

Regional Plan Association

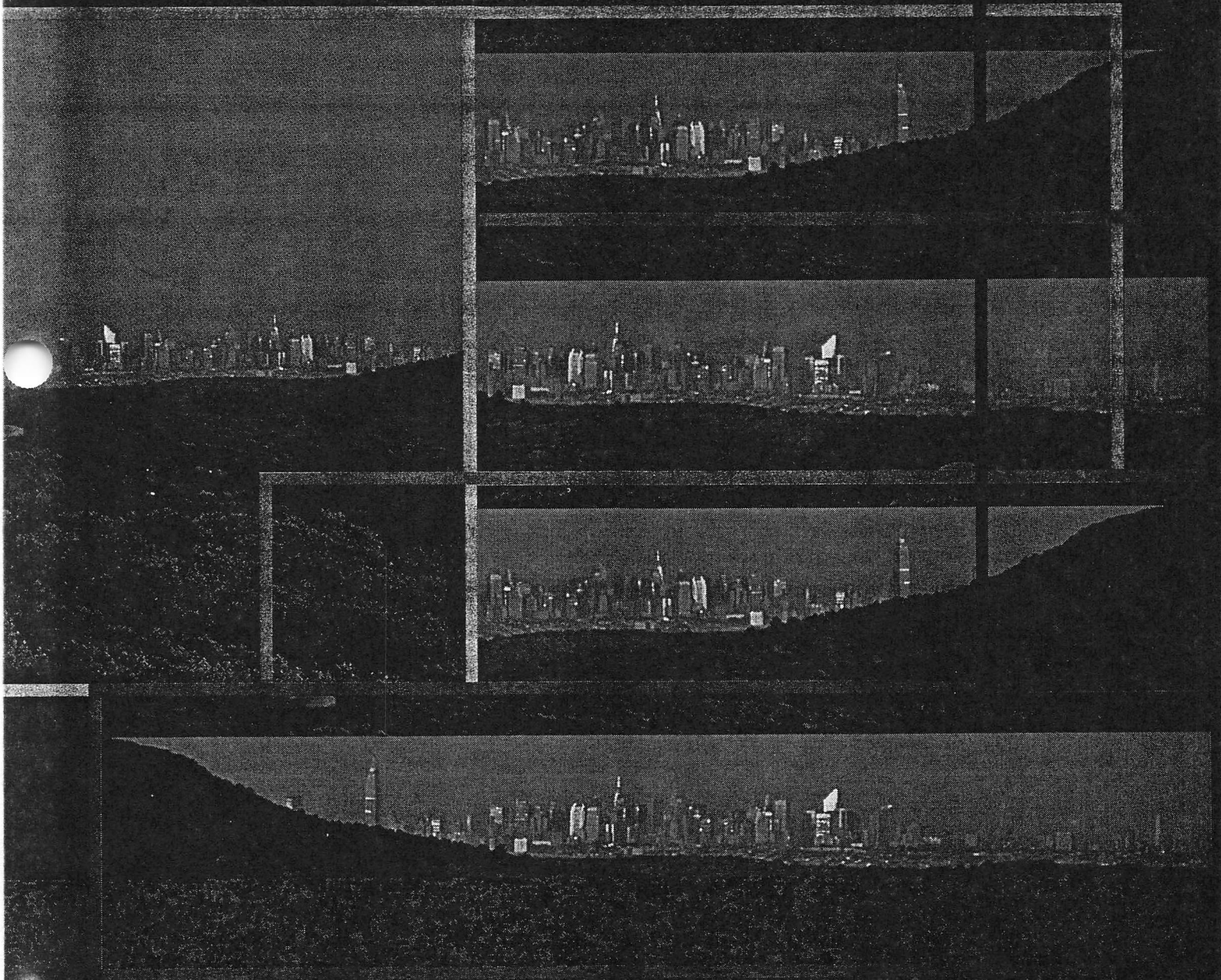


+ RPA MATERIALS

A Region at Risk
Regional Plan Association;
New York, NY; 1996

A Region at Risk

A SUMMARY OF
THE THIRD REGIONAL PLAN FOR
THE NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY-CONNECTICUT
METROPOLITAN AREA



REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION

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Cover photo: New York City skyline from Ramapo Mountain State Forest, boundary of Bergen and Passaic counties in the New Jersey Highlands. Copyright © George M. Aronson. Cover by Octavo Design.

To order a copy of *A Region At Risk: The Third Regional Plan for the New York–New Jersey–Connecticut Metropolitan Area* by Robert D. Yaro and Tony Hiss, contact Island Press, 1718 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, DC, 20009-1148, phone 800-828-1302, fax 202-234-1328.

For more information on Regional Plan Association, visit our web site at <http://maestro.com/~rpa/rpa.html>

Regional Plan Association—A Catalyst With a History of Results

The nation's oldest independent planning organization, Regional Plan Association promotes sustainable economic development, sound environmental stewardship, and broad social equity for the New York–New Jersey–Connecticut Metropolitan Region. Supported by a wide array of corporations, foundations, and individuals from all over the region, RPA prepares long-range comprehensive plans for the region and advocates for their implementation across the 2,000 political jurisdictions that fragment the metropolitan area. Over the years RPA's recommendations have shaped the network of highways, railways, parks, communities, and urban centers that define the region as we know it today, enabling the region to remain at the forefront of the global economy.

RPA's First Regional Plan, published in 1929, brought the region together to build a network of roads, railways, and parks that directly shaped two generations of growth. The Second Regional Plan, published in 1968, renewed the regional focus on landscape and transportation, leading to protection of nearly 1 million acres of open space. It advocated combining the New York City subways and several suburban railroads into the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and NJ TRANSIT, which led to a multi-billion dollar reinvestment program that served as a foundation for the region's surging growth in the 1980s.

Introduction

As a new millennium approaches, the metropolitan region of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut is a region at risk.

- Despite our strength in the global economy, we are facing years of slow growth and uncertainty following our worst recession in 50 years.
- Despite the billions of dollars spent every year by the public and private sectors on infrastructure, office space, and housing, the uncomfortable truth is that we have been living off the legacy of investments of previous generations.
- Despite a history of strength from diversity, a shadow of social division has fallen across the region.
- Despite strict laws and renewed public concern, we continue to pollute our air and water and checkerboard our rural areas with suburban sprawl.

The region faces a future in which it must compete in a global economy that offers new challenges and opportunities. The question posed is whether the next 25 years will represent the final chapter in a story of prosperity and momentum that dates back to the settlement of Manhattan in the 17th century. The warning is that modest growth in the next few years could mask the beginning of a long, slow, and potentially irreversible and tragic decline.

A regional perspective is the proper scale and context

for analyzing and addressing these issues. Metropolitan regions are becoming the dominant economic, environmental and social actors of the next century. During the 1980s, the metropolitan regions in the U.S. that grew most rapidly all had central cities that also grew rapidly. And in areas where suburban incomes declined, central cities also experienced decline. Nearly one-third of the income earned in New York City ends up in the pockets of commuters, around \$44 billion annually. More than ever, the economies, societies, and environments of all the communities in the Tri-State Metropolitan Region are intertwined, transcending arbitrary political divisions. Our cities and suburbs share a common destiny.

