Greetings from the Regional Plan Association

Dear Healthy Regions Planning Exchange Participants,

Welcome to the opening symposium of the Healthy Regions Planning Exchange! We are thrilled to gather such an impressive group from around the country here in New York to kick off a year of learning and sharing how to make our regions more equitable and healthy. Our group is made up of policy makers, activists, government staff, and advocates who are working to make their regions better for the next generation. We all bring valuable experience and expertise to the table and have plenty to learn about making our work more impactful.

RPA is particularly thankful to be hosting this group at this moment in time. The New York region has seen incredible strides and economic growth over the past few decades, but we have also seen a troubling increase in income inequality. This inequality is abundant everywhere - in our housing, on our transportation network, in our schools, and in access to parks, health care, and healthy food.

When we released our Fourth Regional Plan in November 2017, we envisioned a future that charted a different course, one that focused on improving health, sustainability, equity, and economic prosperity for all, not for a select few. But in order to reach that vision, we need to learn from partners from across the country who are also grappling with tough issues, and who are willing to share their experience and knowledge. This is why Regional Plan Association is honored and grateful to have the opportunity to learn from you and everyone in this Exchange.

Over the course of these first few days, we will work together to develop a shared frame for thinking about health equity in planning work, learn more about how to bring the margins to the center through community partnerships, and work through approaches for centering equity and health in various types of planning. This opening symposium will help us all identify clear next steps for incorporating health and equity into the planning within our regions over the course of the next year and beyond.

We thank you all for your thoughtful and dedicated participation in what will be an insightful and motivating year. We are also incredibly thankful to our funders, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies, for making this work possible. And I have to thank the staff at RPA, especially Vanessa Barrios and Carlos Mandeville, for organizing and managing this Exchange, and also our facilitator, Arlene Rodriguez, for all her guidance and direction on this project. Thank you for being here today!

Kate Slevin
Senior Vice President of State Programs and Advocacy
Regional Plan Association
A Note from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Back in the 1920s, the lead developer of the Regional Plan of New York said in a speech to the American Public Health Association that health was “the first object” of regional planning.

The connection between regional planning and health is not new, but the potential for placing health at the center of planning and policymaking is enormous. At the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation we know that health is inextricably tied to where we live, learn, work and play. This means we need safe housing that is affordable, places to play and exercise, access to healthy food, good jobs with fair pay, and the conditions that create opportunity for all.

That’s why the role of regional planners in creating a Culture of Health – one where the conditions in communities allow all residents to achieve their best possible health and well-being – is so critical. And that’s why we’re so thrilled to welcome all of you to the first convening of the Healthy Regions Planning Exchange.

We are excited to be supporting the Regional Plan Association to create this space for peer to peer exchange of ideas, barriers, and solutions so that we may all learn from each other’s experiences from our respective regions. You are all here because you’ve demonstrated your commitment to empowering your regions so that everyone has the opportunity to thrive. And as we come together, I know you will continue to inspire us with your creativity and your commitment to making your communities even stronger, more equitable, healthier, and more sustainable.

We know this work is not easy and we thank you for your open and honest engagement at this initial convening and in our work together in the future. Our bold and ambitious vision to build healthier, more equitable communities will take working in new ways, building and sustaining new partnerships, and measuring our progress along the way. Thank you for all that you do in your community and bringing that learning to these next two days.

Best,

Abbey Cofsky
Managing Director of Healthy Communities
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Wednesday Evening, April 3

Pier A
22 Battery Place, New York, NY 10004

6:00 pm Opening Reception and Dinner (drinks and appetizers @ 6pm, dinner @7pm)
Welcome
▶ Tom Wright, President and CEO, Regional Plan Association
▶ Kaitlyn W. Meirs, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Mingo Game and Prizes
(Exchange participants and invited guests)

Thursday, April 4

Regional Plan Association
One Whitehall Street, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10004

8:30 am Breakfast

9:15 am Welcome and Introductions

9:45 am Defining Health Equity for Systemic Change
Susan Misra (MAG)

11:45 am Break for Lunch

12:15 pm Lunch discussion
Effectuating Change in Planning
Veronica Vanterpool and Ya-Ting Liu

1:00 pm Break Out #1
Going Deep into Issues
▶ Workshop: Equitable Climate Planning
▶ Workshop: Equitable Transportation Planning
▶ Workshop: Equitable Housing Development Planning
▶ Workshop: Economic Mobility Planning

2:30 pm Break Out #2
Building on Our Work
▶ Workshop: Equitable Climate Planning
▶ Workshop: Equitable Transportation Planning
▶ Workshop: Equitable Housing Development Planning
▶ Workshop: Economic Mobility Planning

3:45 pm Group Discussion

5:00 pm Adjourn to Hotel

7:00 pm Group Dinner at Congee Village
100 Allen St, New York, NY 10002
Friday, April 5

Regional Plan Association
One Whitehall Street, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10004

8:30 am  Breakfast

9:15 am  Authentic Partnership –
Margins to the Center
Walter Barrientos, Betsy McLean and
Rachael Banks

Fishbowl Exercise
Breaking Partnership Barriers,
Deepening the Conversation

10:30 am  Break

10:45 am  Cohort Breakout
  to determine region’s goals for the year

11:45 am  Break for Lunch

12:45 pm  Group Discussion and Next Steps

1:30 pm  Good-byes and Appreciations

2:00 pm  Convening Adjourns
Regional Governance

Metro Council is the MPO for the Portland area including Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties. They work with communities, businesses and residents in the Portland metropolitan area to chart a wise course for the future, focusing on issues of land use, transportation, and open space.

Other Governmental organizations include TriMet, which is the transit provider for Portland, bringing rail and bus service to the city and its suburbs. In addition to TriMet, several Portland City agencies serve a central role in leading regional planning related work, like Multnomah County Health Department and Home Forward. Also, the Portland Bureau of Transportation plans, builds, manages and maintains an effective and safe transportation system that provides people and businesses access and mobility.

Non-Profit and Coalition actors include the ACHIEVE (Action Communities for Health, Innovation and Environmental Change) Coalition, which has laid the foundation for Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) since 2009. A group of multi-sectoral partners collectively envisioned: ending health inequities in chronic diseases for African Americans/Blacks in Multnomah County. Groups like Portland African American Leadership Forum, Coalition of Communities of Color, East Multnomah County Transportation Committee also play a role in shaping more equitable outcomes within the Portland Region.

Representatives

ROBYN STOWERS is Senior Urban Renewal Project Coordinator for the City of Gresham. Her passion for equity and institutional change led to a career in local government. She uses her position to bring diverse voices into public decision-making processes and assists people in navigating complicated bureaucratic systems. She also works internally influencing equity initiatives and institutional cultural change. Robyn majored in Community Development and Spanish from Portland State University and has a master’s in Journalism from Syracuse University. In her free time, she loves spending time with her Great Dane Baloo, traveling and Latin dance.

