the state level, there are

1. Tax problems—fiscal inadequacy—real or supposed tax and fiscal inequity in relation to the federal government, municipalities, counties, special (purpose) district governments.
2. Providing legislative, administrative, financial, and technical assistance and guidance to statewide growth and development (including distressed areas) to achieve orderly, efficient, and competitive state development over-all; and as a state policy framework to counties, municipalities, and special districts and affecting the role of agriculture under conditions of strong urban and industrial growth trends.

At the federal (or national) level, there are

1. Tax problems—fiscal questions. For example, the proportion of federal revenues to be devoted to state and local purposes, appropriate (and acceptable) principles and methods for distributing and supervising such federal "assistance."
2. The appropriate role of the federal government in relation to the states and local communities (including the agricultural aspects) serving the national interest, avoiding infringement of constitutional rights of the states and their localities ("creatures of the state"), yet providing national guidance and a national "framework" of social, economic, and physical (physiographic) character, if there are to be unities of form and function of the state, regional, and local communities comprising the nation.

These broad "growth and development" categories are admittedly designed and stated for the purpose of this brief paper. They are selected and subjective, but are relevant to the following proposition: the metropolitan areas of the nation are useful, offering a vantage and a posture whereby growth, development and change at local, state, and national community levels may be dealt with more effectively.

To illustrate the argument, the following typical or characteristic programs currently operative in a great many cities, and in a substantial minority of the nation's metropolitan areas (as designated by the Census Bureau), serve the present purpose. Both programs are "growth and development" oriented: (a) housing, urban renewal, and planning; (b) transportation (highways, transit, mass transportation).

These two programs clearly involve the federal, state, and local governments. As the bulk of the country's population and population growth, tangible and intangible resources, and growth and development activity is concentrated in metropolitan areas (and they are expected to concentrate there increasingly), it may be logically claimed

that a strategy and tactics of growth and development ought to consider seriously the role and uses of metropolitan areas for "associating the specialties," for achieving coordination of growth and development from the local community up and from the national level down. The matter may be examined more concretely from the vantage of a specific metropolitan area—the northeastern Illinois metropolitan area, comprising Chicago and six counties enclosing it—choosing an example from the field of transportation.

The federal government, by means of both regulatory and tax authority, and direct or indirect financial aids, influences the policies, programs, and operational practices of highways, railways, airways, waterways, and pipelines active in interstate commerce. In some cases the federal government establishes national standards that directly reflect in location planning of certain systems (interstate highways) and systems including terminals (civil and military airways). However, all transportation operates in states and serves local units of governments. It is therefore subject to state regulatory (also tax) agencies in these cases. In many metropolitan areas all major types of transportation operate. Yet the federal government does not plan locations, does not coordinate or insist on coordination, of the physical or operational characteristics of any transportation media. The 1961 Housing Act takes limited initiative in this direction.

It will perhaps be argued that this is a proper task for the states. Yet the states also regulate and tax and leave locations and their planning to the municipalities and the counties.

The federal government (Landis Committee, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, National Transportation Policy Report, and the Advisory Commission on Inter-Governmental Relations) is currently analyzing, preparatory to legislation, the tax and regulatory imbalance that have developed between modes and among carriers in the same or other modes. Assuming that there will be alterations in the balance or lack of it among modes and that legislation will change, affect, or even "correct" these functional inadequacies, inequities or injustices, the effects gradual though they may prove will be effective in the states, counties, cities, and metropolitan areas.

Transportation technology is changing and may change more drastically and rapidly than in any previous period. Transport media are land occupiers, sometimes competitors in land acquisition or "logical" occupancy. Airways, in particular, require new substantial land areas to serve jets and growth in military and private flying needs.

Federal and state governments are both involved in and affected by the policies at their respective levels and may be presumed to have, and in fact acknowledge they have, a concern with the relationships of transportation modes and operations in cities and in metropolitan areas in which cities cluster around the metropolitan center and urban growth spreads out into the countryside.

The land-use analysis, the coordination of many competing land occupiers, and the regulation of each by itself and of its relation to others are left to cities or counties, acting under laws established by the state. There is no specific lead in these matters affecting the national interest in growth and development and there is only a bare beginning in some states to establish a lead from the state level indicative of a state "public interest."

The second example relates to housing, urban renewal, and planning. These programs—financial support and technical aid to housing, planning (city, county, metropolitan area and state), and urban renewal—are operating throughout the country—unevenly, it may be said, in range, quality, and degree of local acceptance. The metropolitan areas are replete with activity. The HHFA and the BPR, both in Washington and in their administrative regions, are undertaking to implement formally a joint order to "associate their specialties"; in other words, to facilitate coordination, to bring the housing and highway programs into relationship, wherever possible.

