



Contact: Bryan Slack
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
(508) 756-7717 ext. 23

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 18, 2006

Region's Growth Exceeds State Average But Trails Country
*Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission releases projections of
population and employment for communities and the region*

REGION – Today the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC), the regional planning agency for the 40 municipalities of central and southern Worcester County, released its projections of the region's population and employment in 5-year increments through the year 2030. The projections offer a picture of likely socio-economic changes in the region, including the population, number of households and number of jobs by municipality. CMRPC reported that Central Massachusetts is growing faster than the state but not as fast as the country. This trend has persisted for the past three decades and is expected to continue at least through 2030.

CMRPC will use this demographic data to update the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the long-range transportation plan for Central Massachusetts, required by federal law. The region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the annual list of projects slated to receive federal funding, flows from the RTP. These two documents are prerequisites for the region's eligibility for federal transportation funding. The projections are also used in the region's Travel Demand Forecast (TDF) model, which estimates the current and future use of the region's transportation infrastructure and aids in analyzing projects being considered for both the RTP and the TIP.

By providing these projections to each municipality, CMRPC hopes to stimulate discussion about how communities can shape their policies to address expected growth.

FINDINGS

Between years 2000 and 2030 the region is expected to add 110,000 people, nearly 53,000 housing units and approximately 37,000 jobs. By comparison, in the 30 years between 1970 and 2000, the region added 84,000 people to its population, 63,000 new households, and over 70,000 jobs.

Population

Over half of the population growth in the region by 2030 is projected to occur in eight municipalities: Worcester, Shrewsbury, Grafton, Charlton, Westborough, Rutland, Douglas and Upton.

Population in Massachusetts grew at an average yearly rate of 0.51% between 1980 and 2000 and state officials project a slow down to 0.45% yearly growth between 2000 and 2030. In contrast, the US grew at 0.98% between 1980 and 2000 and the US Census Bureau projects 0.81% yearly growth for the US between 2000 and 2030. Central Massachusetts grew at 0.83% yearly between 1980 and 2000 and CMRPC projects 0.64% yearly growth between 2000 and 2030.

The largest numeric increases in population are expected in Worcester, Shrewsbury, Grafton and Charlton. The largest percentage increases in population are expected in Rutland, Mendon and Upton.

Employment

In 2000, Worcester had 107,000 jobs or 44% of the jobs in Central Massachusetts. Worcester's percentage of regional employment is expected to remain the same through 2030. Between 2000 and 2030, Worcester is expected to gain 17,000 jobs.

In the year 2000, communities located along I-495 in or on the edge of the Central Mass. region (Bolton, Berlin, Hudson, Marlborough, Southborough, Westborough, Hopkinton, Milford and Bellingham) provided approximately 99,000 jobs. Between 2000 and 2030, these I-495 communities are expected to gain 16,000 jobs. Projections for Bolton, Hudson, Marlborough, Southborough, Hopkinton, Milford and Bellingham were made by their planning agency, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).

During the 1990's those I-495 communities grew faster than Worcester, however, in 2030 Worcester is still expected to have more total employment, although both areas are expected to continue to grow at a modest rate. In 2000, Worcester, Westborough, Shrewsbury and Auburn were home to approximately 65% of the region's jobs. Over half of new jobs in the region are expected to be in the education and health care sector.

The largest numeric increases in employment are expected in Worcester, Webster and Westborough. The largest percentage increases in employment are expected in Millville, Barre, Oakham and Rutland.

Demographic data, etc. can be found at <http://www.cmrpc.org/demographics.htm>.

The demographic projections are estimates based on available data and short-term and long-term trends. They provide information to decision makers who can take actions and make choices that could ultimately affect the actual results. Markets and the nature of the transportation and working environments will change between now and 2030, which may also impact the actual numbers in uncertain ways.

Employment Category	Jobs in the Central Massachusetts Region				Ave Wkly Wage 2004*
	Existing 2000	Projected 2030	2000 to 2030		
			# Change	%Change	
Education	62,609	84,889	22,280	36%	\$ 763
Manufacturing	34,749	14,706	-20,043	-58	1,048
Professional	29,943	35,421	5,478	18	889
Retail	29,075	35,253	6,178	21	540
Leisure	19,298	26,472	7,174	37	284
Finance	14,382	18,111	3,729	26	1,077
Construction	11,486	14,531	3,045	26	879
Wholesale	10,202	11,791	1,589	16	913
Transportation	9,494	11,727	2,233	23	873
Public Admin	8,914	10,787	1,873	21	876
Other Services	8,722	12,109	3,387	39	480
Information	5,232	5,104	-128	-2	1,231
Agriculture	396	630	234	59	321

*DUA ES-202 Covered Employees

The table above shows the number of jobs in the Central Massachusetts region in the year 2000 and those projected in the 2030. The Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) provides the average weekly wages by employment category, shown above, for the Worcester Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes most of the Central Massachusetts region and a few municipalities beyond the region's limits. This table can help decision makers understand the economic implications of changes in different employment categories. For example, Retail and Leisure jobs are expected to experience considerable growth but offer relatively low paying jobs, while higher paying jobs in Manufacturing and Information may decline.

Regional data can be found at http://www.cmrpc.org/Agency/CMRPC_Databank.htm.