CHARLENE MCGEE is the REACH Program Manager at Multnomah County Health Department. A self-proclaimed Liberian-Oregonian, her experience as a survivor of the Liberian civil war and a Black immigrant heavily influenced her career. Charlene has more than 15 years of experience at the nexus of cross-sector collaboration. These leadership opportunities allowed Charlene to work at the intersection of public health and healthcare, to confront and influence the political and socio-economic factors that determines population health. Charlene is a proud and active alum of Oregon State University and is currently pursuing an Executive Master’s in Public Administration at Portland State University.

RACHAEL BANKS, MPA, is the Director of Public Health for Multnomah County, Oregon. She is the Principal Investigator for Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH). Rachael oversees strategies to protect, assure and promote the health of over 700,000 people across 6 cities, including Portland. Rachael received her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Gonzaga University and her Masters of Public Administration from Portland State University. She has a proven track record collaborating with communities to address health injustices. Mrs. Banks demonstrates her commitment to workforce equity and has been a leader in supporting and advancing employees of color.

Regional Challenges

In order to implement a vision for deep equity in the region, it’s necessary to create a community-wide paradigm shift in how policy and planning work is done in order to meaningfully engage community, work across silos, and make the investments necessary for this type of transformative change. Systemic and institutional racism and prejudice play a big role in this challenge.

The result of this underlying challenge are persistent issues with equitable access to transportation, housing, and economic mobility.

Organizations

THE CITY OF GRESHAM challenges themselves to embrace inventive ideas, develop practical strategies to provide day-to-day services to our residents, take nimble approaches that roll with change, and use collaborative approaches that allow us to do together what we cannot do alone.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT works in partnership with the communities they serve to assure, promote, and protect the health of the people of Multnomah County. In short, Multnomah County Health Department’s vision is: Healthy people in healthy communities.
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Regional Governance

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is the MPO for the 9 county SF Bay Area, and they coordinate transportation planning and financing.

Other Government Metropolitan Planning Organizations: In addition to MTC, the Association of Bay Area Governments (created by local governments to meet planning and research needs around land use and environmental issues), San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission (a regional authority that works to protect the region’s shore line), and Bay Area Air Quality Management District (regulates stationary sources of air pollution) all work regionally across the bay area. The Bay Area Regional Collaborative works to coordinate these various entities to try to have a better understanding between them of what the others are doing.

Non-profit actors and coalitions: SPUR is a non-governmental, non-profit that does research and policy advocacy regionally around issues of transportation, housing, and economic development. Urban Habitat is a non-profit that does regional policy and advocacy work around transportation, environmental, and housing justice. TransForm promotes walkable communities with excellent transportation choices to connect people of all incomes to opportunity, keep California affordable, and help solve our climate crisis. Also, Bay Area Rising, a network of artists, spiritual leaders, and activists dedicated to ending violence against women and girls, does a lot of organizing around community-based issues.

Regional Metrics

Population: 7,903,238 (+12%)
Jobs: 3,967,603 (+9%)
Median Income: $92.6k

RENT BURDEN
- Burdened: 48%
- Severely Burdened: 24%

MODE OF TRANSPORT
- Drive alone: 65%
- Transit: 11%
- Other: 23%

ENERGY SOURCE
- Renewables: 28%
- Fossil Fuels: 71%
- Other: 1%

CALIFORNIA COUNTIES
San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma
Representatives

**ALICIA JOHN-BAPTISTE** is President and CEO of SPUR and is responsible for defining the overall vision and strategy for the organization. Alicia served for three years as SPUR’s deputy director, overseeing policy and strategic initiatives and running the organization day to day. Prior to joining SPUR, she held senior public administration and public policy roles for the City and County of San Francisco, including chief of staff positions at both the San Francisco Planning Department and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency. She holds a Masters degree in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School and a Bachelor of Arts from Duke University.

**BOB ALLEN** joined Urban Habitat in 2007. In 2009, he helped lead the successful civil rights campaign to stop the use of $70 million in federal stimulus funds for the Oakland Airport Connector project and in 2013 supported the successful free youth transit campaign in San Francisco. More recently he’s led Urban Habitat’s regional equity advocacy and supported a successful transportation tax measure in San Mateo County. His background includes community planning in the United States and internationally, labor organizing, and advocacy with refugee and immigrant communities. Bob received his Bachelor’s degree and Master’s in Public Policy from Rutgers University.

**ABOUBACAR “ASN” NDIAYE** is the Housing and Transportation Policy Manager at Working Partnerships USA. Previously, he worked as Strategic Researcher for SEIU Local 1, planning and developing organizing campaigns for building services workers in the Midwest. He has also worked and volunteered in a variety of roles on electoral campaigns in Texas, Michigan, and Illinois. He is a proud immigrant and a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, where he earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Government.

Organizations

**SPUR** Through research, education and advocacy, SPUR works to promote good planning and good government in the San Francisco Bay Area

**URBAN HABITAT** works to democratize power and advance equitable policies to create a just and connected Bay Area for low-income communities and communities of color. We confront structural inequities impacting historically disenfranchised communities. Through strategic partnerships, we support increasing the power and capacity in low-income communities and communities of color.

**WORKING PARTNERSHIPS USA**, is a community organization bringing together the power of grassroots organizing and public policy innovation to drive the movement for a just economy. Based in Silicon Valley, we tackle the root causes of inequality and poverty by leading collaborative campaigns for quality jobs, healthy communities, equitable growth and vibrant democracy.

Regional Challenges

The failure of regional planning to address the region’s lack of affordable housing and rapidly increasing displacement of low-income, black, and brown communities which is also undermining our climate change goals. Affordable housing production and preservation needs to happen in an equitable framework that considers racial, economic, and geographic factors.

In addition, this region sees an increasingly fragmented transportation system under pressure from private mobility companies and the re-emergence the car as the foundation of our transportation system. The region lacks transportation coordination of fares, schedules, routes, and investment as a result of poor governance and the regressive nature of funding sources for regional transportation and housing bonds.

Another issue is the land fiscalization and negative incentives due to California’s tax laws.
Regional Governance

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the Los Angeles MPO, Council of Governments, and Regional Transportation planning agency. They develop long range regional plans mainly for transportation but also for economic development. Seem to have a lot of planning and policy concentrated in this single organization. While SCAG plays a major role as a regional planning agency for 6 counties in Southern California, they are not the decision-making body that can generate sweeping policies for our region. SCAG acts as a research and planning agency, and their Governing Board can develop and adopt resolutions, but does not create and adopt binding policies.

LA Metro, the transit agency for LA County, is a key and powerful agency in the greater LA region and are leading LA’s $160 billion transit expansion efforts in LA County. The other key players in LA are the LA County Board of Supervisors who serve the 10 million+ residents of LA County, and are the direct representatives of the Unincorporated neighborhoods of LA County (meaning areas of LA that are not part of one of the 88 individual jurisdictions in LA County and have no formal local representation); the Housing + Community Investment Department of the City of LA, which is a key player in the implementation of affordable housing programs and policies; and of course, the LA City Council, who have a powerful role in all local housing, transit, and health policies for the City of LA.