A condition of federal approval of housing and renewal grants is an effective local planning program. Mass transportation planning and capital equipment grants are conditioned upon a metropolitan area plan in being or in preparation. These appear to be ordinances in the right direction, on the right course, although there appears to be a larger extent of need and an opportunity of more substantial dimensions.

This is the opportunity in the metropolitan areas to "associate the specialties" on a wider and deeper front by means of a comprehensive and coordinated approach through metropolitan planning—admitting the limitations and granting the difficulties of a still relatively new approach and of an advisory agency not operational in powers that does not and presumably will not concern itself with structural changes in governments traditionally serving metropolitan areas.

People are closer to the many local governments in each metropolitan area than they are to metropolitan government. Thus, the local governments are more readily subject to their wishes. Whatever its theoretical or presumed merits, metropolitan government has no lobby, no following, and as yet no constituents or electorate.

The northeastern Illinois metropolitan area is served by a planning commission established by the Illinois legislature in 1957. Its jurisdiction of six counties whose central city is Chicago contains nearly 1,000 local governments, 6,250,000 inhabitants in an area of 3,700 sq mi.

Its Commission of 19 citizen members, with a staff of about the same number, and a budget of around \$250,000, has researched land use, population, future employment, and the requirements of the area of jurisdiction affecting first flood control and drainage, water supply and waste disposal, open space and recreation. The Commission in the present year will undertake to utilize its studies concerned with these functions, and others not specified here, in analysis of comprehensive transportation and land use relationships, building on available studies of many relevant kinds and initiating others required but not yet available.

It has already been demonstrated in the Commission's short history that much can be accomplished in selective researches to indicate the profile of the metropolitan area's growth and development problems and challenges of established (or at least present) trends. Intergovernmental relations are bringing together representatives, officials, and citizens to achieve improved coordination of planning and programming of development through continuing cooperation.

For the long pull, however, the long-term, comprehensive, and coordinated metropolitan area plan to guide future growth and development does not appear ready to reveal its secrets, nor does it yet appear to be susceptible to more than tentative, generalized option projections.

To date, the most favorably circumstanced, most affirmatively contributive of these projective studies are those of the type of the Chicago Area Transportation Study and especially the Penn-Jersey Study, with its five clearly stated and testable alternative comprehensive schemes.

There are actual limitations, however, to these or any other metropolitan plans so far produced, and they have to do, not with techniques, but with the question of governmental policies and relationships and the problem of "associating the specialties."

These limitations have to do with the difficulty of preparing with any demonstrable logic, definitiveness, or conviction, metropolitan area plans that lack the following necessary conditions:

1. A lead must be furnished by the federal government establishing guidelines, however broad and general they may of necessity be, indicative of the national interest in urban and rural land use, resource use and conservation, and rationalization of transportation, for the nation and its physiographic divisions.

2. A lead is needed from the state government indicative of the state's role and policy intentions affecting these matters.

3. A research and development program is required—one which is conceived and initiated in response to national, state, regional, and local needs. The purpose would be to identify broad research needs, with high priorities identified for early attention, and accompanied by proposals for public discussion and action on how such research might be accomplished by government, universities, industry, and others.

4. Use should be made of the resource allocation principle, at all governmental levels, as a stimulus to coordination of fiscal management and physical planning in the localities and metropolitan areas. The capital improvements programming technique is perhaps the most readily adopted use of this principle, and might therefore receive earliest application.

5. A lead is required from the federal government, which is the only place from which it properly can emanate, on the extent to which national security factors are to be reflected in growth and development policy and planning.

6. If comprehensive planning is to be achieved, stimulation, guidance, organization, and coordination are needed at the levels of the municipalities and the urbanizing counties to provide a framework within which local officials can work with metropolitan, state, and federal agencies. The effective federal-state-county administrative coordination of programs long ago achieved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture might be cited as an example.

7. Land policies are needed in urban and especially metropolitan areas, including research-derived conclusions and recommendations affecting central city and central city core functional roles in metropolitan complexes. Density standards, circulation system principles and mode "balance," dispersal or concentration (or both in balance), industry, housing and community facility standards (including options) are ingredients that should be available and utilized (perhaps within nationally formulated "value systems").

In conclusion, tax and fiscal problems, the extent and kind of federal and state responsibilities, coordinated planning and capital improvement programming, communications among affected governments and with citizens and community leadership, "association of specialists," and much in addition will be served and will serve the public interest well if the metropolitan areas are utilized as testing laboratories for the range of matters treated in this paper.