

WILL COUNTY



2020 Transportation Framework Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adopted December 2000

Prepared by Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc.

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Resolution #00-481

Prepared By

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Introduction

This Executive Summary provides a synopsis of the latest renewal¹ of the Will County Transportation Plan, which is an element of the Will County Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP).

This plan reflects a collaborative effort among agencies and interests involved in planning activities that affect Will County, including municipalities, townships, regional agencies, and the State of Illinois. The agencies and interests were initially organized into four committees (Policy, Board, Planning, and Citizen) that met quarterly to guide the early stages of the study. The Destination 2020 Regional Transportation Plan, being managed by the joint efforts of the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) and the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), has been used as a framework for the current Will County plan. It is based on the same year 2020 population and employment forecasts. These forecasts served as the basis for estimates of future traffic conditions provided by CATS. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Metropolitan Rail (Metra), Pace suburban bus service, and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) also provided assistance and direction during the planning process. Thus, the recommended plan and the process used to define the plan reflect a consensus of these participants.

Transportation facilities and services are essential for Will County's economic well-being and the quality of life of its citizens. While this relationship is recognized by most people and organizations, the reality of achieving the desired level of transportation infrastructure falls short of this goal. Lack of financing, the inability to acquire right-of-way, lack of coordination between land use and development activities and transportation needs, and differences concerning the need for transportation improvements are factors that impact the implementation of an optimal transportation system.

The presence of these factors is not new in the process of urban change affecting Will County. The

¹ *Will County, Illinois Highway Study, Recommended Long-Range Major Improvement Program*, June 1984. *Joliet Area Transportation Study*, October 1969.

significant fact is that change in Will County is accelerating. Growth is occurring at a faster pace. The longer-range forecasts describe a situation that will generate a significantly higher level of transportation needs.

These conditions mean that a long-range transportation plan has a vital role to play. It has the opportunity to define the unique series of actions that would serve the increasing transportation needs of Will County. Because this plan has a countywide agenda, in geographic terms, it can address key considerations:

1. Program coordination between many agencies: state, regional, and local.
2. Facility planning and design coordination to respond to the fact that growth will increase the urbanized area and bring local communities closer together.
3. Identification of long-range facility needs, viewed in a system fashion, with provision to protect or preserve transportation right-of-way opportunities.
4. Increasing the value and benefits from transportation investments through the use of system planning concepts that identify opportunities to serve multiple needs or accommodate the needs of more than one agency.
5. Enhancing the use of limited funding for transportation investments.

The 2020 Transportation Framework Plan is intended to be more detailed than previous plans. It is multimodal in content and includes roads, public transportation improvements, and railroads, and also provides the foundation for later studies on bikeway, pedestrian, equestrian, and airport transportation. The plan has also tried to be responsive to the possible development of a third regional airport in the Peotone area. The results are a recommended transportation plan described in terms of two scenarios: with a new airport and without a new airport.

The plan is written to guide transportation improvements through the year 2020. It also takes an even longer view. The opportunity for facilities such as bridges or rights-of-way for roadways or public transportation needs to be protected for the post-planning period. As development continues, transportation improvements will be needed for the long range. Because of the rapid growth the county is anticipating, with population that is projected to more than double by the year 2020, this plan should be continually managed and updated. This requires commitment. Will County will need to be an active partner with other organizations to achieve this use of the plan. In this sense, the preparation of this plan is only the beginning.

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Plan Overview

The recommended 2020 Transportation Framework Plan carefully considers the challenges and opportunities facing Will County over the next 20 years, and it recommends goals, objectives, and improvements to prepare the region to meet its future transportation needs. The plan is intended to provide a framework for decisions on short-range and long-term transportation *and* related land-use activities.

The relationship between transportation and land use is significant and should be recognized more fully—specifically, the transportation plan is an element of the Will County Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP), which recognizes transportation as a land-use issue. Following the recommendations and programs contained in the LRMP will substantially improve the county by providing enhanced access and mobility for current and future county residents and assuring responsible land use decisions.

On the other hand, major departures from the land-use plan would require that modification of the transportation plan be considered. These land-use changes could include conscious decisions by local units of government to modify the development concept (location, intensity, type) or *actual* population and employment growth or updated forecasts that are significantly different from population and employment estimates upon which the transportation plan is based.

As an example, several changes in land use planning have occurred in Will County since this transportation study was initiated in 1995. These changes, which include the redevelopment of the former Joliet Arsenal property, the Joliet motorsports complex, industrial growth in the I-80 corridor, and other local development plans, were not originally included as base socio-economic data in the development of traffic forecasts on the Will County transportation system. Thus, there was no quantifiable basis in this study for recommending transportation improvement projects to support these growth areas in the 2020 Transportation Framework Plan. However, it is recognized that these areas have the potential for significant development growth and/or traffic generation

within the 20-year time horizon of this plan. As such, it is recommended that this transportation plan be re-evaluated within the next 3 years following the update of the County's Land Resource Management Plan.

In addition, public comments received on the draft 2020 Transportation Framework Plan yielded several roadway improvement projects that were not identified nor evaluated in the alternative transportation concept stage of the study. The merits and resulting traffic impacts of these projects require further examination, which will occur in the update of this plan.

Specific Considerations in Development of Plan

To properly understand this plan, a series of specific considerations must be recognized. First, the plan is oriented toward countywide, intermunicipal transportation demands. Thus, appropriate connections to local community arterial streets are specified without encroaching on local street planning activities. On the other hand, expanding employment opportunities in Will County will be partially based on accessibility to markets. Industrial, major office, and retail developments are sensitive to access to regional and, possibly, interstate markets. This factor emphasizes the importance of connections to and improvements in the regional transportation system. The ability of Will County to be "freestanding" is tempered by these needs for linkage to the region. In addition, a second regional context is recognized in which facilities serve through or non-stop travel in addition to serving Will County's local transportation needs. The effectiveness of the regional facilities depends on their overall status and continuity in the *regional* system. For all recommendations involving regional highways, such as improvements to I-80, I-55, I-57, and the potential extension of I-355 (from the southern terminus of the approved extension at I-80 into Indiana), the CATS 2020 Regional Transportation Plan was used as a guide and framework.