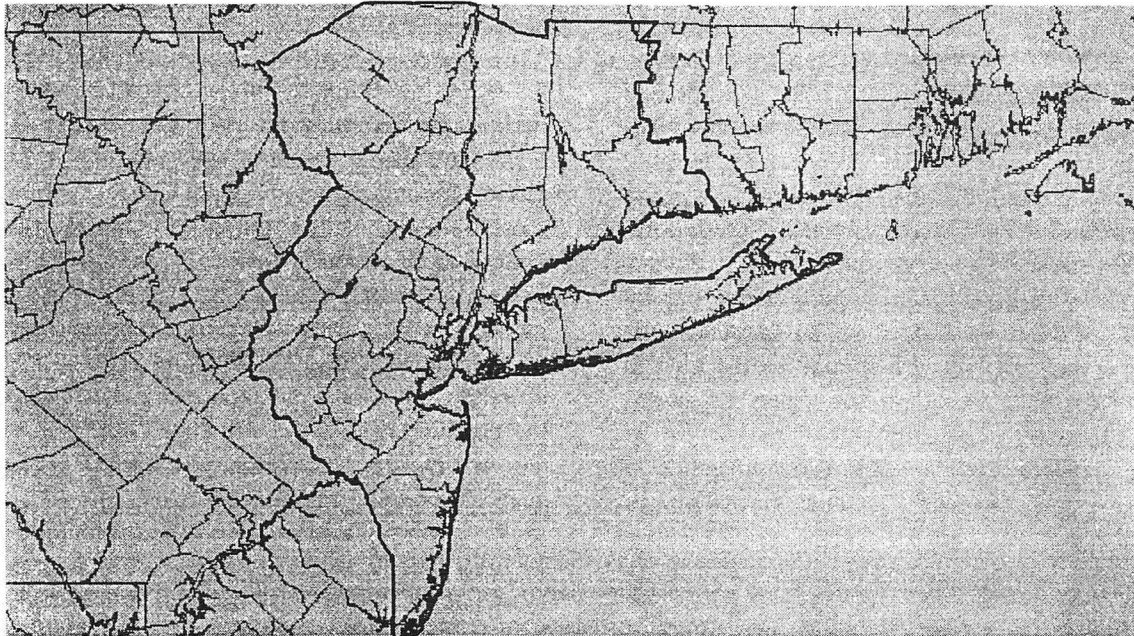
RPA has produced a plan to reconnect the region to its basic foundations, the “Three E’s”—economy, environment, and equity—that are the basis of our quality of life. The fundamental goal of the plan is to rebuild the “Three E’s” through investments and policies that integrate and build on our advantages, rather than focusing on just one of the “E’s” to the detriment of the others. Currently, economic development is too often border warfare, as states within the region try to steal businesses from each other in a zero-sum game. Social issues are either ignored or placated by a vast welfare system that fails to bring people into the economic mainstream. And environmental efforts focus on short-term solutions that attack the symptoms rather than the causes of problems.

This summary outlines RPA's analysis and projections of the "Three E's." It summarizes the recommendations of *A Region at Risk*, the Third Regional Plan, and groups them into five major campaigns that integrate the "Three E's": creating a regional greensward, concentrating growth in centers, improving mobility, investing

in a competitive workforce, and reforming governance. Each campaign combines the goals of economic, equity, and environmental improvements, leading the region to a more competitive, prosperous, fair, and sustainable future.

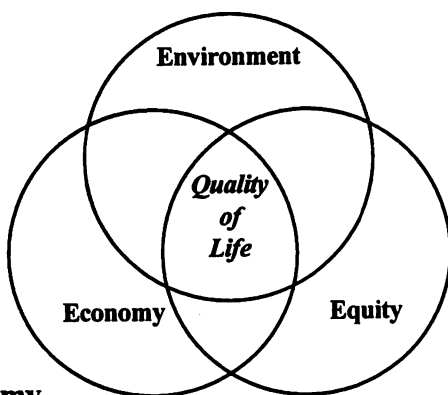
The Tri-State Metropolitan Region

RPA focuses its research and analysis on the 31 counties that compose and surround New York City and function as a single region. They encompass southwestern Connecticut, New York City's five boroughs, Long Island, the lower Hudson Valley, and northern New Jersey. It includes nearly 20 million people, a more than half-trillion dollar economy, and nearly 800 cities, towns, and villages spread across 13,000 square miles.



The “Three E’s”: Where We Are, Where We Are Headed

The “Three E’s” are the objectives of the plan, the components of RPA’s goal of improving quality of life.



Economy

Between 1989 and 1992, this region fell into a steep and frightening recession that claimed 770,000 jobs—the largest job loss of any metropolitan area since World War II—eliminating virtually all our growth from the 1980s. Unlike previous recessions, however, all parts of the region suffered losses of similar magni-

tude. Immediate growth prospects for many key industries remain weak or uncertain, and recovery has been much slower than in other parts of the nation.

This recession and slow recovery must be considered in the context of a wrenching global transformation. New technologies have radically changed how goods and services are produced, marketed, and distributed, and a fiercely competitive global economy can quickly turn the fortunes of a business or a community. Low-skilled workers are particularly vulnerable to this transformation, as automation, rising skill requirements, and corporate downsizing have depressed wages and job opportunities.

But this region has enormous advantages in the emerging global economy. It is the world’s most active and innovative center of global capital management, with more than 10,000 international businesses. It is an unsurpassed producer of information, with leadership in broadcasting, book publishing, and magazines and electronic media. This region is a premier designer of popular culture, through the arts, mass marketing, me-

dia, and an increasing multi-culturalism that equips us to compete directly in dozens of languages and cultures. With over 150 colleges and universities, it is one of the world's largest centers for research and academia. Finally, it is the meeting grounds for governments from around the world, with the United Nations, its affiliates, and permanent missions drawing an unparalleled diversity of people, interests, and ideas.