ACT LA works regionally to ensure that LA becomes a transit-rich city where all people have access to quality jobs, affordable housing, necessary social services, ample transportation options, and a voice in decision-making. LA Thrives is a collaborative of organizations committed to equitable TOD that protects the social fabric of neighborhoods.
Organizations

ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY TRANSIT (ACT-LA)
As a broad coalition of economic and environmental justice, active transportation, tenants’ rights, affordable housing, and faith-based organizations, ACT-LA envisions a Los Angeles that is a transit-rich city where all people have access to stable homes, quality jobs, ample transportation options, and a voice in decision-making. We are building a sustainable city through the reduction of toxic air pollution, the promotion of public health, and the strengthening of community culture and heritage.

KOREATOWN IMMIGRANT WORKERS ALLIANCE (KIWA) is a multi-racial worker center in Los Angeles that organizes immigrant workers in low-wage industries for dignity and respect in the workplace and community. One of the nation’s most established workers centers, KIWA is one of few community organizations that organizes both Korean and Latinx workers. Our vision is to bring workers and community members together in a broad, multi-racial, and multi-generational coalition.

THAI CDC works to advance the social and economic well-being of low and moderate income Thais and other ethnic communities in the greater Los Angeles area through a broad and comprehensive community development strategy including human rights advocacy, affordable housing, access to healthcare, promotion of small businesses, neighborhood empowerment, and social enterprises.

Representatives

MARIANA HUERTA JONES is the Campaign & Communications Manager with Alliance for Community Transit - Los Angeles (ACT-LA). She leads ACT-LA’s equitable community planning program, builds capacity for local groups to engage community members in the planning process, and develops ACT-LA’s communications strategy. Previously, Mariana served as the Policy and Research Coordinator with Restaurant Opportunities Center in LA, where she coordinated projects and campaigns to advance racial equity and economic justice, and organized restaurant workers against discrimination and exploitation. She holds a Masters degree in Urban and Regional Planning from UCLA, and a BA in Feminist Studies from Stanford University.

CAT YANG (she/her) is the Program Associate at KIWA (Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance). Cat lives and works in Koreatown, Los Angeles. Her work centers on advancing equity and self-determination in equitable development policy making and urban planning in Los Angeles. She envisions art and design as tools to make policy public and personal. She co-organizes amwa, a Los Angeles-based collective of femme and non-binary pan-Asian art workers.

GINA CHARUSOMBAT is the Policy and Program Coordinator at Thai CDC and works to advance affordable housing and equitable development. She received her Bachelor of Arts from Smith College and her Master of Public Policy degree at UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs. Gina worked as a Research and Program Assistant with the Center for the Study of Social Policy, where she assisted a team that provides technical assistance for place-based initiatives that built the capacity of communities to transform their neighborhoods. She also was a Policy Fellow with the California Reinvestment Coalition, working on minority-owned small business advocacy.

Regional Challenges

A big challenge is LA’s geography: it is an extremely large region, so it is very challenging to coordinate transformational, equitable planning efforts at a large-scale.

While many LA elected officials talk the good talk about addressing the city’s planning challenges, they won’t take bold action and lack the political will needed to tackle our region’s housing affordability and homelessness crises. It is widely known that our elected officials are very developer friendly, and will push back on communities’ demands in favor of developer/investor desires.

Related, policies that consider our communities are often add on measures, rather than the central core of the policy. As well, the lack of accountability leads to weakened commitment to implementation of community identified priorities once policies are passed.
Regional Metrics

Population: 14,300 (+15%)
Jobs: 3,700 (17%)
Median Income: $27.8k

RENT BURDEN
- Burdened: 32%
- Severely Burdened: 15%

MODE OF TRANSPORT
- Drive alone: 65%
- Transit: 2%
- Other: 33%

ENERGY SOURCE
- Renewables: N/A
- Fossil Fuels: N/A
- Other: N/A

SOUTH DAKOTA COUNTIES
Bennett, Jackson, Oglala Lakota

Regional Governance

The Pine Ridge Reservation is home to the Lakota Nation. Many of us have seen in news recently that the reservation is experiencing a crisis as a result of historic flooding and an inadequate response from state agencies. A full review of the regional governance structure will be included in a later edition of this program.
Organizations

THUNDER VALLEY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (TVCDC) envisions a liberated Lakota nation through our Lakota language, culture and spirituality. We have developed a comprehensive, innovative, and grassroots approach to collaborating with and empowering Lakota youth and families to improve the health, culture and environment of our communities, through the healing and strengthening of cultural identity. Through our nine holistic and comprehensive initiatives, TVCDC has designed and is continually building our very own exercise of sovereignty and self-sufficiency.

Regional Challenges

A big challenge is how to create culture and mindset shift in individuals, families, and communities when there is a pervasive sense of apathy and hopelessness. These attitudes and beliefs have deep roots in the colonization, oppression and dehumanization of our people but nonetheless they exist and in order for us to effectuate our vision and mission, we need to move the dial in our communities from survival mode to actual vitality.

In addition, there is a regional need to develop economic development strategies and securing increased financial resources to execute the region’s expressed needs for more housing and infrastructure.

Representatives

TATEWIN MEANS is from the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota, Oglala Lakota and Inhanktonwan nations in South Dakota. Ms. Means received a BS from Stanford University in Environmental Engineering, JD with a concentration in Human Rights Law from the University of Minnesota Law School and a Master of Arts in Lakota Leadership and Management from Oglala Lakota College. Tatewin served as the Attorney General for the Oglala Sioux Tribe from 2012-2017 and was also a German Marshall Fund Marshall Memorial Fellow in 2015. Tatewin is the Executive Director of Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation, an Indigenous non-profit organization on the Pine Ridge Reservation, seeking to lead systemic change through the development of a regenerative community.

JENNIFER IRVING is the Deputy Director at TVCDC and an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. She has a Bachelor’s in Human Biology from Chadron State College. She received her Masters in Community Health Education from the University of Minnesota. In 2007, Ms. Irving worked in Maternal and Child Health at the Northern Plains Tribal Epidemiology Center. Ms. Irving was the first American Indian to graduate from the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Applied Epidemiology Fellowship program. She then worked as the Oglala Sioux Tribe’s Epidemiologist and served as the Legislative Liaison to President Bryan Brewer.

DECORA HAWK is Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, and Hochunk from the South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wisconsin areas. DeCora attended OLC and graduated summa cum laude with a Lakota Language Certificate, AA in Tribal Law, AA in Lakota Studies, and BA in Lakota Studies with emphasis in Indian Law. She also attended the University of Oklahoma College of Law graduated with an MLS in Indigenous Peoples Law. DeCora is the Community Engagement Director for Thunder Valley CDC, an Indigenous non-profit organization on the Pine Ridge Reservation, seeking to lead systemic change through the development of a regenerative community.
Regional Governance

Metropolitan Council is the regional policy-making body and planning agency for the Twin Cities, and its mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for the region. MC also operates Metro Transit which provides 95% of the bus trips in the twin cities and operates a commuter rail line and light rail transit.