Another area of consideration has been implementation issues. The uncertainty of obtaining financial resources sufficient to pay for transportation projects is recognized. It is clear that resources are limited, particularly at the county level; therefore, certain implementation realities must be considered to achieve maximum benefits, and additional revenues or new financing mechanisms must be sought.

Another implementation issue that guided plan development was physical feasibility. While the technical work associated with the plan concerned system planning, not design, the location of new facilities or the improvement of existing facilities generally has been screened for physical feasibility. Alignments shown in the plan were modified wherever major negative land-use impacts were identified (e.g., penetration of an existing neighborhood) or impacts on natural resources would be expected. In some instances, this represented a trade-off decision that creates some compromises in the plan. It should be noted that separate engineering studies have not yet been conducted on most of the proposed alignments; thus, precise alignments are not suggested in this plan.

A final implementation consideration has been the decision-making process used for implementation of improvements. The purpose of the transportation plan is to recommend improvements to serve the transportation needs of the citizens of Will County. For this reason, decisions required to implement

the plan should involve the county and local units of government in as large a role as appropriate. This may require modification of the function of the Will County Governmental League (WCGL) Transportation Committee to consider more countywide, multimodal issues as addressed in the plan, including interagency coordination between major planning activities such as the corridor councils.

The planning process also has recognized that during the next 20 years, the transportation system for Will County needs to be a multimodal one. Certainly, public transportation has been and will continue to be significant for Chicago Loop-oriented commuter trips made by rail. Other transit within the county has played a very limited role in the overall transportation situation. These services include the regular fixed-route and –schedule service and dial-a-ride bus. Expansion of the latter would improve the basic mobility of persons who do not have the use of an auto. Expansion of regular bus service might have an impact on the transportation plan. This would occur if the transit service were provided at a high enough level and in the proper location to attract riders who would or could use their autos. This mode shift from auto to transit could offset the need for new or expanded auto-oriented facilities.

While it is recognized that improvements to the public transportation system are beyond the jurisdiction of the county, the transportation plan encourages and recommends that the strategic regional transit (SRT) system improvements included in the 2020 RTP be implemented in Will County, as well as projects identified in the earlier Metra/Pace Future Agenda for Suburban Transit (FAST) proposal. The plan also encourages the public transportation coordinating efforts currently under way at the RTA, as contained in the draft Regional Transit Coordination Plan.² In addition, the plan suggests the additional actions to be explored to increase transit access in the county, such as express bus and community transit service.

In addition to public mass transit, transportation demand strategies would or could impact the transportation plan and involve ridesharing, transit incentives, and time management (flexible work hours). These could receive greater emphasis and, if effective, could reduce peak-hour auto traffic volumes and thus forestall capital commitments for construction of new or expanded highway facilities.

These transit/auto facility relationships represent only a potential, since many uncertainties are associated with transit implementation. At this time, it appears unwise to assume that transit service and use in the county will increase sufficiently to eliminate the need for identified highway improvements. If, however, over the next 20 years such increases do occur, the transportation plan should be updated as appropriate. For now, options for meeting potential future highway needs should be preserved.

Socioeconomic Forecasts

Population and employment are expected to increase significantly by the year 2020; projections made by NIPC indicate a 2.5 percent annual increase in households and a 3 percent annual increase

² *Regional Transit Coordination Plan: Proposed Approach*, prepared by the Regional Transportation Authority, public comment draft, December 21, 1999.

in employment over the next 20 years. Should large-scale development plans come to fruition, such as the proposed South Suburban Airport, the growth rate is projected to be higher, with an annual household growth of 3 percent and an annual growth in employment of 4 percent.

Figure 1 shows the forecast growth of households and employment for Will County as a whole. Figures 2 and 3 show the projected distribution of households and employment growth, respectively, among the townships in the county. The growth data shows that households will increase greatly in Wheatland, DuPage, Plainfield, Homer, New Lenox, Frankfort, and Monee townships. Employment will grow significantly in DuPage, Troy, Frankfort, Monee, and Crete townships. When the proposed South Suburban Airport is considered, the townships of Monee, Crete, Peotone, and Will—and to a lesser extent Green Garden and Washington—are projected to experience rapid employment growth.