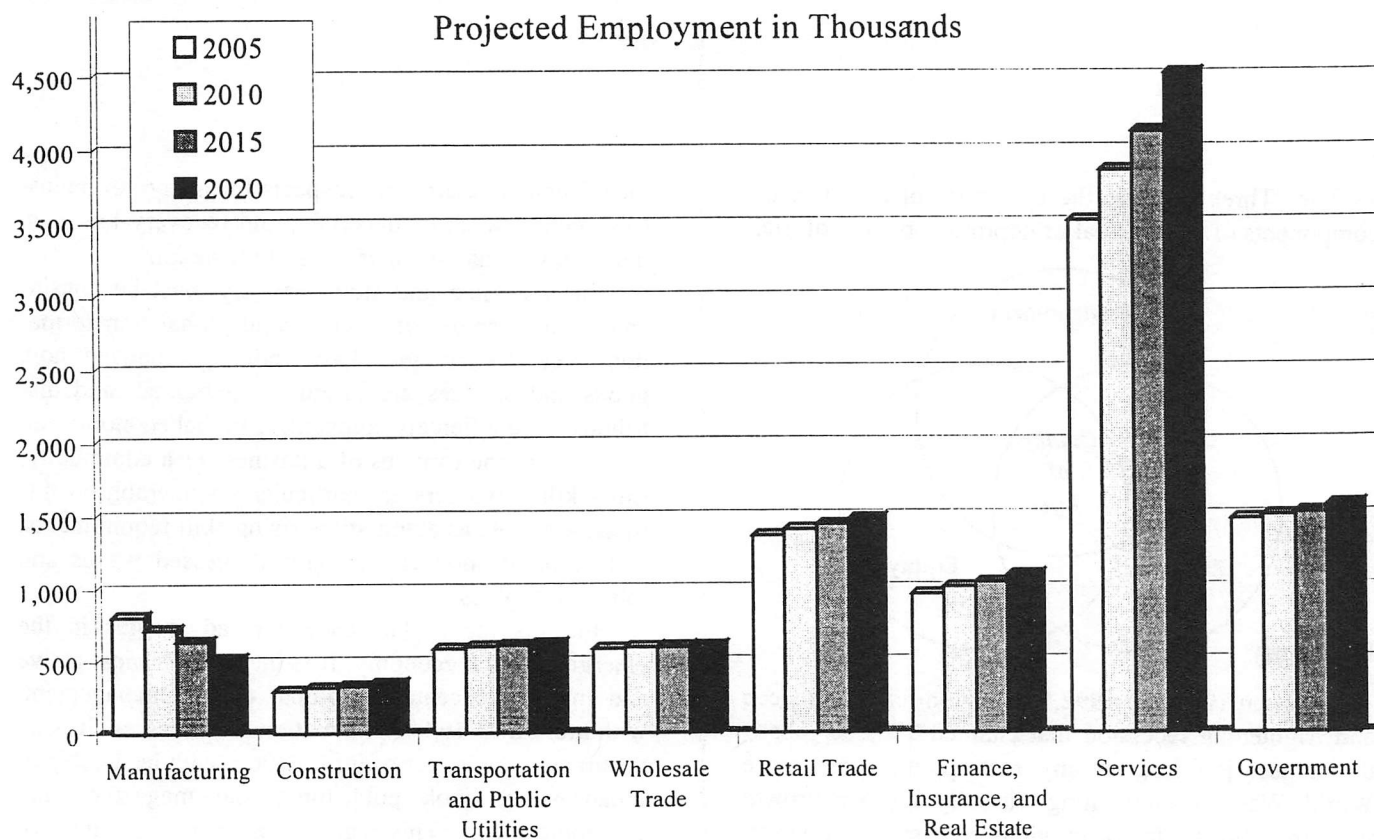
Over the next decade, the region is likely to experience sluggish growth as employment recovers to its pre-recession peak. Moderate growth fueled by new global markets and information technology will be countered by continued corporate downsizing and global competition. These trends will likely result in continued employment losses in manufacturing and government, but modest increases in financial, business, and personal services.

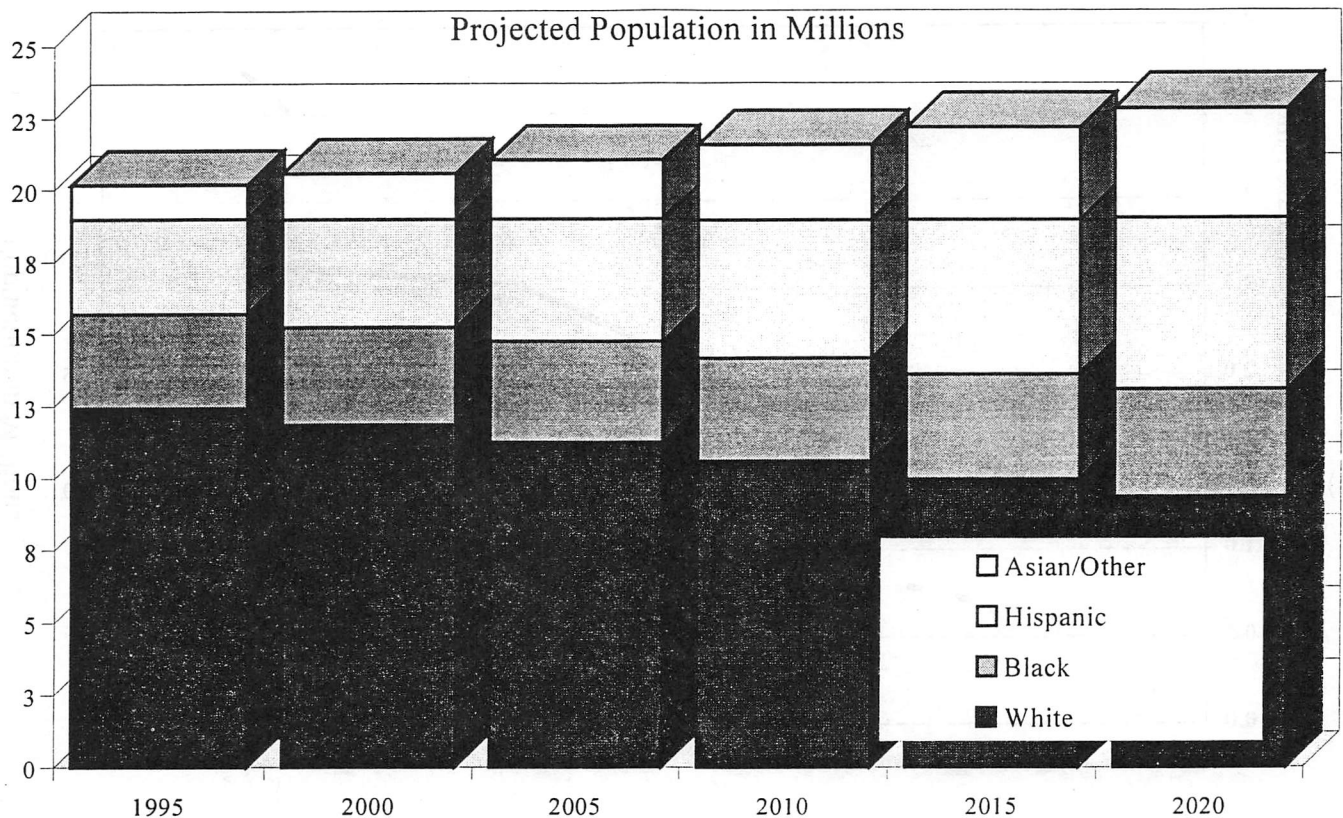
In the long term, the region has the opportunity to enjoy sustainable economic growth driven by productivity gains and increased sales to expanding global markets. But that promise could fail without new investments in infrastructure, communities, environment and the workforce. Increasingly, quality of life is the benchmark against which the region is judged in competition with other regions in the nation and world.

Equity

This region is one of the most diverse in human history. Residents speak more languages, offer a wider array of skills, reside across more extreme densities, and live under the broadest range of incomes in the nation. Demographic projections show that it will be even more diverse in the future. By the year 2020 a majority of the region's residents will be of African, Asian, or Hispanic heritage, largely as a result of a constant flow of immigrants from around the globe. Since 1970 the region has drawn nearly 3 million legal immigrants, almost one-fifth of the nation's total legal entries. Throughout the 1990s and beyond, immigrants and their children will account for virtually all of the region's expansion in working-age population. These new residents bring with them enormous talent and cultural diversity—New York City could never have become the world capital it is without them.

