

How Far We've Come: A 30-year retrospective on regional travel modeling and planning in Chicago



Kermit Wies
CATS
CMAP
nearly retired



Thirty Years at the Chicago MPO

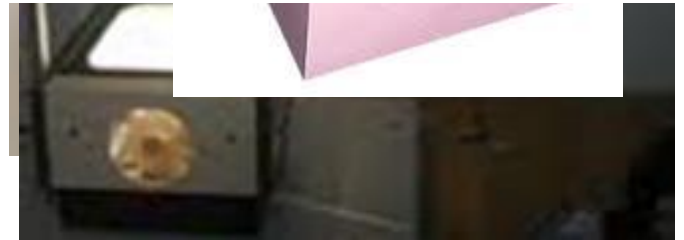
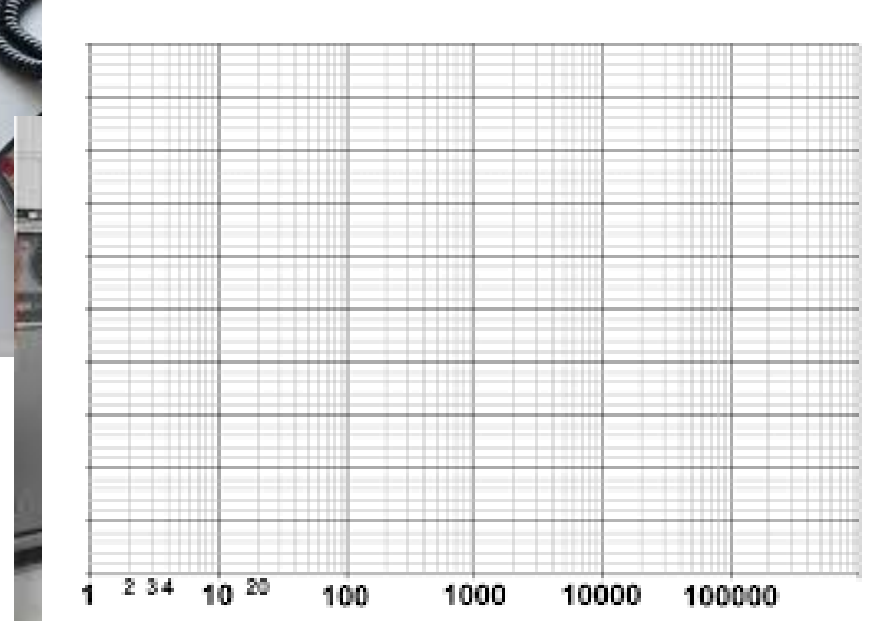
- 1985-1994: The Venerable CATS
 - 1995-2004: Conformity Wars
 - 2005-2015: CMAP Innovation



1985-1994: The Venerable CATS

Tools of the Trade:

- Telephone
- Graph Paper
- Scientific Calculator
- Mainframe Computer
- Overhead projector
- Ashtray



1985-1994: The Venerable CATS

Questions asked:

- How many people would use a 3rd Chicago Airport?
- What can we do to eliminate suburban congestion?
- How many people would ride Amtrak to O'Hare?
- How many lanes should I-355 South have?
- Where should we put new Fox River bridges?
- Should we extend IL53 into Lake County?



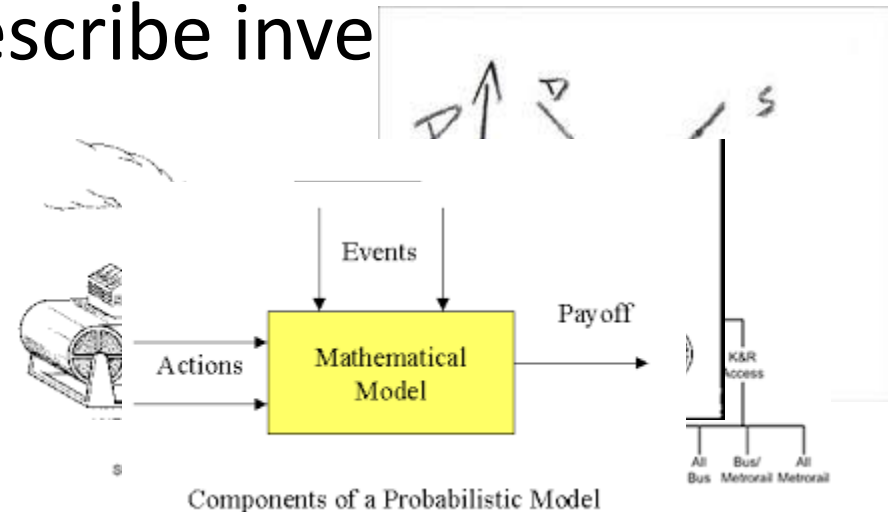
- Millions
- Widen all the roads
- Thousands
- Zero
- Out near the old Hastert place
- Yes. I mean...No. Wait...Let's study it.