The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), which is a board of Metropolitan Council, is a key participant in the region’s transportation planning process. TAB was created by the state legislature in 1974 to perform transportation planning and programming for the Twin Cities metropolitan area, as designated by state and federal law. The transportation planning process is based on Minnesota statutes and federal rules and regulations on urban transportation planning. As the region’s federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) the Council and the TAB are responsible for the continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a coalition of community based organizations building shared power to influence regional policy towards just outcomes. The Alliance’s member organizations all play an active role in this work, including in the Equity in Place group which influences planning and investments to ensure that people of color and low-wealth people have a role in shaping the Twin Cities. Move Minnesota works to ensure every community has choices for getting around through advocacy, education, and community engagement. African Career, Education and Resource (ACER) is a non-profit that engages African immigrants living in the suburbs of Minneapolis to advance equity and eliminate disparities for this community. Other non-profit actors include the Sierra Club - North Star Chapter, Housing Justice Center, and the University of Minnesota Center for Urban and Regional Affairs.

Regional Metrics

Population: 3.18 million (+16%)
Jobs: 1.78 million (+10%)
Median Income: $73.8k

RENT BURDEN
- Burdened: 45%
- Severely Burdened: 22%

MODE OF TRANSPORT
- Drive alone: 77%
- Transit: 5%
- Other: 18%

ENERGY SOURCE
- Renewables: 4%
- Fossil Fuels: 85%
- Other: 11%

WISCONSIN COUNTIES
Pierce, Saint Croix

MINNESOTA COUNTIES
Hennepin, Ramsey, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Isanti, Le Sueur, Millard Lacs, Scott, Sherburne, Sibley, Washington

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a coalition of community based organizations building shared power to influence regional policy towards just outcomes. The Alliance’s member organizations all play an active role in this work, including in the Equity in Place group which influences planning and investments to ensure that people of color and low-wealth people have a role in shaping the Twin Cities. Move Minnesota works to ensure every community has choices for getting around through advocacy, education, and community engagement. African Career, Education and Resource (ACER) is a non-profit that engages African immigrants living in the suburbs of Minneapolis to advance equity and eliminate disparities for this community. Other non-profit actors include the Sierra Club - North Star Chapter, Housing Justice Center, and the University of Minnesota Center for Urban and Regional Affairs.
Representatives

**JOOHEE POMPLUN** joined the Alliance staff in 2017. Joo Hee was formerly the director of policy and advocacy at Asian Economic Development Association where she worked with Asian communities and small businesses to open opportunities for wealth building. Joo Hee founded the Health Equity Working Committee, a coalition of community-based organizations advancing health equity. She also served as the executive director of the Minnesota Asian/American Health Coalition. Joo Hee has a bachelor’s degree in women’s studies, a master’s of public health, and is a certified massage therapist at the People’s Movement Center, a collective of people of color, indigenous, queer, and trans healers.

**TIA WILLIAMS** is Co-Director of Frogtown Neighborhood Association. Tia is a lifelong resident of the Frogtown Neighborhood, she has worked with the FNA in the past on engaging the community with the Promise Neighborhood Project, and also training inSafe Growth program, pertaining to the Developments on the Central corridor. She is extremely passionate in building and creating a Community based Neighborhood.

**ASAD ALIWEYD**, is the Founder and Executive Director of the New American Development Center. Asad wants to develop transformative ways for Muslim people to build wealth. He believes a new, culturally responsive financing infrastructure that addresses current barriers can advance the economic well-being of Muslim Americans in Minnesota and beyond. He seeks to bring change to financial institutions that deal with diverse communities. Asad was selected as a 2018 Bush Fellow.

Organizations

**ALLIANCE FOR METROPOLITAN STABILITY** is a coalition of community-based organizations and advocacy groups building shared power to advance strategic campaigns around the intersections of racial justice, economic justice, environmental justice, and health equity. Our mission is to advance justice and equity in economic growth and land development in the Twin Cities region. We are conveners of coalition tables focused on housing, transportation, land use and development, jobs, and emerging issues driving gentrification and displacement.

**FROGTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION** works through accountable collaboration, strategic partnerships, neighbor relationships and shared values to ensure the balance and harmony of our neighborhood by focusing on health, the physical environment, arts centered organizing and community wealth building in the neighborhoods of Frogtown, Mt. Airy, Capitol Heights, and East Midway.

**NEW AMERICANS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (NADC)** is a community-based organization dedicated to improving the health, educational attainment, Economic Empowerment, human welfare, and opportunities for youth, adults, and families of East African immigrant community within the Twin Cities. NADC focused on lowering the poverty rate of refugee, immigrants and low-income skilled workers in the Somali community through authentic, culturally appropriate and sustainable wealth-building programs that include technical assistance, business development, entrepreneurship training, and youth employment.

Regional Challenges

The Twin Cities are experiencing an affordable housing crisis despite the city’s growth over recent years. Development has not been centered in equity and has not incorporated the needs of communities of color. The result of this is a heightened threat for the displacement of marginalized communities. A related issue is the stripping local ownership opportunities from local residents and the land grab by people from outside community. The region needs to work to help communities better leverage tools to influence planning and development, investment models, and funding streams.

According to the state of Minnesota’s latest report, Somalis are the lowest for the overall poverty rate in the state. Somali families have traditionally large families—averaging 8 or more, so the current affordable housing units that are available are incompatible with their housing needs.
GREATER CHICAGO

Regional Governance

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning is the MPO that does regional planning for northeastern Illinois. CMAP leads a variety of regional planning efforts around economic development, livability, local technical assistance, and transportation, and leads the long-term regional planning via their “ON TO 2050” plan. Through its programmatic committees it brings together representatives from different counties and organizations around the region.

For transportation, the Regional Transportation Authority provides funding, planning and oversight for the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra, and Pace. There was discussion around five years ago to merge RTA with CMAP citing declining transit services. Other significant regional public agencies include the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District.

City agencies play a large role shaping policy and planning within the region. These include the Department of Public Health, the Department of Planning & Development, the Department of Housing, the Department of Transportation, Park District, and the Mayor’s Office, among others. Cook County has several agencies with significant authority, including the County Health & Hospital Services, Assessor, Forest Preserves, and Land Bank Authority.

Some state and federal agencies have a fair amount of influence, especially around transportation and natural resources, such as the Illinois Department of Transportation for state roads and the US Army Corps of Engineers for navigable waterways.

