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**NEW REPORT QUESTIONS TODAY'S HOME
CONSTRUCTION PLANNING**

Region's Mayors and Civic Leaders Suggest Ways to Prepare for Future Growth

Homes for a Changing Region, a forward looking housing report issued today by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and Chicago Metropolis 2020, challenges the long-term viability of current housing construction patterns in the six-county Chicago metropolitan region.

The report forecasts a serious mismatch between the type of housing being planned and the housing that is likely to be needed by the region's growing population, which is predicted to increase by 24 percent from 8.1 million in 2000 to 10 million people by 2030. Projections indicate that too many large-lot, expensive single family homes and too few small-lot single family homes, town homes and condominiums are being planned.

Latinos, African-Americans and seniors over the age of 65 will account for most of the region's population growth, and the types of housing chosen by those groups today is much different than the housing now being planned, constructed and rehabilitated.

"The fact that the housing patterns of Latinos, African-Americans and senior citizens differ significantly from housing choices of the past implies that housing demand will shift as the region's population diversifies and ages," according to *Homes for a Changing Region*. "In general, the pattern will shift toward denser housing with higher demand for rental units, entry level single-family housing, and apartments and condos in large complexes."

Today, more than 730,000 families in the region are financially stretched because more than 30 percent of their income is spent on housing. Unless current trends are changed, an additional 140,000 families will pay more than they can afford for housing because the housing they can afford will not be built.

(more)

The Mayors Caucus and Chicago Metropolis 2020 encourage communities to take action now to eliminate the projected housing mismatch. Among action steps recommended are:

- The formulation of multi-year housing plans which provide for a broad range of housing by size and price point to meet the needs of all community residents.
- The review and modification of zoning and building codes to permit the construction of a variety of housing types.
- The inclusion of residents in housing and development decisions and the use of local housing commissions to consider ways to provide housing options for all types of residents.
- The creation of sub-regional housing plans that would involve groups of municipalities and help local leaders to serve the overall needs of all communities in a sub-region.
- The creation of new revenue streams to support the preservation and construction of affordable housing.

“The mayors of our region recognize that the future will not be like the past,” said David Bennett, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus. “They understand the critical role that public policy plays in introducing more variety into the housing marketplace. Several communities in the region are already fostering the creation of more balanced housing options, and others are likely to follow.”

“Housing choices in the Chicago region have become increasingly constrained,” said King Harris, a Senior Executive at Chicago Metropolis 2020. “Our region will become less attractive to the business community and to our workforce if we continue to limit the range of available housing whether by type, price or location.”

The complete text of *Homes for a Changing Region* is available at the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus web site (www.mayorscaucus.org) and the web site of Chicago Metropolis 2020 (www.chicagometropolis2020.org).

About the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus

The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus is a voluntary collaboration of the Mayor of the City of Chicago and the Mayors and Presidents of the suburban municipalities in the region acting through their councils of governments. The Mayors Caucus provides a forum through which the chief elected officials of the region cooperatively develop consensus on common public policy issues and multi-jurisdictional challenges.

About Chicago Metropolis 2020

Chicago Metropolis 2020 is a nonprofit civic organization created in 1999 by The Commercial Club of Chicago to promote long-term planning, better regional cooperation, and smart investment in the Chicago region and its people.

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