Transportation Needs

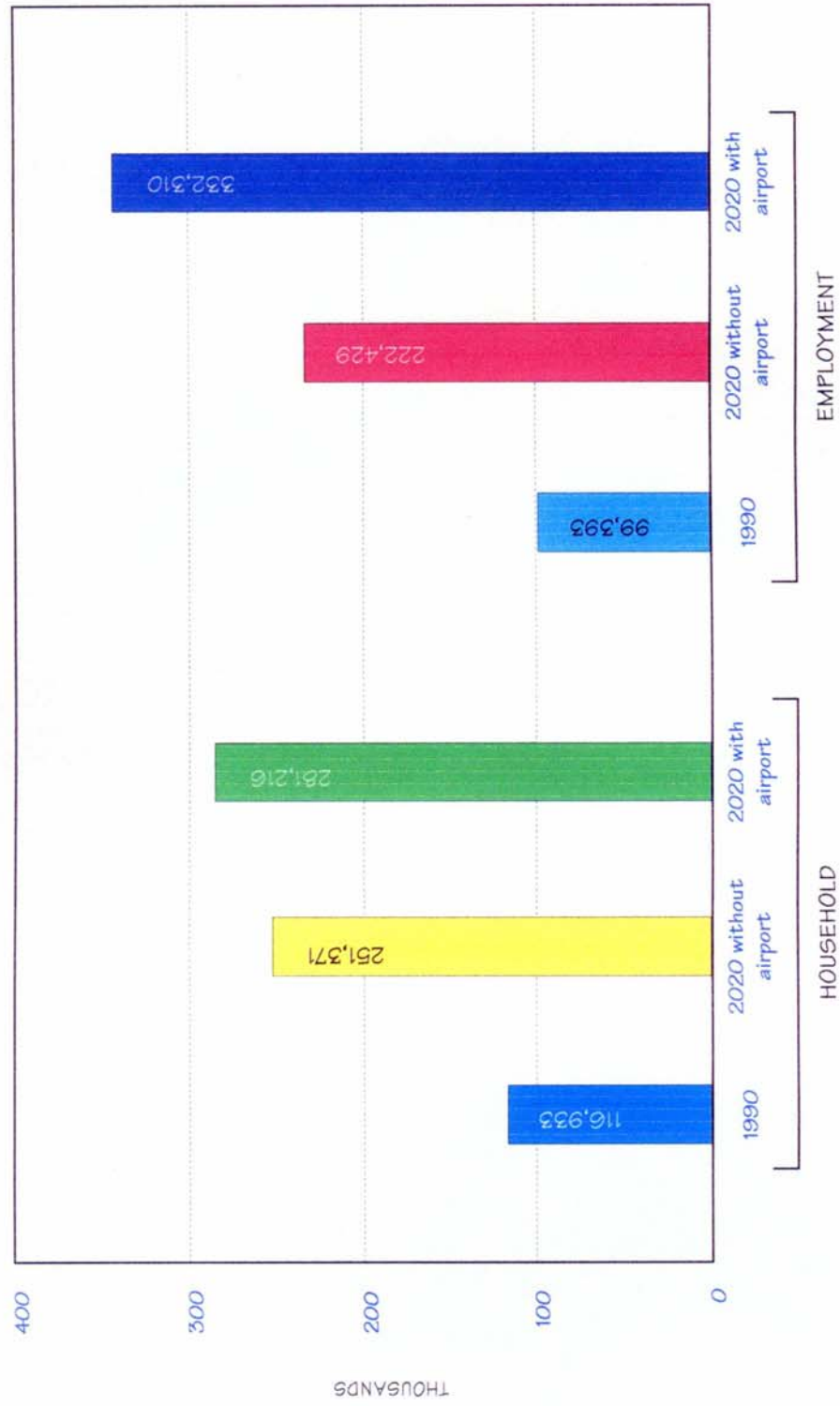
General conclusions regarding the future transportation system in Will County are listed below:

- Traffic growth will not be uniform across the county. There will be concentrations in several townships, including DuPage, Wheatland, Homer, Lockport, New Lenox, Frankfort, Plainfield, Monee, and Crete. This is caused by an increase in work trips to the Chicago and DuPage County employment areas, which is created by high residential growth in the established Will County municipalities, but relatively low employment growth. Will Township will also experience significant growth if the proposed South Suburban Airport is built.
- The distribution of trips, that is, the linkages between origins and destinations, will reflect patterns similar to existing conditions, but will also include (1) much stronger linkage to DuPage County, (2) continued linkage between eastern Will County, Cook County and northwest Indiana, and (3) increased local linkages between Frankfort, New Lenox, and Mokena.
- Traffic estimates indicate that needs will be most apparent in specific corridors. These are segments of the system reflecting concentrated channels of travel flow.
- The future needs will focus on, but not be limited to, the following corridors: (1) north-south in the area from the east edge of Homer Township to IL 59; (2) east-west crossings of the Des Plaines River from Plainfield to Lemont; (3) generally east-west along U.S. Route 30 throughout the county; (4) north-south from IL 394 to I-57 in the east areas of the county; and (5) east-west linkages with Indiana.
- Future traffic volumes in the critical travel corridors will increase by amounts ranging from 50 to 100 percent between now and the year 2020.
- The number of vehicle-miles traveled under congested conditions is projected to increase from 18.4 percent in 1995 to 49.5 percent in 2020 under the without airport scenario and to 53.8 percent under the with airport scenario, indicating significant negative impacts for many users of the system.

- The impact of increased traffic will require added capacity via new lanes of pavement.
- Interchanges on the expressway system are widely separated; current spacing between existing interchanges in Will County is approximately two interchanges at 1 mile or less, five at 1.1 to 2 miles, three at 2.1 to 3 miles, and seven at over 3 miles. This design would be appropriate for expressways that tend to serve long trips rather than provide local access. Future growth in Will County, however, indicates that new interchanges should be considered.
- Once the traffic impacts associated with development of the former Joliet Arsenal property and other developments not anticipated by NIPC are considered, additional capacity may be necessary in some areas of the county. These capacity improvements will be determined during the first update of this transportation plan in approximately 3 years to coincide with the update of the county's Land Resource Management Plan. Some of these improvements are identified in the Appendix of the 2020 Transportation Framework Plan final report. Non-residential developments, so as those being developed on the former Arsenal property, will not produce the traditional travel patterns evident in the northwest and east areas of the county, i.e., flow directed toward Chicago.
- With the exception of the northwest area of the county and a small number of other roads, excess roadway capacity exists. Correcting the discontinuities in the network should distribute traffic better to create additional capacity. From a link-capacity perspective, in many areas of the county, only intersection or traffic flow improvements, such as street realignments and turn lanes, may be necessary.
- The impact of poor regulation of access to adjacent properties on high-volume routes is not included in the evaluation. For example, as development occurs, poorly spaced curb-cuts and/or intersections on IL 53 would reduce capacity and lead to increased congestion and delay. This must be considered on routes where development is likely.
- Along with auto travel, there will be a need to consider improvements to the transit system. Added trip-making will occur in two primary ways: (1) to and from Cook County (including downtown Chicago) and (2) intercounty travel, mostly to and from DuPage County.
- Continued growth in the northwest and west central subareas will require improved access and service on the Metra Heritage Corridor line. The Village of Romeoville is presently bypassed. Also Bolingbrook and Plainfield do not have rail service.
- Growth in the east subarea, particularly if a third regional airport is developed, suggests the need for either an extension of the existing Metra Electric District line south to Monee and potentially the proposed new airport and Peotone. In addition, service to the communities of Steger and Crete, and possibly Beecher, would be desirable.
- Residential growth in Manhattan Township should justify the extension of one of the existing Metra lines, most likely the SouthWest Service line.
- A rail connection to the employment corridors in DuPage County would have significant benefits to Will County communities and could relieve congestion on key north-south arterials.