But even as we become a more diverse society, disturbing trends show us becoming a more isolated and fragmented society. Low-skilled workers face a future of declining incomes and sporadic employment, and over two million residents of the region already live in poverty. Nearly three million adults in the region are





estimated to be functionally illiterate. Most new jobs will demand at least some college or post-secondary education, yet a large share of urban students never finish high school. And poverty remains much more concentrated among non-white residents, even when differences in education and skills are accounted for, demonstrating that bias and segregation remain persistent problems.

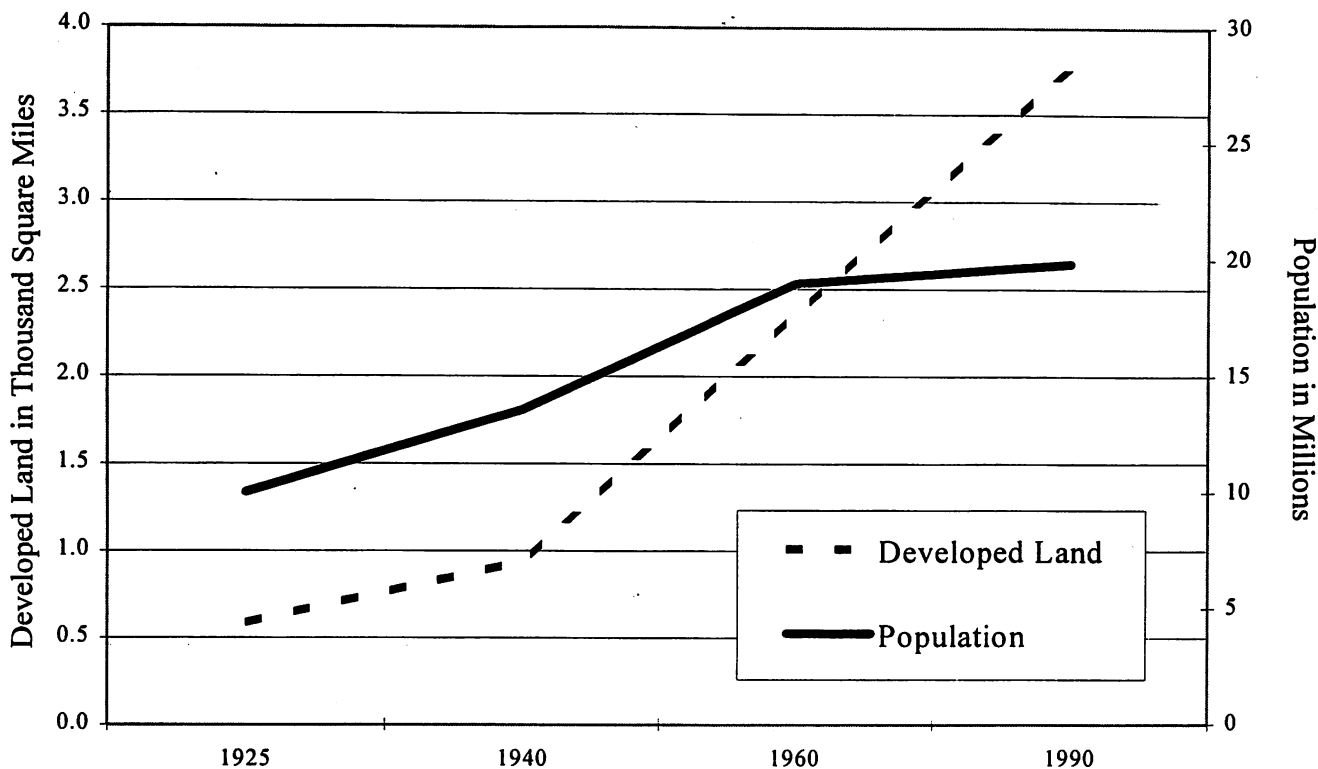
Entire communities are being left out of the region's growing prosperity, as too many people have come to accept the concept of a permanent underclass. Some people now see our diversity not as the enormous advantage it provides in the world economy, but as a hindrance. For a prosperous future, this region must do a better job of welcoming and assimilating its present immigrant population, as well as the 1.25 million new immigrants expected in the next 10 years. Isolated by physical barriers—such as a lack of housing or public transportation alternatives—that separate residences from new employment opportunities, inner-city communities have been cut off from the new employment centers in the region's suburbs. The region needs to work harder to integrate isolated and racially diverse communities into its social fabric and economic mainstream.

These communities can either be an enormous advantage, or a liability, depending on the policies put in place now, from affordable housing to education to economic development.

Environment

This region is a national leader in environmental protection, having enacted comprehensive and far-reaching environmental standards and having spent the money and political capital needed to make the laws work. As a result, the region has added 350,000 acres of public parkland since the 1960s, while air and water quality has improved significantly. Yet these achievements can obscure the serious nature of problems that still confront us. Most of the region does not meet federal air quality standards. More and more drinking water must now be filtered. Many urban neighborhoods lack park acreage and suburban development continues to sprawl across mountains and farmland.

In the past 30 years a new pattern of land use has swept the region, involving the construction of massive campus-style commercial and industrial facilities in sprawling residential suburbs. From 1970 to 1995, core urban counties lost more than 300,000 jobs while the



outer suburban ring gained 2 million. Eighty percent of the 1.7 million housing units built since 1970 were constructed in the region's outer ring, as residents sought affordable housing, lower taxes, and escape from the problems of cities and inner suburbs. But these rings of deconcentrated suburbs consume vast areas of open land and shatter traditional patterns of community.

The spread-out pattern of homes and jobs has led people to drive more than ever. The number of vehicle miles traveled in the region grew by 60% from 1970 to 1990, creating congestion on highways and roads. Growing use of automobiles, trucks, and buses is also the key reason why the region is second only to Los Angeles in number of days that air quality fails to meet federal standards. But current toll policies are absolutely backward, rejecting the fundamental market principle of charging more for a scarce resource. Instead, tolls are discounted for commuters who use the roads during the most crowded times. Furthermore, parking is often provided for free and gasoline is now cheaper in constant dollars than it has ever been, costing less than bottled water.

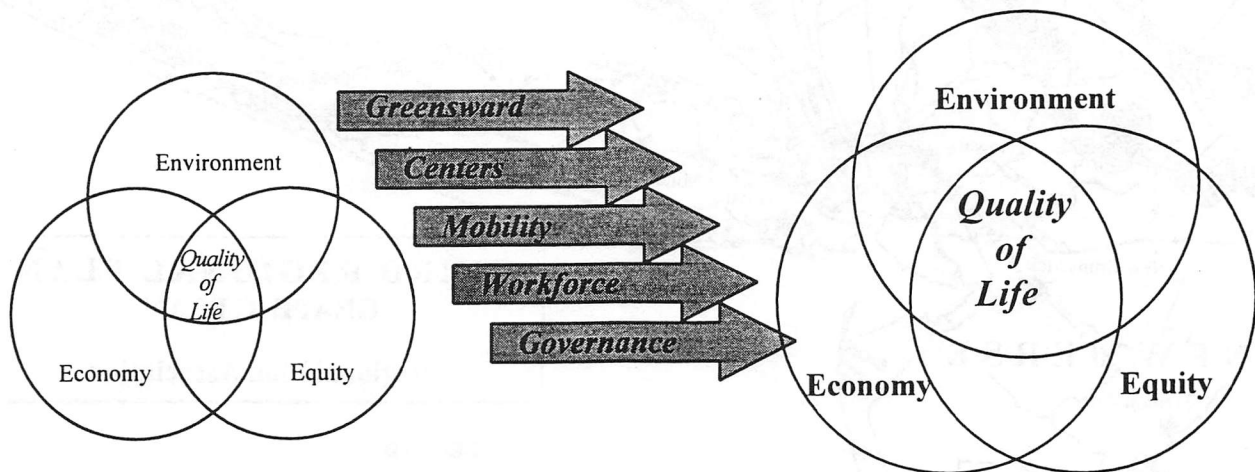
At the same time, the region has abandoned urban areas, hollowing out cities that historically have been the locus for jobs and residences. By 1980 the majority of the region's residents did not live in a city. The most

