

Summary Case Assessment

The purpose of this section is to summarize the transit planning and decisionmaking process in the Chicago region in light of the guidelines listed in the Introduction to the case assessments. The summary, therefore, is divided into **two** parts: (1) Assessment of the Institutional Context, and (2) Assessment of the Technical Planning Process.

1. Assessment Of The Institutional Context

- **Forum for Decisionmaking.**—The city of Chicago dominated transit planning and decisionmaking until the need to broaden the base for tax revenue for metropolitan transit led to creation of the Regional Transit Authority. RTA, because it has independent sources of tax revenue, is likely to become a strong regional institution. However, the creation of RTA does not resolve the problem of selecting or creating a metropolitan organization with responsibility for both highway and transit planning.
- **Accountability of Decisionmakers.**—Accountability to the public for transit planning and decisionmaking has become increasingly diffused in the past 5 years as more agencies became involved in making decisions. The creation of RTA, with board members appointed by local elected offi-

cials, may restore accountability by focusing public attention on the decisionmakers that should be held accountable.

- **Public Involvement.**—Public participation in the planning and decision process was not systematically undertaken in the past, and whether RTA will develop a structured program of citizen interaction remains to be seen.

2. ASSESSMENT OF THE TECHNICAL PLANNING PROCESS

- **Goals and Objectives.**—The 5-year transit development program published by the Regional Transportation Planning Board in 1974 developed a set of goals and objectives that permitted setting priorities among area transit projects.
- **Development and Evaluation of Alternatives.**—The Chicago area has never undertaken a full-scale evaluation of alternatives at an areawide level, and primary technical planning, analysis, and evaluation is concentrated on maintaining and improving the existing system.
- **Financing and Implementation.**—The Chicago area's plans for transit development are heavily dependent on obtaining Federal funding in amounts significantly above the level of the present program.