- As an alternative to rail service, high-speed express bus service between the northwest, west central, and north central subareas and Will County would serve a portion of intercounty trips.
- The development of park-n-ride facilities has been an ongoing strategy in the region, targeted more toward commuter rail stations. Expanded development of these facilities in the major travel corridors would make express bus service more attractive.

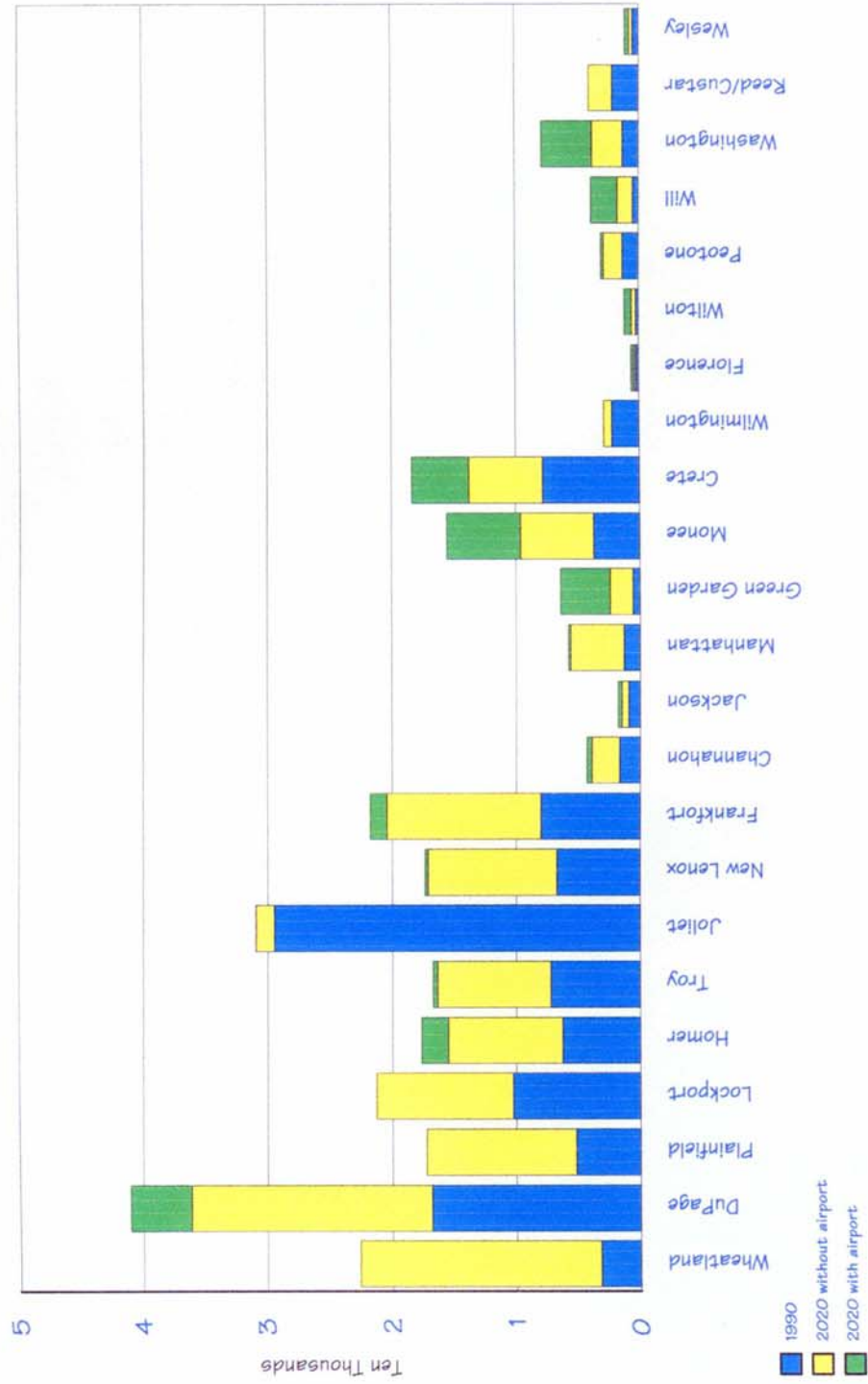
WILL COUNTY HOUSEHOLD AND EMPLOYMENT COMPARISON



Source: Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission Endorsed Household and Employment Forecasts, November 6, 1997.

