



NEWS RELEASE

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For More Information:

Neysa Pranger at (917) 532-0567, (212) 253-5796 or npranger@rpa.org

New Transit Blueprint for NYC and North Jersey Released

On Tap: New and Better Bus Routes, Subways, Ferry Routes and Commuter and Light Rail

Plan Comes on Heels of Debate; Push for Transit Investments as Part of Economic Recovery Package

A new study released today by the Regional Plan Association lays out a comprehensive plan for new and upgraded transit for New York City and Northern New Jersey. The blueprint comes on the heels of last night's presidential debate in Long Island and a push from Congressional leaders and local transit officials and groups calling on the federal government to invest in transit as part of the economic recovery package.

"In every recent recession, government has invested in transit and infrastructure to spur recovery," said Thomas K. Wright, Executive Director, Regional Plan Association. "Today we lay out a roadmap for what these priority transit investments should be."

The 53-page, in-depth report entitled "Tomorrow's Transit: New Mobility for the Region's Urban Core" outlines new subway, bus, commuter rail, light rail and ferry projects for the New York 'Urban Core,' which includes the five boroughs of New York City and urban portions of Northern New Jersey.

The nearly forty recommendations focus on providing service to underserved and impoverished areas, better connections within the existing transit network and short- and long-term transit solutions with varying price tags.

Highlights of recommendations include (see attached map):

- more, more, more-

- **Bronx:** Extend the Second Avenue Subway to the Third Avenue corridor and Co-op City; provide added service on Metro-North at six Bronx station stops on the Harlem and Hudson River lines; offer peak express service on the Dyre Avenue line; and establish ferry service from Soundview.
- **Brooklyn:** Convert the Atlantic Branch of the LIRR to subway service and connect it to the Second Avenue Subway; build a Utica Avenue branch off the converted Atlantic Branch of the LIRR; extend the Nostrand Avenue 2 and 5 lines to Kings Highway; extend the Canarsie L line to Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City; and establish high speed ferry service from Williamsburg, Greenpoint, and Bay Ridge.
- **Manhattan:** Implement no-fare rides on the 34th Street, 42nd Street and 50th Street cross-town bus routes; extend the Second Avenue Subway west along 125th Street; construct a station entrance on the east end of the First Avenue L station; and establish a midtown Bus Rapid Transit or light rail route loop.
- **Queens:** Convert the LIRR Atlantic Branch to subway service; connect Queensboro Plaza and Queens Plaza and the E, F, G and V at Court Square; and begin Bus Rapid Transit on Queens Boulevard.
- **Staten Island:** Proceed with Hylan Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit; establish ferry service from southern Staten Island; and establish a bus lane along the full length of the Staten Island Expressway.
- **New Jersey (Hudson County and Newark):** Extend currently planned Bus Rapid Transit routes in Newark to include cross-town and Sumner/Mt. Prospect Avenue corridors; construct a new Hudson Bergen Light Rail Station at Grand Street and 17th Street in Hoboken; and extend the Hudson Bergen Light Rail to Route 440.

“These projects are a vision of what our urban transit system should look like in five, ten, twenty years from now,” said Jeffrey Zupan, report author and RPA Senior Fellow for Transportation. “Together with investments in the Region’s suburbs, such as Third Track for the Long Island Rail Road and transit for the I-287 corridor in Westchester and Rockland, these projects can lay the foundations for several decades of economic growth.”

Project recommendations were based on population density, rail transit and express bus coverage, travel times, poverty and auto-ownership. They fell into four main categories:

- more, more, more-

those that can be implemented relatively quickly and inexpensively; those that help serve underserved constituencies; those that would add value to the current set of expansion projects; and those that are major, new expansion projects to be implemented over many years.

Projects were also categorized by cost – low (under \$50 million), medium (\$50 – \$500 million) and high (over \$500 million) – and by time frame – short-term (less than three years), medium-term (three to ten years) and long term (more than ten years).

To determine high-priority recommendations, the report identified dense areas with no transit service, high poverty levels and low auto ownership. Neighborhoods that meet these criteria and should see investment first include the south-central Bronx neighborhoods of Melrose, Morrisania and East Tremont, the central Brooklyn neighborhoods of Bushwick and Brownsville and the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

“Projects that could improve service to low income areas at relatively low cost should be considered first,” said Zupan. “Those include Bus Rapid Transit routes on Nostrand Avenue in Brooklyn and in Newark, express subway service on unused tracks on the Dyre Avenue line in the Bronx and the J line in Brooklyn, discounted price service on inter-city commuter rail service and a new station entrance on the L line to serve the Lower East Side.”

The report also makes recommendations for system-wide improvements and land-use policies such as implementing a time-of-day fare policy, purchasing only low-floor buses, reducing low-cost on-street parking and encouraging “local efficient” mortgages near transit stations.

The study took over a year to complete and was done in consultation with over twenty-five of the region's transit experts and with NJ TRANSIT, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and New York City Department of Transportation.

“Tomorrow's Transit” was made possible by the One Region Fund with additional foundation support from the Community Foundation for New Jersey, the Emily Hall Tremaine

Foundation, the Fairfield County Community Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Long Island Community Foundation, The New York Community Trust, the Surdna Foundation and the Westchester Community Foundation.

The complete report can be found on the web at: www.rpa.org/pdf/RPA_tomorrows_transit.pdf (24.9 MB).