visible impact of this has been the conversion of forests, farms, and wetlands to urban uses and the paving of wildlife habitat and natural resources. The region lost 40% of its farmland between 1964 and 1987, and development outside urban areas continues at around 30,000 acres a year.

This challenge comes at a time of widespread dissatisfaction with environmental management by business and the public sectors. Government policies that call for polluted sites to be cleaned by their owners often impede beneficial site restoration. In 1994, more than \$4.6 billion in state, federal, and local funds were allocated for water pollution control in coastal waters and \$2.8 billion was spent disposing of garbage. But all of the region's landfills will reach capacity around the year 2000, and we will be spending more on pollution control and disposal in the future.

Efforts to protect the environment from further degradation will have to begin looking at the causes of problems—such as land use and transportation—to find innovative and comprehensive solutions. We can do a better job of protecting the environment and living within our means by learning to produce less waste, recycle, and rely on biological systems for natural resource management and pollution control.

The Five Campaigns



Strategies for improving the region's quality of life must reinforce all three of the cornerstone E's and demonstrate how our economy, equity, and environment are vitally linked to each other, or those strategies may, in fact, be counter-productive.

Five initiatives anchor the plan—*Greensward*, *Centers*, *Mobility*, *Workforce*, and *Governance*. Each campaign addresses all three E's. Together, they have been designed to re-energize the region by re-greening, re-connecting, and re-centering it. The *Greensward* safeguards the region's green infrastructure of forests, watersheds, estuaries, and farms, and establishes green limits for future growth. *Centers* focuses the next generation of growth in the region's existing downtown employment and residential areas. *Mobility* creates a

new transportation network that knits together the re-strengthened centers. *Workforce* provides groups and individuals living in these centers with the skills and connections needed to bring them into the economic mainstream. Achieving these ends will require new ways of organizing and energizing our political and civic institutions, as outlined in *Governance*. Collectively, all of these strategies underpin the region's quality of life and can guide us to sustainable growth as we enter the 21st century.

The goal of the campaigns in the Third Regional Plan is to integrate and improve the region's economy, environment, and equity, thereby improving our quality of life.



Greensward

Two generations of decentralized growth have drastically increased the region's urban land—by 60% in 30 years despite only a 13% increase in population. Continuing exurban development at a rate of more than 30,000 acres a year threatens large areas of open land and critical environmental resources at the region's outer edge, more than 50 miles from Manhattan.

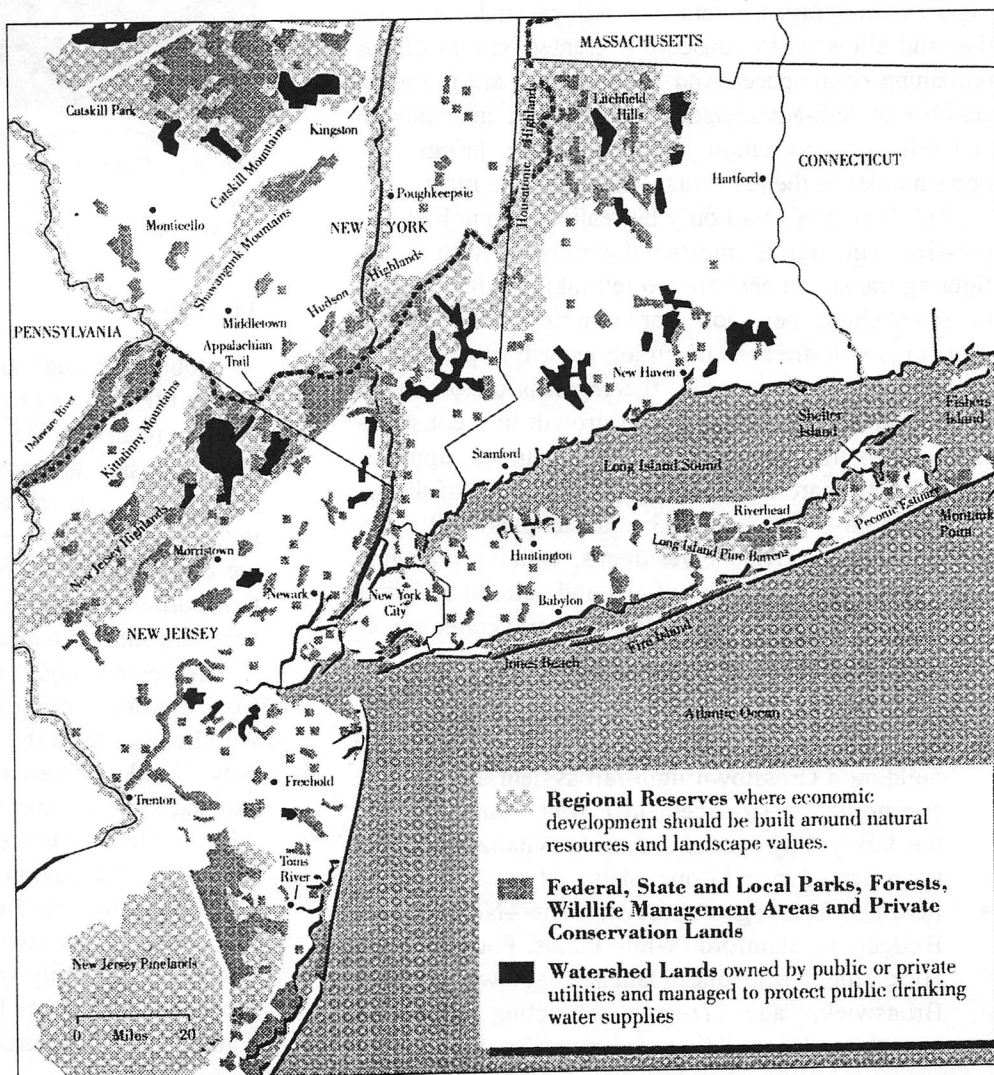
The region needs a regional greensward that safeguards water and food supplies and recreational opportunities and shapes future growth by integrating protected large-scale landscape resources, an established regional network of greenways, and revitalized urban parks and open spaces. The greensward makes economic sense, protecting the environmental infrastructure that would otherwise require costly cleanup and pollution controls. It will provide important benefits to people, safeguarding access to recreation and natural and agricultural landscapes. And it will be good for the environment, providing a long-term and comprehensive plan to reconcile local land use and development with broader regional objectives.