Executive Summary Figure 1

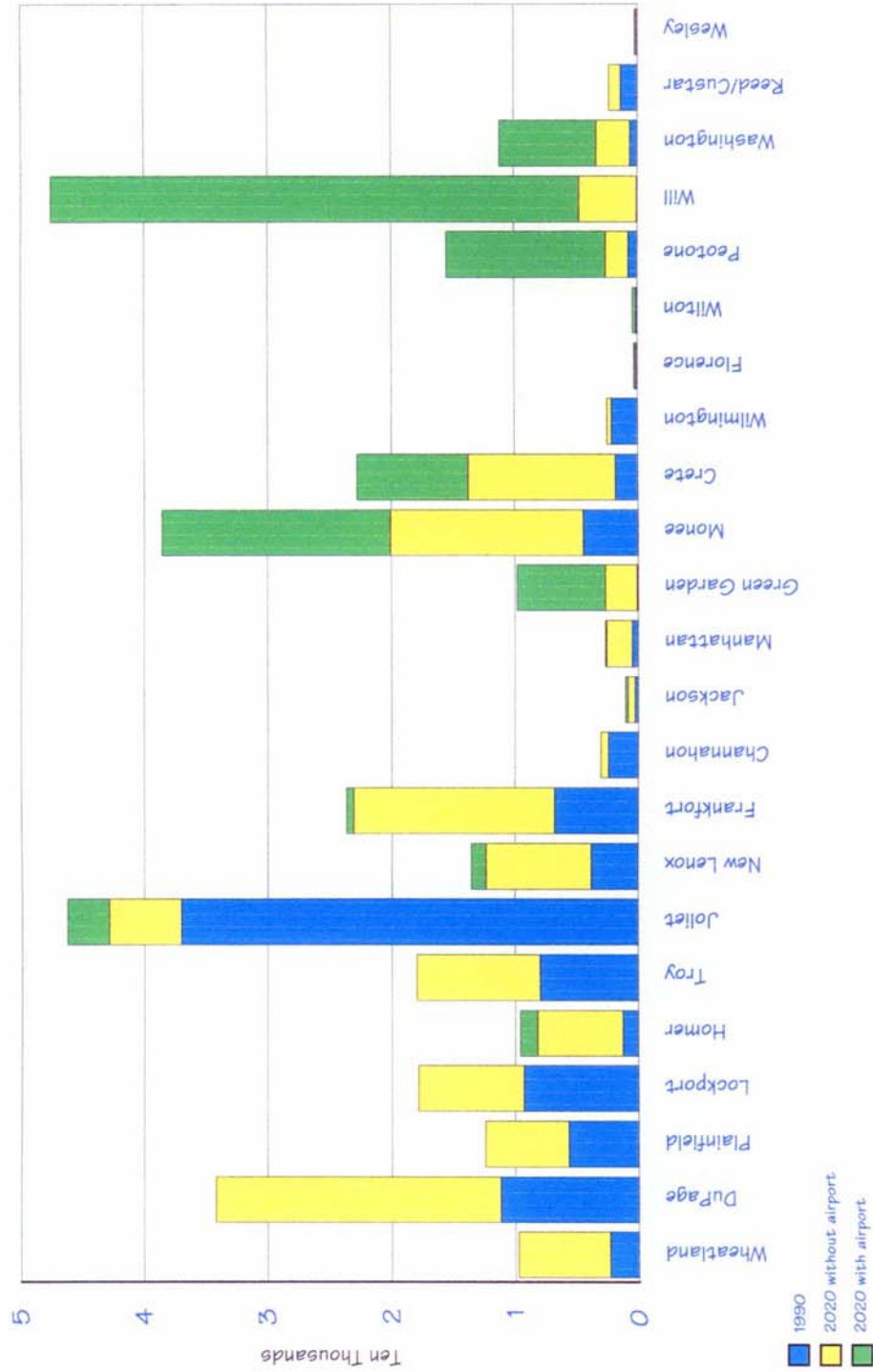
TOWNSHIP LEVEL HOUSEHOLD COMPARISON - 1990 & 2020



Source: Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission Endorsed Household and Employment Forecasts, November 6, 1997.

Executive Summary Figure 2

TOWNSHIP LEVEL EMPLOYMENT COMPARISON - 1990 & 2020



Source: Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission Endorsed Household and Employment Forecasts, November 6, 1997.

Executive Summary Figure 3

2

Recommended Plan

The recommended roadway improvements and transit connections, shown in Figure 4, represent a system that, if put in place by the year 2020, will serve transportation demand, respect the quality of life in Will County, set the stage for an increase in public transportation, and, finally, develop a more proactive program of transportation planning initiatives. The plan is intended to be integrated within an overall multimodal context and represents a significant effort to achieve improved land use/transportation relationships. While more details are identified for the roadway elements, assertive action is necessary to achieve increased transit and non-motorized use in the long term to help preserve and enhance overall mobility within the region. The plan places a priority on the improvement of the existing transportation system wherever feasible.

The formulation of the plan as a *system* of transportation services implies several attributes:

- Effective connection to the regional system.
- Continuity of routes across or through the county.
- Balance of system capacity with travel demand, as generated by the type of land use.
- Equitable quality of service for the entire county.

The specific aspects of these attributes require coordination between state, county, and local governmental agencies. The plan elements represent the highest-priority improvements and are based on the following considerations:

1. The plan elements for the most part satisfy the goals and objectives described in Chapter 3.
2. The plan elements are buildable, considering local concerns over alignment and the potential for negative environmental impacts.
3. The plan elements attempt to address the need to protect corridors to serve transportation

demand beyond the year 2020.

4. The plan elements provide for future land use and transportation planning initiatives in crucial transportation corridors.

A wide variety of agencies have and are developing plans for transportation facilities to be located in Will County. One of the challenges of this planning process has been to sort out all of these plans and projects relative to the goals, objectives, and transportation needs of Will County.

This sorting out activity means that the resulting recommended plan is an amalgamation of elements from other agency plans, with those identified in this planning effort. The attempt has been to assess which elements of other plans are consistent with Will County goals, objectives, and policies and which are needed, based on the travel forecasts prepared specifically for Will County by CATS.

The recommended plan, then, contains (1) descriptions of projects initiated by other agencies and simply repeated herein (indicated with □) and (2) descriptions of projects that are new additions and not included in other agency plans (indicated with ■). Some projects contain a combination of these two conditions (indicated with ◻).

Regional Road System Improvements

- **I-55.** Widening to add a third lane in each direction between Naperville Road and I-80. Upgraded interchange at IL 126. New interchange at Caton Farm Road.
- **I-80.** Widening to add a third lane in each direction between U.S. Route 45 and I-55. New interchange between Wolf Road and Parker Road.
- ◻ **I-57.** Widening to add a third lane in each direction between I-80 and future I-355 extension near Pauling Road. New interchanges at Stuenkel Road and future I-355 extension. Upgraded interchange at Manhattan-Monee Road.
- **IL 59.** Widening to a four-lane facility with turn lanes between I-55 and U.S. Route 30 and between Main Street (Plainfield) and 103rd Street.
- ◻ **U.S. Route 30.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between the Kane County line and IL 43 (some segments are already widened).
- **U.S. Route 45.** Widening to six lanes with turn lanes between 191st Street and 143rd Street (Cook County). Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between Nebraska Avenue and Manhattan-Monee Road.
- ◻ **IL 43 (Harlem Avenue).** Widening to six lanes with turn lanes between U.S. Route 30 and 175th Street (Tinley Park). Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between U.S. Route 30 and Laraway Road/Sauk Trail.