1985-1994: The Venerable CATS

Lessons learned:

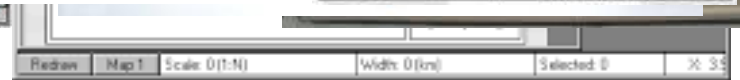
- Latent demand does not exist
- Adding transit reduces traffic congestion
- Land use induces travel
- Models are used to prescribe investment decisions



1995-2004: Conformity Wars

Tools of the Trade:

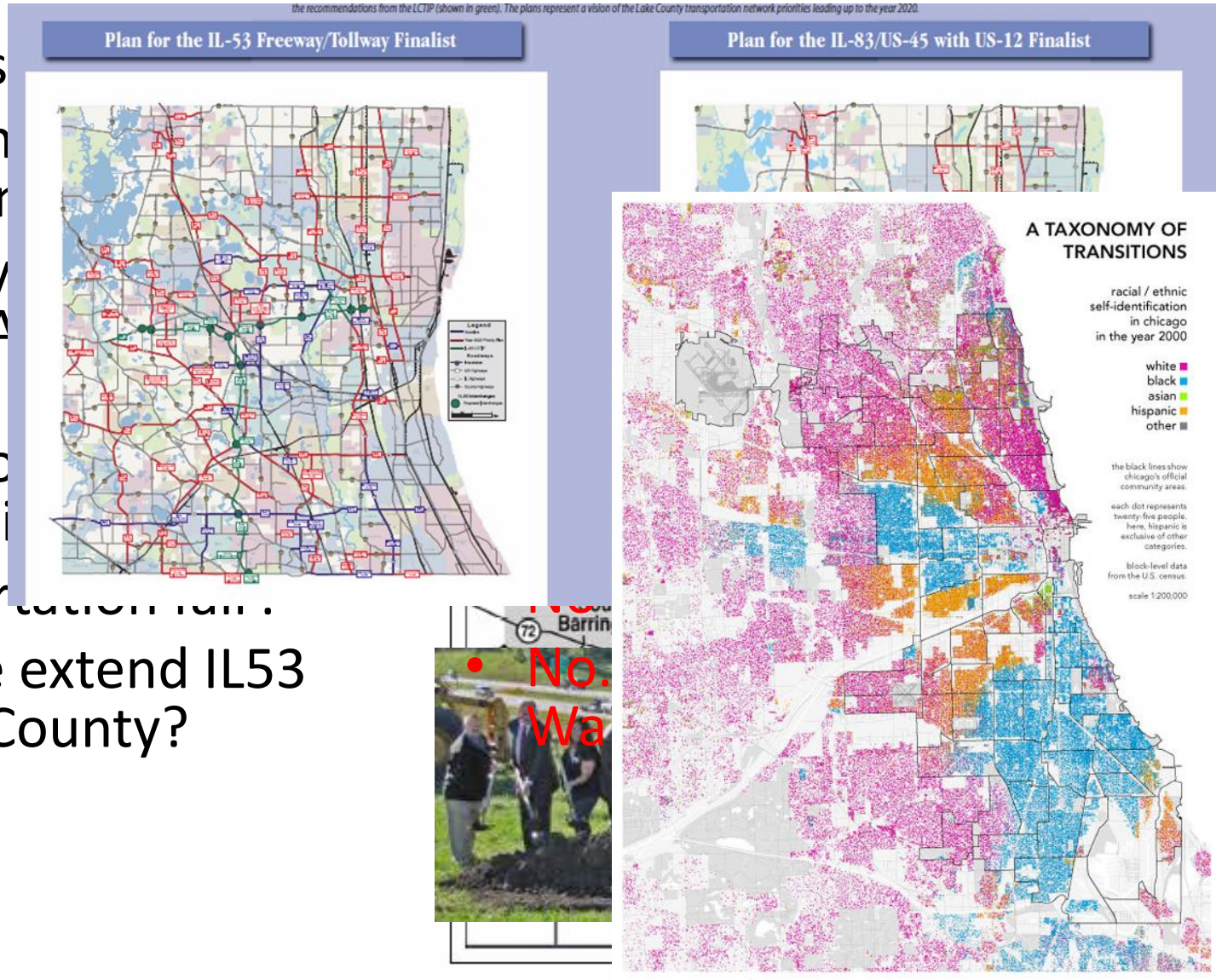
- Desktop Personal Computers
- LCD projector
- Workstation GIS and Travel Modeling software
- Local Area Networks



1995-2004: Conformity Wars

Questions As

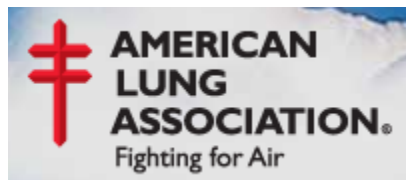
- How much does it come from?
- How many ride Jane Addams O'Hare?
- Where should we build our next big highway?
- Is transportation fair?
- Should we extend IL53 into Lake County?