RPA is undertaking projects designed to protect key open space tracts, manage natural resources, protect productive farmland, provide land use planning assistance to local communities, and revitalize urban parks. Eleven landscapes and coastal estuaries are of particular concern: the Long Island Pine Barrens and Peconic Estuary; Catskill Mountains; Shawangunk and Kittatinny mountains; New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Appalachian Highlands; Hudson River; Delaware River; New Jersey Pinelands; Long Island Sound; New York/New Jersey Harbor; Atlantic seashore; and disappearing active farmland. These reserves comprise 2.5 million acres that are currently at risk of being consumed by sprawl.

Models for protection of these areas already exist in the New Jersey Pinelands and especially in the Long Island Pine Barrens, where a new locally controlled commission is protecting 50,000 acres and supervising development on another 50,000 acres. The recent agreement between New York City and upstate communities to balance growth and protection of the watershed builds on this experience.

Major recommendations of the campaign include:

- Establish 11 regional reserves that protect public water supplies, estuaries, natural habitats, and farmlands and function as an urban growth boundary for the region.
- Reinvest in urban parks, public spaces, and natural resources, restoring and creating new spaces in urban neighborhoods and along waterfronts.
- Create a regional network of greenways that provide access to recreational areas.



Centers

Recent development patterns have shifted resources and investment away from the region's cities and inner-suburbs, so that virtually all our employment growth in the past 30 years has been located outside existing centers. Unless this trend is reversed, the region will face ever-worsening problems of limited access to employment opportunities, wide income disparities, social isolation, environmental degradation, and lack of affordable housing. Already, economic consequences of decayed cities, traffic congestion, and the region's deteriorating quality of life are apparent.

The region must work to improve quality of life and economic opportunities in centers, including not only the region's Central Business District but also downtowns throughout the region such as Newark, Poughkeepsie, and Bridgeport. Centers provide a more efficient use of resources and reduce costs for the entire regional economy. Centers also reduce land consumption and allow us to conserve a greater portion of our remaining open space. And because they are more accessible to less-advantaged communities, investing in and bringing new employment to centers brings new opportunities to the residents who need them most.

But these goals will only be realized through an aggressive campaign to improve downtowns, from reconfiguring transit connections, to rethinking urban design, to establishing new job opportunities. The Centers Campaign will direct as much job growth as possible to central business districts in the region's major downtowns and encourage residential growth in a constellation of centers. The goal is to maintain the approximately 50% share that centers currently have of the region's employment. To do this, the campaign will work for new public-private investments, creative planning, and zoning, and expansion of arts and cultural activities that foster the kind of desirable mixed-use communities that will attract jobs and residents to centers.

Major recommendations of the campaign include:

- Strengthen the region's Central Business District by building a Crosstown light-rail system and district, expanding transit access to Lower Manhattan and the Jersey City waterfront, and revitalizing Downtown Brooklyn and Long Island City.
- Invest in 11 regional downtowns—New Haven, Bridgeport, Stamford, White Plains, Poughkeepsie, Hicksville, Mineola, Jamaica, Newark, New Brunswick, and Trenton—attracting new job growth and rebuilding communities rather than

building on greenfield sites.

- Create incentives for new development and investment in transit- and pedestrian-friendly centers throughout the region, so they provide the quality of life that makes living and working in centers worthwhile.
- Support new institutions and uses in centers, such as “telematic” at-home businesses, mixed use districts, and arts and cultural institutions.



The arts are a critical resource to the region's quality of life. The Centers Campaign seeks to promote arts and cultural institutions as catalysts for the revitalization of centers throughout the region.

Mobility

Mobility throughout the region is hampered by limited and fragmented transit service, a freight rail system that terminates at the west side of the Hudson River, and congested and bottlenecked roads. There is little capacity for growth on the current highway system, unless new development takes place even further from the center of the region. At the same time, the public transportation system requires new commitment and investment simply to maintain it in a state of good repair.

The region should invest in a Regional Express Rail (Rx) network to bring mobility throughout the region to world-class standards, which can be accomplished with only 25 miles of new rail track—a 2% expansion of the existing system—and by re-using abandoned or underutilized infrastructure. Improved mobility would strengthen the region's economy by reducing travel times and transfers to employment centers and airports, improving freight connections, and using the road system more efficiently with less congestion. It would improve our society, as less-advantaged communities become better connected to employment opportunities.

allowing people and goods to travel more quickly with less pollution.

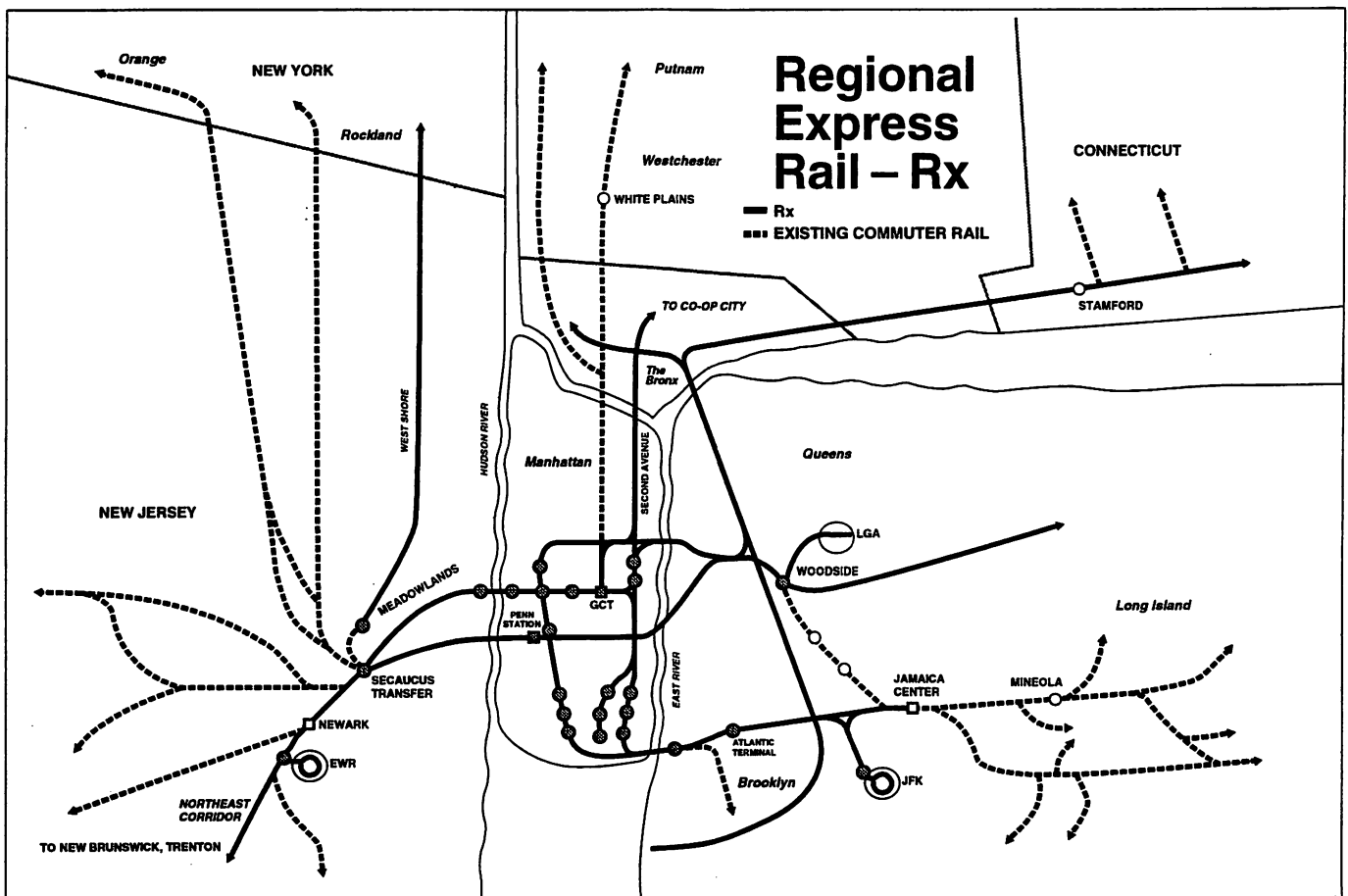
The Mobility Campaign has three principal components: improved transit service, a transformed freight system, and a highway network with reduced congestion. The campaign will promote a Regional Express Rail network that supports the centers of commerce and provides fuller access to major employment sites. RPA will advance strategies that promote a more efficient system of freight movement in the region. And the campaign will work to institute market-based transportation pricing measures that recognize the full public and private costs of transportation and add efficiency through market incentives.