- **U.S. Route 6.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between Briggs Street and Wolf Road (Orland Park), and between McDonough Street and the Grundy County line.
- **IL 53.** Widening to add a median with turn lanes between I-55 and Ruby Street.
- **IL 1.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between Steger Road and Eagle Lake Road (IL 1 Bypass), except through urbanized areas of Steger and Crete.
- **IL 1 Bypass.** New two-lane bypass road around Village of Beecher.
- **IL 171.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between New Avenue and 135th Street.

Arterial Street System Improvements

- **Bell Road.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between IL 7 and Archer Avenue/Calumet Sag Road (Cook County).
- **Larkin Avenue.** Widening to six lanes with turn lanes between I-80 and Knapp Road.
- **Weber Road.** Widening to six lanes with turn lanes between Knapp Road and Naperville Road.
- **Naperville Road.** Widening to six lanes with turn lanes between Boughton Road and Weber Road.
- **Caton Farm Road.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between WIKADUKE Trail and the Des Plaines River (some segments already widened). New bridge over river with connection to realigned Bruce Road.
- **Bruce Road.** Realignment with proposed Caton Farm Road bridge over the Des Plaines River and widening to four lanes with turn lanes between the bridge and Cedar Road.
- **Cedar Road.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes from Bruce Road north to IL 7 (159th Street) and from Bruce Road south to Francis Road in the Village of New Lenox.
- **159th Street (IL 7).** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between Farrel Road and Harlem Avenue (IL 43) in Tinley Park/Orland Park.
- **159th Street (Renwick Road).** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes from IL 59 to IL 53.
- **WIKADUKE Trail.** Development of a continuous north-south arterial between U.S. Route 6 (Minooka) and IL 56 (Aurora) via improvements to and connections between Ridge Road, Stewart Road, Heggs Road, and Eola Road.
- **119th Street.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between the WIKADUKE Trail and Weber Road.
- **95th Street.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between 248th Street and IL 59. West extension of four-lane facility from 248th Street to U.S. Route 30. East extension of four-lane facility from Plainfield-Naperville Road to Boughton Road.

- **Boughton Road.** Median modifications to create left-turn lanes at intersections between IL 53 and Feather Sound Drive. Widening to six lanes between Feather Sound Drive and Jones Avenue.
- **Kings Road.** Extension from 119th Street north to Boughton Road as a three-lane facility.
- **Plainfield-Naperville Road.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between 95th Street and IL 126.
- **Exchange Street.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between Stuenkel Road (via Crawford Road) and IL 394 (some segments already widened).
- **Laraway Road.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between IL 53 and IL 43.
- ☑ **St. Francis/LaPorte Road.** Extension of LaPorte Road east to 88th Avenue as a two-lane facility. Widening of St. Francis Road to four lanes with turn lanes between IL 43 and U.S. Route 45. Widening to three lanes between Kirkstone Way and I-80.
- **Gougar Road.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between IL 7 and Laraway Road. Extension of four-lane section from Laraway south to Baker Road at U.S. Route 52.
- **191st Street (Cleveland Avenue).** Widening to four lanes between Wolf Road and U.S. Route 45.
- ☑ **135th Street.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes from IL 53 west to Weber Road and from New Avenue east to IL 171.
- **Stuenkel Road.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between Harlem Avenue and Steger-Monee Road.
- **Manhattan-Monee Road.** East extension from IL 50 to Crete-Monee Road.
- **Crete-Monee Road.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes from the Manhattan-Monee Road extension to IL 1.
- **Monee Road.** Widening to add a center turn lane between Stuenkel Road and the Cook County line.
- ☑ **Arsenal Road.** Widening to four lanes between U.S. Route 52 and I-55.
- **111th Street.** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between IL 59 and Plainfield-Naperville Road
- ☑ **143rd Street.** Widening to three lanes between U.S. Route 30 and IL 59. Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between IL 171 and Will Cook Road.
- **Drauden Road.** South extension from Theodore Street to Mound Road (at Ingolsby Road).
- **Steger Road.** East extension from IL 50 to Crawford Avenue.
- **88th Avenue (Pfeiffer Road).** Northwest extension from U.S. Route 30 to U.S. Route 45 at Colorado Avenue.
- **North Avenue.** West extension from 84th Avenue to 88th Avenue (extended).
- ☑ **Cottage Grove Avenue.** Extensions of two-lane facilities from Richton Road to Exchange Street

in Crete and from 287th Street to 295th Street in Washington Township.

- **Church Road (295th Street).** Extension from Hahn's Road to Cottage Grove Avenue.
- **Offner Road.** Extension from Cottage Grove Avenue to Ashland Avenue.
- **Ridge Road.** Extension from Laraway Road to Schweitzer Road.
- **183rd Street.** Extension as Orland Park Way from just west of John Charles Drive to U.S. Route 45, and from U.S. Route 45 to 94th Avenue.

Intersection Realignments

North Central

- Cedar Road at Bruce Road
- Gougar Road with State Road at 147th Street
- Vollmer Road with St. Francis Road at IL 43 (Harlem Avenue)

East

- Harlem Avenue at Steger Road
- Bemis Road with 117th Avenue (in Indiana) at State Line Road
- Steger Road with 81st Avenue (in Indiana) at the Indiana state line
- 311th Street with 151st Avenue (in Indiana) at State Line Road
- County Line Road with 181st Avenue (in Indiana) at State Line Road
- Klemme Road with 17500 East Road at County Line Road
- Stoney Island Avenue with 16000 East Road at County Line Road
- Cottage Grove Avenue with 15000 East Road at County Line Road
- Ashland Avenue with 12000 East Road at County Line Road
- Eagle Lake Road with Brunswick Road at Yates Road
- Cicero Road with Will Center Road at Governors Highway (IL50)
- Crawford Road with Richton Road at Steger Road
- Ridgeland Avenue at Steger Road
- Torrence Avenue at Steger Road
- Western Avenue with 11000 East Road at County Line Road
- Kedzie Avenue with 10000 East Road at County Line Road
- Crawford Avenue with 9000 East Road at County Line Road
- Will Center Road (Cicero Avenue) with 8000 East Road at County Line Road
- Central Avenue with 7000 East Road at County Line Road
- Ridgeland Avenue with 6000 East Road at County Line Road