Non-Profit actors and Coalitions: Metropolitan Planning Council is a non-profit, independent research and advocacy organization that is dedicated to shaping a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous Chicago region. MPC as a non-governmental group pushes the regional planning entities discussed above by conducting quality research to compliment or challenge the work being done within the region. Depending on the issue,

Regional Metrics

Population: 9.55 million (+5%)
Jobs: 4.49 million (+2%)
Median Income: $66.5k

RENT BURDEN
► Burdened: 47%
► Severely Burdened: 24%

MODE OF TRANSPORT
► Drive alone: 71%
► Transit: 12%
► Other: 17%

ENERGY SOURCE
► Renewables: 1%
► Fossil Fuels: 79%
► Other: 20%

INDIANA COUNTIES
Jasper, Lake, Newton, Porter,

ILLINOIS COUNTIES
Cook, Dekalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Will

WISCONSIN COUNTIES
Kenosha

Chicago, Illinois

Chicago, Illinois
Organizations

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING COUNCIL (MPC)** has been dedicated to shaping a more equitable, sustainable and prosperous greater Chicago region. As an independent, nonprofit, non-partisan organization, MPC serves communities and residents by developing, promoting and implementing solutions for sound regional growth.

**CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH’S** mission is to promote and improve health by engaging residents, communities and partners in establishing and implementing policies and services that prioritize residents and communities with the greatest need.

**CHICAGO METROPOLITAN AGENCY FOR PLANNING (CMAP)** is the regional planning organization for the northeastern counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. The agency and its partners developed and are now implementing ON TO 2050, a new long-range plan to help the seven counties and 284 communities of northeastern Illinois implement strategies that address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality-of-life issues.

Regional Challenges

The Chicago Region’s population growth has stagnated and economic growth lags behind peer regions. Economic outcomes in our region reflect racial lines of demarcation. Residents of color, particularly black residents, often experience lower incomes and higher unemployment. Some communities become caught in a cycle of disinvestment, unable to promote economic development, invest in infrastructure, and otherwise serve their residents.

Further, Chicago has an aging and obsolete infrastructure and significant capital funding shortages limit our region’s ability to provide accessible, high quality service. At current funding levels, the condition of these systems is declining, and the costs to repair them increasing, every day.

The lack of political will, municipal capacity and coordination, and structural racism & classism are underlying barriers to all of this work. A lack of a city/regional master plan (including zoning) that would help prioritize and streamline development decisions contributes to this challenge.

Representatives

**CHLOE GURIN-SANDS** is an Associate at the Metropolitan Planning Council in Chicago, IL. Chloe’s work across the organization includes policy analysis, qualitative and quantitative research, community engagement, and technical assistance to local groups. She also works to incorporate public health into MPC’s array of projects. She is part of the Great Rivers Chicago and the Cost of Segregation / Our Equitable Future project teams, and manages MPC’s growing vacant and underutilized land strategies. Chloe is a co-chair of MPC’s Equity Committee. Chloe has a Master’s in Public Health from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

**EMILY LAFLAMME** is a senior epidemiologist at the Chicago Department of Public Health, focused on the intersection of community development and health. Using tools such as health impact assessment, community health assessment and qualitative analysis, she leverages data to advocate for and evaluate the impact of environments that promote community wellbeing. She serves on numerous multi-sectoral collaborations, bringing a public health and equity lens to community development initiatives. You will often find Ms. Laflamme exploring Chicago’s neighborhoods by bicycle and arriving to a meeting with a helmet in hand. She holds a Master of Public Health from the University of British Columbia.

**RICARDO LOPEZ** is a Senior Planner at the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) with over 11 years of experience in the public and non-profit sectors. He is experienced in leading multi-disciplinary planning projects in diverse communities working with a cross-section of cultural and socio-economic stakeholders. In 2017, he developed a Health Equity strategy paper to integrate health equity into the ON TO 2050 Regional Comprehensive Plan. Previously, Ricardo worked as a Field Coordinator with the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI). Ricardo was born in Guadalajara, Mexico, and studied urban planning at the University of Illinois at Chicago.
Regional Governance

Regional Planning Commission focuses on transportation, economic development, and environmental planning between the 8 counties around New Orleans. The board of this organization is comprised of local elected officials, citizen members from the area parishes, and the LA Secretary of Transportation. It operates three main committees—Transportation Policy, Technical, and Economic Development Strategy—and two advisory councils—Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation, and Complete Streets. RPC do not have much authority and mostly take on projects commissioned by their members. It also does not do the most effective job engaging its constituents. It should be noted that there currently is not a great amount of cooperation in regional planning efforts in part because of the difference in governance between New Orleans and its neighbors.

The New Orleans City Council has authority over all zoning and land use matters in the city, and the city’s government agencies including the Office of Community Development play a role in shaping planning decisions. The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority provides transit service for New Orleans, and the Housing Authority of New Orleans, which does not operate regionally, serves a quarter of all renter households in New Orleans. Other governmental entities include the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority—a city-funded land bank and redevelopment authority—the New Orleans Aviation Board, Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority, and the Louisiana State Legislature, which often impacts local policy decisions.

The Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC) plays an important role regionally and for the whole state to enhance access to affordable housing for the region’s residents. GNOFHAC has worked with the Office of Community Development and the Housing Authority of New Orleans to develop and implement the goals stated in the Assessment of Fair Housing Plan. The Foundation for Louisiana tackles issues that most deeply impact communities by funding community based work at numerous community organizations. Other ally organizations include: Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance, Step Up, Power Coalition, Jane Place Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative, Louisiana Budget Project, and VOTE. Other powerful, non-ally actors include: Business Council of New Orleans and the River Region, GNO Inc, and New Orleans and Co.
Representatives

CASHAUNA HILL has served as Executive Director of the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center, a non-profit advocacy group that seeks to end housing discrimination and segregation throughout Louisiana, since 2015. In 2016, Cashauna led GNOFHAC’s partnership with the City of New Orleans and the Housing Authority of New Orleans to submit the nation’s very first Assessment of Fair Housing plan. An expert with years of experience litigating fair housing cases and engaging in advocacy campaigns, Cashauna has written about housing segregation and civil rights for Next City and The Hill, among other outlets. Cashauna is a graduate of Spelman College and Tulane Law School.

MAXWELL CIARDULLO is the Director of Policy and Communications for GNOFHAC. He leads the organization’s legislative, regulatory, and communications work related to policies that encourage fair housing choice and decrease segregation. Previously, he worked as a health care access policy fellow with the New Orleans Health Department. Maxwell has served on the City of New Orleans Neighborhood Housing Advisory Council, the board of the Lower Garden District Association, and was selected as a 2019 New Leaders Council Fellow. Maxwell holds a master’s degree in regional planning from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and Bachelor’s in Sociology from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

ROSA GOMEZ-HERRIN is a scholar, community advocate, writer and strategist from the Global South. Her personal, academic and professional experiences in the United States and abroad are rooted in a life-long commitment to social and racial justice, with almost two decades working as an advocate, community organizer and social service providers in the U.S. and abroad. She currently works for the Foundation for Louisiana as Director of Racial Justice Programs. Rosa has a graduate degree in Urban and Regional Planning and is completing her research to obtain a PhD in Urban Studies at the University of New Orleans, focusing on emerging barrios in the New Orleans metro.

