



Polk County Supervisor Tom Hockensmith, Chair
R. Todd Ashby, AICP, Executive Director

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Media Contact: Gunnar Olson
515-334-0075 | golson@dmampo.org

2050 Forecast: Population of 750,000 is older, more diverse

By 2050, Greater Des Moines will have 750,000 people who are older, more ethnically diverse, working jobs in expanding industry sectors, and living in new urban and suburban developments.

These are among the findings in a newly released growth-scenario report by the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The report is a local analysis of population and jobs data from Regional Economic Model Inc. (REMI), which forecasts trends at the county level. The report further refines the projections to forecast where the population and jobs growth will occur within the 18 cities of the metro area. The resulting maps show what the metropolitan area could look like in 2050.

Findings from the [Forecasting Our Growth](#) report include:

- 56 percent population increase to 750,000 people in 2050, up from 480,000 in 2010.
 - People 65 years and older are the fastest growing age group, projected to increase to 21 percent of the population by 2050, up from 11 percent in 2010.
 - Diversity will increase to 31 percent of the population being non-white by 2050, up from 16 percent in 2010, with Latinos representing the fastest growing group by ethnicity.
- 40 percent employment increase to 481,000 jobs in 2050, up from 338,000 in 2010.
 - The fastest-growing industry sectors include natural resources and construction, as well as and education and health services.

To develop the report, the MPO assumed a growth pattern based partially on cities' comprehensive plans and partially on The Tomorrow Plan, a long-range plan for developing Greater Des Moines sustainably. The MPO then worked with the cities to allocate the projected population and jobs growth within each jurisdiction.

This report is presented to community leaders for the purpose of making informed decisions about which investments and growth patterns will bring the greatest benefit to residents of the region, reduce disparities, increase opportunities, and move the region closer to meeting its performance goals. Such goals include optimizing the transportation system, improving access to active transportation (transit, walking and biking), improving energy efficiency, and providing equitable and safe modes of transportation.

The full Forecasting Our Growth report is available online at www.dmampo.org. For more information, please call or email MPO staff at 515-334-0075 or info@dmampo.org.

The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) acts as a regional forum to ensure coordination between the public and local, state, and federal agencies in regard to planning issues and to prepare transportation plans and programs. The MPO develops both long- and short-range multimodal transportation plans, selects and approves projects for federal funding based upon regional priorities, and develops methods to reduce traffic congestion.