- Harlem Avenue with 5000 East Road at County Line Road
- 80th Avenue with 4000 East Road at County Line Road
- Center Road with 2000 East Road at County Line Road
- 104th Avenue with 1000 East Road at County Line Road

Southwest

- 104th Avenue at Steger Road
- Watkins Road with Zeismer Road at U.S. Route 52
- Kankakee Street at Manhattan-Monee Road
- Gallagher Road at Cedar Road
- Koehler Road with Schoolhouse Road at Smith Road
- Baker Road with Stuenkel Road with Green Garden-Manhattan Road with Town Line Road
- 80th Avenue at Steger Road
- 88th Avenue at Steger Road

Regional and Arterial System Improvements for Proposed South Suburban Airport

- ***I-57.*** Widening to add a third lane in each direction from the I-355 extension near Pauling Road south to Wilmington-Peotone Road. New interchange near Offner Road with connection to west airport access road.
- ***IL 394.*** Widening to add a third lane in each direction between I-80 (in Cook County) and Sauk Trail. Potential widening between Sauk Trail and IL 1 with conversion to a limited-access facility.
- ***IL 1.*** Widening to four lanes with turn lanes between the IL 1 Bypass at Eagle Lake Road and the Kankakee County line (except in the urbanized area of Beecher).
- ***Wilmington-Peotone Road.*** Widening between U.S. Route 45/52 and IL 50.
- ***Manhattan-Monee Road.*** Widening between U.S. Route 45 and I-57.
- ***Joliet Road (295th Street).*** Widening between U.S. Route 45 and 80th Avenue.

Road Corridor for Further Study

I-355

Over the next 20 years and beyond, development is expected to continue filling in the northwest, west central (Plainfield, Joliet), north central (Frankfort/Mokena/New Lenox), and east (Monee, Crete, University Park) subareas of the county. This growth will be significantly influenced by the

development of a third regional airport in the Peotone area. The proposed South Suburban Airport, if constructed, would overwhelm the existing road system, requiring substantial expenditures on the part of local government. Even without the airport, future residential and commercial growth will require substantial capacity improvements to the highway and arterial street system.

The interstate system now provides a double beltway around the Chicago metropolitan region in all areas except into Indiana. Here, traffic is channeled into I-80, a facility that clearly functions over-capacity today, carrying between 120,000 and 140,000 on a daily basis. With little opportunity for major capacity improvements to I-80, additional high-capacity connections into Indiana are needed. Without such connections, traffic will continue to make use of alternate east-west routes across the state line, most of which are two-lane arterial facilities that lead through urbanized communities.

The extension of I-355 from I-55 south to I-80 (near New Lenox) has been approved and will provide substantial benefits for north-south travel to and from Will County. At the time of this study, a legal challenge had been raised about this road and IDOT was in the process of updating the final environmental impact statement to address the findings of the court proceedings. The need for this extension is unquestionably vital to alleviating north-south traffic capacity deficiencies in the northwest and north central areas of Will County. Thus, despite the uncertainties created by the legal action, a further extension of this route from I-80 east to IL 394, with access to the proposed South Suburban Airport if developed, and possibly further east to I-65 in Indiana is designated by CATS as a Corridor for Further Study in the 2020 RTP. The Will County plan also depicts the recommended alignment of the I-355 extension between I-57 and IL 394, as identified in the Master Plan and Environmental Assessment for the South Suburban Airport.

The evaluation process results demonstrated that a new access-controlled highway in north central Will County would be effective in removing long-distance trips from the subregional arterial system, including U.S. Route 30, U.S. Route 45, and U.S. Route 52. Since traffic levels are projected to increase substantially in the north central area of the county, particularly because of the emerging development in the Frankfort/Mokena/New Lenox area, the expressway would protect the sub-regional arterial system by preserving the system's capacity for intracounty travel.

The I-355 extension would also relieve traffic levels on sections of the regional interstate system, including I-57 and I-80, diverting up to 20,000 vehicles per day or more from the Borman Expressway (I-80) alone if the facility is extended to I-65. Thus, this eastern extension is critically needed, regardless of whether the proposed South Suburban Airport is built.

The transportation plan encourages the preservation of right-of-way for the chosen alignment of the I-355 extension and supports the planning efforts of the I-355 South Suburban Tollway Corridor Council and the Eastern Will County Regional Council.

Metra Commuter Rail Improvements

- ***Heritage Corridor Line.*** Service improvements and extension from Joliet to Wilmington. New stations in Romeoville, Elwood, and Wilmington.

- ***Rock Island District Line.*** Service extension from Joliet to Rockdale and potentially Minooka. New stations in Rockdale and the eastern Joliet/western New Lenox area.
- ***SouthWest Service Line.*** Service extension from Orland Park to Manahattan and potentially the planned industrial park on the former Joliet Arsenal property. New stations in New Lenox and Manhattan.
- ***Electric District Line.*** Service improvements and extension from University Park to Peotone and potentially to Kankakee and the proposed South Suburban Airport. New stations in Monee and Peotone.
- ***SouthEast Service Line.*** Initiation of new service along the Union Pacific/CSX line from Chicago to Beecher. New stations in Will County to include Beecher and Crete and potentially Steger and the Goodenow Road area.

Commuter Rail Corridor for Further Study

Outer Circumferential Line

New suburb-to-suburb service has been proposed on the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern (EJ&E) freight line to connect Waukegan to Gary, Indiana, via Barrington, Elgin, Aurora, Plainfield, Joliet, New Lenox, and Frankfort. Transfers could be made to most of Metra's existing radial lines. The core segment of this line, which will be defined after Metra has completed its studies, has been selected in the CATS RTP as a plan project. Due to funding constraints, the remainder of this project has been designated as a Corridor for Further Study. A potential branch line of the EJ&E is also recommended for further study and would extend from Plainfield southwest to Minooka via Shorewood.