1995-2004: Conformity Wars

Lessons learned:

- Modeling is a numbers game.
- Transit does not reduce traffic congestion
- Transportation induces land use
- Models can be used in court to prescribe investment decisions



2005-2015: CMAP and Innovation

Tools of the trade:

- Wireless communication
- SmartPhones
- GPS
- Web 2.0



2005-2015: CMAP and Innovation

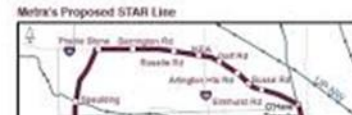
Questions asked:

- Is land use better than transportation?
- How many people would ride the STAR Line to O'Hare
- Where should we put the next Metra extension?
- Should we move freight or people?
- Should we extend IL53 into Lake County?

- Yes
- Thousands or
- tens of thousands



- Out near the old
Hastings



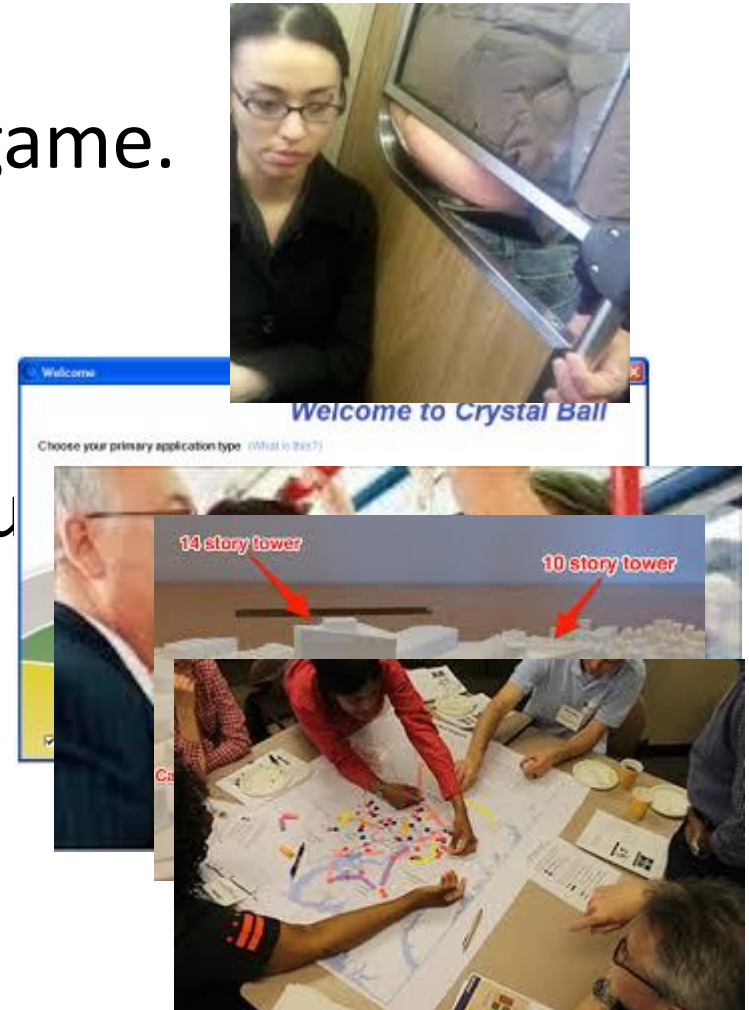
- Freight



2005-2015: CMAP and Innovation

Lessons learned:

- Forecasting is a numbers game.
- Transit gets congested too
- Land use induces travel
- Models alone are not enough for investment decisions



What I Learned:

- Clean living pays off
- Keep the drama to a minimum
- Don't put new wine in old bottles
- Beware of old wine in new bottles
- Don't delete the alternatives
- Document as much as you dare



And with that...



Fossils

At midnight in the museum hall
The fossils gathered for a ball
There were no drums or saxophones,
But just the clatter of their bones,
A rolling, rattling, carefree circus
Of mammoth polkas and mazurkas.
Pterodactyls and brontosauruses
Sang ghostly prehistoric choruses.
Amid this mastodontic wassail
I caught the eye of one small fossil.
"Cheer up, sad world," he said, and winked—
"It's kind of fun to be extinct."

-Ogden Nash

Bye Y'all! Don't forget to write!