Major recommendations of the campaign include:

- Build a Regional Express Rail (Rx) system that provides: airport access by connecting the Long Is-

land Railroad to Grand Central Terminal, Lower Manhattan, Kennedy Airport, and LaGuardia Airport; direct access from New Jersey and Long Island to the East Side and Lower Manhattan; direct service from the Hudson Valley and Connecticut to the West Side and Lower Manhattan; through service from New Jersey to Connecticut and Long Island; and service between the boroughs in a new circumferential subway line.

- Promote congestion-busting through road-pricing and market approaches, such as tolls and employer incentives. Also finish missing links in the highway network that support existing centers or remedy notorious bottlenecks.
- Improve commercial transportation by building a freight rail trans-Hudson crossing and cutting congestion on the highway system.



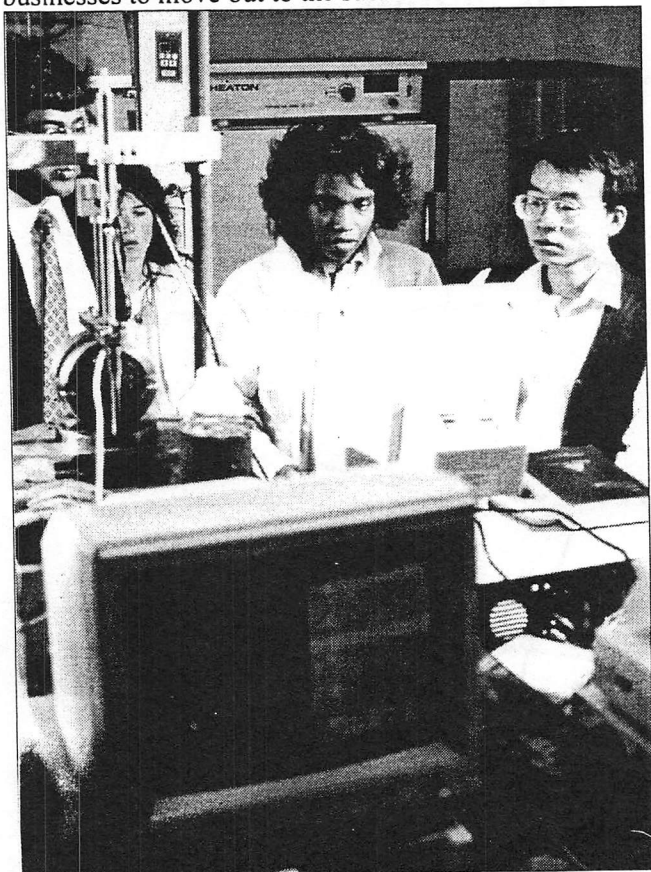
The Rx System in the Region.

The existing commuter rail network is shaded, while new Rx connections are depicted in black. Where there is an overlap, as on the Northeast Corridor in New Jersey and on MetroNorth's New Haven line, the Rx shading is used.

Workforce

The emerging economy in today's global market will require a competitive, educated workforce to perform increasingly complex jobs. High-paying jobs in growing international service industries will be particularly demanding of new skills. But entire communities are being left behind by these trends, failed by the institutions and regulations that should allow them to become full participants in a growing economy.

The region must help provide young people and adults, particularly from low-income communities, with the skills and access needed to participate in information and technology-based industries. Workforce development ensures economic growth by supplying the workers needed for new technology-based activities and by increasing productivity. It addresses social equity by closing the skill gap that creates larger disparities in income. And it improves our environment by focusing growth into urban centers, rather than encouraging more businesses to move out to the suburbs.



A workforce with diverse skills and cultures is central to the region's strength in the global economy.

RPA calls upon the region's business, education, labor, and civic institutions to develop a system of life-long learning that meets the requirements of a competitive, knowledge-based economy and to reform institutions and regulations to allow low-income communities to participate fully in the mainstream economy. The campaign will identify existing strengths and weaknesses in our current systems and propose benchmarks for regional institutions. RPA will also support increased private sector participation in workforce development initiatives and will advocate policies to increase school financing in low-income communities, encourage greater participation by immigrant populations in the mainstream economy, loosen restrictions on "informal" economic activities, and improve access to information, telecommunications, and transportation services for poorer communities.

Major recommendations of the campaign include:

- Improve education in low-income communities by combining state financing of public education with local management reforms and teaching innovations.
- Reconnect education and the workplace with local school-to-work alliances linking schools to employers, state tax incentives to encourage continuous education for adult workers, and a tri-state council of business, labor, education, and civic leaders to coordinate workforce development initiatives.
- Bring immigrants and minorities into the mainstream economy by expanding English literacy programs, legitimizing informal economic activities, and seeking moderate reform of federal immigration statutes.
- Connect low-income communities by expanding support for community-based organizations, improving transportation links to job centers, and using new information technologies to expand job information networks.

Governance

The region is composed of 20 million people living in 13,000 square miles governed by over 2,000 units of government, including counties, cities, towns, service districts, and authorities. Each of these political entities is funded almost exclusively through property tax, and the majority of them control their own budgets independently. The result is fiscal imbalance and inefficiencies, in the form of duplication of efforts, depletion



In Jamaica Bay, a smart infrastructure approach is achieving water quality improvements by protecting and restoring natural systems and habitat. The smart infrastructure plan, which replaced a proposed treatment plant, has improved wildlife and fishery habitats and provided new recreational opportunities with an estimated 50% reduction in the cleanup budget.

and degradation of natural resources, self-serving and short-sighted decisions, cumbersome land use regulatory processes, and inadequate delivery of public services.