Pace Bus System Improvements

The transportation plan supports and encourages several improvements to bus service in the county, as proposed in the 2020 RTP and previous Pace initiatives. Improvements relate to the following facilities and services:

- Pre-rail bus service prior to implementation of new or extended commuter rail service.
- Express bus service along major regional routes.
- Community transit service expansion.

- Dial-a-ride service expansion to southwest townships.
- Commuter park-n-ride facilities.
- Transportation centers and transfer facilities.
- Restricted use lanes on interstates.
- Transit signal pre-emption systems along major arterials.

High-Speed Rail

The transportation plan recognizes the efforts of the State of Illinois to develop a high-speed rail line between Chicago and St. Louis. All alternatives being considered traverse Will County. Routing via the Illinois Central line in eastern Will County appears advantageous over other alternatives and has the potential for direct service to the proposed South Suburban Airport.

General Aviation Airports

The preservation of the county's general aviation airports is of increasing importance. The transportation plan calls for the county to take advance steps in working with local municipalities and townships to plan land uses and development growth in a way that acknowledges the existence and ensures the continued viability of the remaining general aviation facilities in Will County.

Bikeway and Pedestrian System

Will County supports and is committed to developing a countywide bikeway and pedestrian system and anticipates the preparation of a bikeways plan. The bikeway plan would be adopted and implemented as a component of the Will County 2020 Transportation Framework Plan.

Equestrian Trails

Will County is committed to developing a countywide equestrian plan that would also become a supplement to the transportation plan. The Will County Trail Riders group will be consulted in the development of this plan. The possibility of providing multi-use trails that accommodate horse riders also exists and could be expounded upon in the proposed bikeway plan.

Transportation Management Strategies

The transportation plan encourages the following strategies:

- Ridesharing
- Flexible work hours
- Transit incentives

The benefits achieved from transportation management strategies are enhanced when developed and implemented in conjunction with other transportation projects and capital investments.

3

Plan Implementation and Management

Implementation of the 2020 Transportation Framework Plan will require significant cooperation and coordination from the various implementing agencies and will involve a combination of planning, engineering, and construction activities. While construction of some of the recommended projects is critical in the near future, construction of other projects will be needed closer to the 2020 horizon year of the plan. In either case, it should be recognized that new highway or transit projects require a considerable expenditure of time and money to prepare the required project documents and plans.

The projects recommended in the transportation plan must have a level of priority identified in order to focus on the most immediate needs to be implemented first. To select projects for the first stage of implementation, the various individual characteristics of each improvement have been evaluated with regard to several alternative strategies, including reducing traffic capacity deficiencies, minimizing environmental and property impacts, protecting right-of-way opportunities, and encouraging development as specified in the LRMP.

High-priority projects have been identified for roadway facilities under state, county, and local jurisdiction. These projects satisfy the staging strategies to a large extent and were determined to be needed in the near term to mitigate existing traffic congestion.

The strategy also assumes that corridor plans for those regional roadways and transit improvements that are proposed to be improved will continue to be performed, such as the plans that have been developed for the I-80 corridor, Strategic Regional Arterials, Metra commuter rail major investment studies (MIS), and others.

The staging program in this plan is simply an attempt to match transportation infrastructure needs to the available funding at the state, county, and local levels, and identify the higher priority projects for near-term implementation so that appropriate engineering feasibility and environmental studies can be initiated. Further study should be completed to develop a more detailed staging program, with projects separated into a near-term, mid-range, and long-range timeline based on the estimated

financial resources available.

From a planning standpoint, based on current funding levels, the recommended plan would not be financially attainable over the next 20 years without a substantial increase in revenues that could be used towards transportation improvements. Detailed estimates were prepared for county and state funding based on historical levels. In both cases, increased revenues from existing funding programs (i.e., County real estate tax-based funds, state MFT allocation, STP funds) or new revenue sources (i.e., county option MFT, impact fees, etc.) will be needed if the transportation infrastructure is to keep pace with rapid development growth and associated travel demands projected for Will County's roadway system. Even with additional or new sources of revenue, some project construction will likely extend beyond the 20-year plan period. The burden of the local share of improvements can be attained through successful cooperation with the development community and the use of outside funding, such as STP funds distributed through the WCGL.

As any long-range plan, the transportation plan has been prepared with some degree of uncertainty about future events. The condition of the national economy, a changing federal administration, projections of rapid county growth, and availability of financial resources for transportation are external factors that influence and affect the Will County transportation program. Local decisions about transportation must still be made, however, and a long-range plan with inherent flexibility is needed to guide these choices.

Therefore, it is recommended that the county adopt a monitoring and plan modification process to continually manage this plan. Also, steps should be taken immediately to preserve the county's options. That is, transportation rights-of-way should be protected where they might be needed in the future.

In order to initiate the overall implementation approach, a series of actions and decisions are needed, as follows:

1. Formal adoption of the Will County 2020 Transportation Framework Plan by the County Board, plus formal recognition by other regional and local public agencies as the device through which interagency coordination would occur.
2. Enhancement of the WCGL Transportation Committee to assist the county in developing a working relationship between participating agencies for implementation of the plan.
3. Identification of staff person(s) to be the focal point for plan implementation, monitoring activities, etc., and establish budget for activities.
4. Develop detailed work program for monitoring activities.
5. Approval of high-priority program projects, including authorization of design and detailing studies for key new county facilities.

6. Because of the significance of coordinating improvements along the northern Will County line, conduct an interagency meeting for plan coordination purposes with representatives of the City of Aurora, City of Naperville, DuPage County, and Kane County.
7. Develop revised access design standards and policies to be used to guide project design.

This transportation plan develops the county strategy to guide future development. It serves as the overall plan of the county and its municipalities. The plan summarizes most of the transportation plans and documents previously developed by the MPO, IDOT, county, and municipal governments. As new updated plans are developed, their findings and recommendations should be incorporated into this document.