Organizations

GREATER NEW ORLEANS FAIR HOUSING ACTION CENTER (GNOFHAC) is a nonprofit civil rights organization established in 1995 to eradicate housing discrimination. GNOFHAC’s work throughout Louisiana includes education, investigation and enforcement activities. GNOFHAC is dedicated to fighting housing discrimination because it is an illegal and divisive force that perpetuates poverty, segregation, ignorance, fear and hatred.

FOUNDATION FOR LOUISIANA’S mission is to invest in people and practices that work to reduce vulnerability and build stronger, more sustainable communities statewide.

Regional Challenges

A critical issue is the displacement of working class, residents of color—who make up the backbone of the city’s workforce and are the creators of its culture—to the margins of the metro area where resources and amenities are sorely lacking. This is due to gentrification, the lack of affordable and accessible housing, and an under-funded and poorly operated public transit system.

Another challenge is the existential threat to the city posed by sea level rise and/or severe storms due to climate change, which acutely harms the working class, residents of color that are also effected most by displacement pressures.
Regional Governance

The “Nashville Area MPO” is staffed by the Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) whose mission is “to assist local communities and state agencies in the development of plans and programs that guide growth and development in the most desirable, efficient, and cost effective manner.” The MPO conducts transportation planning for 7 counties surrounding Nashville. GNRC works with the Federal government, the State of Tennessee, and governments across 14 counties in Middle Tennessee to deliver services and develop plans and programs that guide growth and development in the region. GNRC’s areas of focus include aging and disability services, as well as economic development, solid waste, land use, and transportation planning.

As coordinated by GNRC, the county governments that make up the region play an important role in implementing policy and coming to consensus on regional planning issues. Nashville MTA coordinates transit for the region, and the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency plays a role in developing affordable housing for Nashville.

Nashville Civic Design Center, whose mission is to elevate the quality of Nashville’s built environment and to promote public participation in the creation of a more beautiful and functional city for all, has produced several plans for the city. There are other small non-profits and neighborhood groups focused on housing, transit, displacement, etc. One of these groups is Conexión Américas who promotes community development for Latinx people in Nashville, focusing in South Nashville along the Nolensville Pike corridor. Other organizations include the Salahadeen Center of Nashville—one of the largest Muslim community centers in the area—and Walk Bike Nashville—a group that promotes active transportation throughout the city.
Organizations

**CONEXIÓN AMÉRICAS** builds a welcoming community in Nashville and creates opportunities where Latino families can belong, contribute and succeed. Conexión Américas believes successful efforts to promote the integration of immigrant families into their new community recognize that integration is a multi-dimensional process. Therefore, Conexión Américas focuses on advocating for, and supporting the Social, Economic, and Civic integration of, Latino families in Nashville.

**GREATER NASHVILLE REGIONAL COUNCIL (GNRC)** works with the Federal government, the State of Tennessee, and governments across 14 counties in Middle Tennessee to deliver services and develop plans and programs that guide growth and development in the region. GNRC’s areas of focus include aging and disability services, as well as economic development, solid waste, land use, and transportation planning.

Representatives

**ALEX MACIAS** is the Community Development Manager at Conexión Américas, where he leads a coalition in the project Envision Nolensville Pike. The project builds civic participation to collectively transform Nashville’s international corridor from a congested arterial into a thriving “main street” through artistic interventions and equitable development. Alex experienced Nashville’s tremendous growth first hand and believes multi-modal transit is key for community members to access economic opportunities and to improve health disparities and social connectivity. Alex holds a BA in International and Global Studies from the University of the South and is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer.

**SHELLY HAZLE** serves as a senior policy advisor at the Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC). Shelly works on a variety of issues, including solid waste planning, housing, sustainability, and transportation. In addition, she serves as a liaison, growing GNRC’s relationships with governments and organizations across the region. Prior to joining GNRC, Shelly spent 10 years at Smart Growth America, which helps communities across the nation improve their livability, prosperity, and sustainability. During her time at SGA, she helped lead a technical assistance program that worked with governors and state administrators to develop policy solutions to transportation, housing, and urban planning challenges.

**ROCHELLE CARPENTER** leads the bicycling, walking and creative community engagement initiatives of the Greater Nashville Regional Council. Previously, she managed health and transportation programs and policies at Transportation for America. She is the author of, Building Healthy and Prosperous Communities: How metro areas are implementing more and better bicycling and walking projects, and sister policy papers published by Transportation for America in 2016 and 2017. She directs the Envision Nolensville Pike Collaborative (ENCP) in Nashville with Conexión Américas and the Salahadeen Center. Through this initiative, community-based organizations, community members, artists, transportation professionals and decision-makers are re-imagining a congested, unsafe arterial.

Regional Challenges

The Nashville region has been experiencing rapid growth over the past several years, driving up housing prices, increasing displacement, and stressing the transportation system.
Regional Governance

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission is the regional planning agency serving the Pittsburgh region. They are involved in developing the long range transportation and economic development plans for this region.

The Port Authority is the transit planning agency in Pittsburgh that manages and operates transit for its nearly 200,000 daily riders. According to their website, “Port authority plays an increasingly significant role in economic development efforts and community vitality within Pittsburgh and throughout Allegheny county’s communities”. The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), the City of Pittsburgh’s Economic Development Agency, does work on land acquisition for the city to sell to developers. URA have historically been responsible for some of the most egregious displacement incidents in Pittsburgh history, but now do a significant part of the city’s affordable housing development, to mixed effect. The Housing Authority’s of Allegheny County and Pittsburgh lead affordable housing development and provide publicly assisted housing through traditional public housing, scattered sites, and Section 8 vouchers.

There are a number of regional coalitions organized around specific issues, like Pittsburghers for Public Transit, who work to enhance access to transit for the city and county’s residents. Pittsburgh United brings together labor and community organizations to move the conversation around a broad set of issues that most effect low income and people of color. The Breathe Collaborative focuses on addressing air quality issues, and the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council organizes around food justice questions.

Regional Metrics

Population: 2.35 million (-3%)
Jobs: 1.11 million (+1%)
Median Income: $56.2k

RENT BURDEN
- Burdened: 41%
- Severely Burdened: 21%

MODE OF TRANSPORT
- Drive alone: 77%
- Transit: 5%
- Other: 17%

ENERGY SOURCE
- Renewables: 2%
- Fossil Fuels: 79%
- Other: 19%

PENNSYLVANIA COUNTIES
Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington, Westmoreland
Representatives

CARL REDWOOD, JR. - MSW 1987 - is a social worker and has participated in various community organizing efforts on the local, national, and international levels. He has been a part time faculty at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work for many years. Carl serves as chairperson of the Hill District Consensus Group and was Chairperson of the One Hill Community Benefits Agreement Coalition.

HELEN GERHARDT is a Grassroots Organizer at Just Harvest and serves on the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council, the City’s Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Task Force, and the Housing Committee of the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations, which enforces civil rights. Prior she worked as an organizer at Pittsburghers for Public Transit, Action United, the American Friends Service Committee, and the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations. She received a BA in English and a BFA in studio arts from the University of Missouri, and a MFA in nonfiction writing from the University of Pittsburgh.

LAURA WIENS is the Executive Director of Pittsburghers for Public Transit (PPT). Over the past two years, she has led successful campaigns to prevent criminalization of fare evasion and massive transit service reductions in marginalized communities. PPT Transit rider-leaders are now advancing campaigns for fare equity, affordable housing and transit policy, and transit as a climate solution. Laura has her roots in labor organizing with Unite HERE, and draws from that experience to mobilize transit riders in the fight for equity, access and transparency within our public agencies. Laura believes in the collective power of people to transform their communities.
Regional Governance

Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council is the MPO for the region and coordinates various planning efforts for Erie and Niagara counties to ensure that federally funded transportation funds are spent effectively to achieve the region’s planning goals.

University at Buffalo Regional Institute co-leads the One Region Forward Implementation Council in partnership with the MPO and offers capacity in planning, policy analysis, public process, urban design and communications.

The One Region Forward Council continues to meet quarterly to foster plan implementation. However, the HUD funded planning grant for One Region Forward ended in 2015 so implementation of projects and programs consistent with the plan is largely accomplished through existing funding sources and programs.

The Western New York of regional office of Empire State Development works hand-in-hand with new and existing businesses to help identify program funding to support business growth and expansion. WNY ESD administers the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process for the region.

Buffalo-Niagara Partnership, as the Chamber of Commerce, connects private sector stakeholders to the planning process in this region and is involved in promoting reinvestment in the Opportunity Zones in our region. The Metro Rail is located within or adjacent to approximately eight (8) of the 32 Opportunity Zones within Erie County.

The Coalition for Economic Justice’s (CEJ) mission is to unite our member labor, faith, and community organizations and activist with allies and resources to win campaigns that promote economic justice for all through building strong, diverse, sustainable communities.
Representatives

**KELLY DIXON** is a Principal Transportation Planner with the GBNRTC, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Erie and Niagara Counties. At the GBNRTC, she is involved in Long Range Transportation Planning efforts including Moving Forward 2050, Coordinated Human Services Transportation Planning and the Go Buffalo Niagara initiative that is expanding multi-modal transportation in the region. Prior, Kelly was the National Programs Coordinator for the Center for Transportation Excellence, a mobility management company coordinating Non-Emergency Medical Transportation for governmental entities. She is an Eno Transportation Fellow and holds a Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University at Buffalo.

**JULIE BARRETT O’NEILL** is the Executive Director of LISC Buffalo. Previously, Julie served as General Counsel and Green Program Director for the City of Buffalo Sewer Authority. She oversaw the implementation of the Sewer Authority’s $93 million green infrastructure combined sewer overflow reduction program. Prior to her work at the City, Julie served as the ED of Buffalo Niagara RIVERKEEPER, the region's largest non-profit water advocacy organization, for 10 years. Julie obtained her JD and her master’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Iowa, and an undergraduate degree in environmental studies from the University at Buffalo.

**JENNIFER KAMINSKY** is an urban planner who focuses on community development and affordable housing. She currently she serves as Director of Planning and Community Development for People United for Sustainable Housing (PUSH Buffalo). She leads BNSC’s efforts to create high-quality, green affordable housing on Buffalo’s West Side and engage communities on planning for their neighborhoods. Previously, she helped create shared-equity housing cooperatives with the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board (UHAB) in New York City and develop affordable housing in Boston with the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corp (JPNDC). Ms. Kaminsky holds a Master of City Planning degree from MIT.
Regional Governance

Regional governance in the greater New York metropolitan region consists of several metropolitan planning organizations across the three states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, the Port Authority of New York-New Jersey that operates airports, ports and bi-state transportation crossings, two state-run transit agencies—the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in New York and Connecticut and New Jersey Transit—and several special purpose authorities and commissions responsible for conservation, water and open space management and energy regulation. There are no regional governing bodies for housing or land use, although New Jersey has a state housing plan.

The metropolitan planning organizations (mpos) are responsible for producing regional transportation plans that are required to qualify for federal transportation funds, and are governed by boards that include state transportation agencies and the counties in their jurisdictions. There are two large mpos—the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council in downstate New York and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority in New Jersey—and several small mpos in Connecticut and on the periphery of the region.

Regional Plan Association, a non-profit research, planning and advocacy organization that produces and tries to implement long-range plans for economic development, housing, transportation, energy and the environment, is the only organization spanning the entire metropolitan region, but has no governmental authority. Two consortiums were formed under the Obama administration’s Sustainable Communities Initiative to integrate transportation, housing, economic and environmental planning and forge collaboration between governmental and nongovernmental organizations. The Together North Jersey initiative, is still functioning, even though federal funding ended in 2015. The New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities consortium still exists technically but has not been active since producing a sustainability plan and running out of funding.

Regional Metrics

Population: 22.9 million (+6%)
Jobs: 10.4 million (+10%)
Median Income: $74.4k

RENT BURDEN
- Burdened: 51%
- Severely Burdened: 28%

MODE OF TRANSPORT
- Drive alone: 53%
- Transit: 28%
- Other: 19%

ENERGY SOURCE
- Renewables: 3%
- Fossil Fuels: 87%
- Other: 10%
Representatives

JUANITA LEWIS was born and raised in Saint Paul, MN. She graduated from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities with a B.A. in History and Political Science, and with her Masters of Advocacy and Political Leadership Degree from the University of Minnesota-Duluth. She began her work as a community organizer with the Minnesota chapter of ACORN. Since 2004, she has worked on numerous electoral campaigns at the city, state and federal level in different staffing capacities.

CHRIS JONES directs research and planning for Regional Plan Association. Since joining RPA in 1994, he has led many multidisciplinary initiatives to improve economic, social and environmental conditions in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region. He led the research and policy development for RPA’s fourth regional plan, a long-range blueprint for the metropolitan region released in 2017. Previously, he managed a federal Sustainable Communities initiative that included 17 cities, counties and planning organizations in New York and Connecticut. Prior to joining RPA, Chris was the special assistant to the deputy mayor for planning and development in New York City.

KATE SLEVIN is senior vice president of state programs and advocacy at Regional Plan Association and oversees RPA’s programs in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Kate joined RPA in 2016 from Municipal Art Society, where she was vice president of planning and policy. She previously served as assistant commissioner for government and community affairs at the New York City Department of Transportation where she managed the legislative program for former Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan. Previously, she served as executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. She has a master’s in urban planning from New York University and a bachelor’s in earth and environmental sciences from Wesleyan University.

Organizations

COMMUNITY VOICES HEARD (CVH) is a member-led, multi-racial organization principally comprised of women of color and low-income families in New York State. CVH tackles tough issues and builds power to secure racial, social and economic justice for all New Yorkers. Through grassroots organizing, leadership development, policy changes, and creating new models of direct democracy CVH is creating a truly equitable New York State.

REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION (RPA) works to improve the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan region. Some of the region’s most significant public works, economic development and open space projects have their roots in RPA ideas and initiatives. RPA has pursued these goals by conducting independent research, planning, advocacy and vigorous public engagement efforts. In November of 2017, RPA released the Fourth Regional Plan, which seeks to address issues including housing affordability, overburdened transportation infrastructure, and vulnerability to climate change — by addressing the shortcomings in the region’s governance structures.

Regional Challenges

First, years of population and job growth and underinvestment in both maintenance and new construction have led to congestion, lack of reliability, and major disruptions on a regular basis. The region needs to make investments that will have far-reaching and positive effects on land use, settlement patterns, public health, goods movement, the economy, and the environment.

Climate change is transforming the region. Reducing the region’s greenhouse gas emissions is critical, but it won’t be enough. Today, more than a million people and 650,000 jobs are at risk from flooding, along with critical infrastructure. By 2050, nearly two million people and one million jobs would be threatened.

While household incomes have stagnated, housing costs have risen sharply, straining family budgets and resulting in increased displacement and homelessness. What’s more, the region’s racial and economic discrimination has kept many residents away from neighborhoods with quality schools and good jobs. Instead, many live in areas that are unsafe or environmentally hazardous.

Lastly, public institutions are ineffective in addressing all of these challenges. Solving these existential challenges will require public officials and citizens to reassess fundamental assumptions about public institutions.
Workshop Guests

**WALTER BARRIENTOS** is a community organizer, strategist and leader in the immigrant justice movement. He co-founded the New York State Youth Leadership Council and the United We Dream Network, and has supported movement building as a grant maker at North Star Fund and then with Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR). Recently Walter served as Long Island organizing director for Make The Road New York and Make The Road Action where he grew the membership to more than 1,200 members. Walter was named among New York Nonprofit Media’s 40 Under 40 Rising Stars in 2015. He is currently a consultant based in the Lower Hudson Valley where he and his life and movement partner Cristina Jiménez Moreta live.

**MEL LOYOLA AGOSTO**, The visual note taker at the convening, holds a BFA in Film, Animation, and Video from the Rhode Island School of Design, and a Master of Architecture degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture. She is involved in teaching, design and art direction for film, event design, exhibition design, and architectural projects. Her work centers on promoting equity and environmental sustainability.

**YA-TING LIU** is the Principal of Civic Agenda, and has spent the last 11 years working on transportation, sustainability and environmental issues in NYC as an advocate, organizer, and coalition builder. In 2018, she started her own consulting business to help clients develop public engagement and outreach strategies for issue campaigns, including congestion pricing. She was named by City and State in the class of 40 Under 40 of New York City in 2017. Ya-Ting holds a Master of Arts degree in city planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley.

**BETSY MCLEAN** has engaged in community development work for over 15 years. As Executive Director of Hester Street, Betsy works to ensure that cities are shaped by their residents. Previously, Betsy developed hundreds of affordable homes and spear-headed the community-led creation of Brooklyn’s first green public school in East New York. Prior, Betsy created and led a community development program in Cuba and worked as a carpenter. Betsy’s projects have earned awards from ALIGN, ioby, Boston Society for Architects, and the American Planning Association. Betsy holds master’s degrees in Urban Planning and International Development from Columbia University.

**VERONICA VANTERPOOL** is the Deputy Director of the national Vision Zero Network, which is helping communities eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all, and is the Principal of V Squared Strategies where she provides consulting services throughout the New York metro region. Prior, she served as executive director of the New York City based Tri-State Transportation Campaign, where she spent 10 years. She worked on key issue campaigns including increased funding for transit, walking and biking infrastructure; congestion pricing; Complete Streets; and Vision Zero. She is a recognized leader in the transit sector having been appointed in 2016 to the board of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the nation’s largest transit system providing 2.6 billion transit trips per year.
ARLENE RODRIGUEZ brings a life-long commitment to advancing social justice and liberation. She strives to support progressive movements that shift us away from the extractive systems and structures that serve to accumulate power and wealth in the hands of a few and move us toward an inclusive democracy that generates cooperative economies and thriving ecosystems. Through ARC Associates, Arlene helps to 1) align philanthropic programs and resources 2) support leadership development 3) scale up organizational capacity, and 4) advance networks and collaborations as the crucibles for encouraging emergent learning, cooperative leadership and the radical strategies needed to navigate the complexities of transformative movements toward social change.

In the past, Arlene has served as Director of Membership and Public Engagement for Living Cities, Director of Environment at the San Francisco Foundation and led the foundation’s Organizational Resiliency Program. Arlene was also one of the first program officers during the inception of the $4 billion Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. Before her work in philanthropy, she played leadership roles in various organizations such as Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, the Crissy Field Center, the Trust for Public Land, GLSEN, and North Carolina Housing Authority.

SUSAN MISRA is CoDirector at MAG, and has over 19 years of experience in multi-sector change initiatives, nurturing networks, community engagement, capacity building, and innovative models of financial sustainability. She has strengthened over 200 organizations around complex adaptive strategy, leadership development, and financial sustainability. Prior to joining MAG, Susan was the Associate Director of Program/Grants Management and Capacity Building at TCC Group. She also served as the Co-Director for Policy Research at AWARE in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India. Earlier, Susan worked as the Coordinator for the Youth Public Education Campaign, a joint initiative of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission and Rock the Vote. In addition, Susan has worked as an independent diversity trainer and facilitator.

Susan received a Master’s in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She received the Kennedy School Social Service Award as well as the post-graduate Sheldon Fellowship to bridge social capital and community conflict resolution. Susan holds a B.S. in Psychology from Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon.

VANESSA BARRIOS is a Senior Associate for State Programs & Advocacy at RPA. She conducts research and outreach on projects related to affordable housing, community engagement and equitable economic development in the region. Previously, she worked as case manager, housing navigator and outreach worker at People Assisting the Homeless, a homeless service organization that serves the Greater Los Angeles area. Vanessa has a bachelor’s in sociology from the University of California, Riverside, and a master’s in urban planning from New York University where she focused on international development planning. This specialization culminated in an analysis of local economic growth in the 30 regions of Tanzania and provided recommendations for industry potential and quality of life improvements. Feel free to reach out to Vanessa with any questions you may have about the learning exchange at vbarrios@rpa.org.

CARLOS MANDEVILLE is a Research Analyst for RPA working across all of RPA’s research areas. Previously, he worked as the 2017-2018 Equitable Public Space Fellow at the Design Trust for Public Space. His work ranged from designing and leading workshops with members of the cultural community on the North Shore of Staten Island in order to better organize and respond to development around the ferry terminal to scoping and planning a community planning project in partnership with South Bronx Unite. He has a Bachelor’s in Geography from Vassar College and is currently pursuing a Masters in Urban Planning at Hunter College. Feel free to reach out to Vanessa with any questions you may have about the learning exchange at carlos@rpa.org.

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