The Governance Campaign will re-focus state government and regional authorities, enabling us to build and manage world-class infrastructure and reduce regulatory burdens and tax inefficiencies. Reforming governance is necessary for the region's economy, as it is clear that we cannot support current deficient systems, with delays and expensive regulations. Governance is critical to providing greater equity for the region's society, in public education, land use, and service delivery. And governance is crucial to protecting our environment, as we reform land use regulations that currently encourage sprawl rather than redevelopment.

Through reform of taxation and land use regulations, RPA will promote faster and better delivery of public services with less duplication, fewer layers of bureaucracy, and a reduction in conflicting mandates. The Governance Campaign will propose more efficient public

capital infrastructure investments, identified in the plan, and effective state development plans and growth boundaries.

Major recommendations of the campaign include:

- Coordinate governance in the region through state growth management plans, education finance reform, service sharing, and new regional coalitions:
 - * An annual "G-3" governors' conference to coordinate policies and investments to promote regional competitiveness and a regional compact between the three governors to reduce border warfare economic development policies.
 - * A Tri-State Congressional Coalition to fight for essential federal tax and regulatory reforms and infrastructure funds.
 - * A Tri-State Business Council composed of the major regional chambers of commerce and partnerships to coordinate regional promotion and advocacy and develop a regional business plan.

- Create new public institutions to finance and provide regional services, such as a Tri-State Regional Transportation Authority, a restructured Port Authority, and a Tri-State Infrastructure Bank.
- Improve public and private decision-making processes, incorporating sustainable economics in accounting and tax and regulatory systems and utilizing smart infrastructure approaches to capital investments.

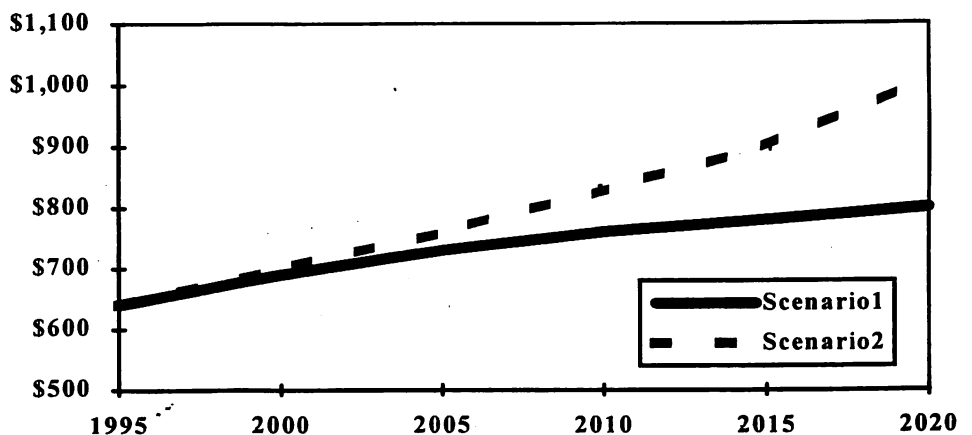
Paying for the Plan

If fully implemented, the plan's five campaigns will yield a range of benefits that include stronger and more sustainable economic growth, a more cohesive society with a more equitable distribution of prosperity, cleaner air and water, less congestion, more attractive communities, and a rich legacy for future generations. Many of these benefits cannot be quantified, because we lack the tools to measure them effectively. However, a plausible scenario can be constructed to demonstrate the difference between current trends and the result of a pro-active strategy to reinvest in the region's human, physical, and natural resources.

For the past several decades the region's share of the national economy has declined. If this trend continues at the same rate, the region will decline from around 9% of the national Gross Domestic Product today to near 7% by 2020. This chart shows two projections for our Gross Regional Product—

continuing its declining share of the nation's GDP (scenario 1) or maintaining its current share and growing at the same rate as the rest of the country (scenario 2). The chart shows that holding our share of the nation's growth could translate into an additional \$200 billion annually in the region's economy by 2020.

Projected Gross Regional Product, 1995 to 2020
(in billions of 1994 dollars)



The investments, policies, and governance reforms recommended in the plan do not guarantee that the region will achieve this goal. In fact, in the short run the region will probably continue to see some decline in its share of national GDP. But long-term paybacks from the investments proposed in the plan could make it possible for the region to stabilize its share within the next decade. This strategy would be supported by the region's expanding links to global markets which are expected to grow more rapidly than the U.S. economy. The sooner we begin investing in these resources, the sooner we will gain the benefits of them.

To implement the recommendations in three campaigns—*Greensward*, *Centers*, and *Mobility*—RPA estimates that the region will need to spend \$75 billion above current spending levels in capital expenditures over the next 25 years. Specifically, the plan estimates that establishing 11 regional reserves, instituting greenways and cleaning up urban parks and waterfronts will cost \$11 billion; that \$17 billion will be necessary to attract new jobs and development to the region's downtowns and make significant progress in affordable housing needs; and that building a world-class express rail system while improving highway and freight movement will cost \$47 billion. The recommendations of the workforce campaign carry additional costs, from returning public schools to a state of good repair to addressing adult literacy, that are more difficult to estimate.

RPA proposes that these investments be funded through a combination of strategies that increase government efficiency or charge users for services, rather than increasing general taxes. Even with recent downsizing in state and local government, innovative approaches to right-size government and the reduced costs of providing services to compact centers can achieve additional savings of several billion dollars. Phasing out costly "border warfare" economic development strategies would also provide significant revenue for investment—as much as \$500 million annually if tax incentives to businesses were reduced by half. Major new

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Estimated Cost (in billions)</i>
The Greensward Campaign	
Regional Reserves	6
Greenways	1
Urban Parks, Natural Resources and Waterfront Redevelopment	4
Total Greensward	11
The Centers Campaign	
Housing	10
Downtown Revitalization	4
Arts and Historic Preservation	2
Brownfields	1
Total Centers	17
The Mobility Campaign	
Regional Express Rail-Rx	21
Transit Upgrade	15
Highways	4
Freight and Airports	7
Total Mobility	47
Total Capital Costs	75

revenue sources could include incentive-based tolls on highways and bridges, a 1-cent charge per vehicle mile traveled (VMT), and a 10-cent per gallon tax on gasoline. These fees could yield a total of \$40 billion over the next 25 years. To pay for watershed protection and open space preservation, new development fees, a property tax surcharge in the regional reserves, and a .001-cent charge per gallon of water could generate over \$300 million a year. Finally, the plan's investments would yield additional revenue from stronger economic growth. An increase in gross regional product of \$200 billion by 2020 could produce an additional \$20 billion annually in state and municipal tax collection, even with a decrease in tax rates.

Combined, these revenue sources would provide financing for the \$75 billion in infrastructure investments and much of the workforce investments proposed in the plan.

Call to Action

Regional Plan Association has prepared an ambitious plan that targets new investments necessary for sustained growth and continued prosperity in an uncertain future. The plan calls for radical changes in the status quo and bold initiative on the part of citizens. Some of the recommendations carry significant price tags, but the Tri-State Metropolitan Region cannot afford *not* to make these investments. Projections and analysis demonstrate that we are reaching the end of credible short-term solutions and must begin to look at the fundamental causes of our mounting problems. At their root, these issues are all regional and will require comprehensive approaches for meaningful improvements.

The five campaigns outlined in this document are presented in greater detail in *A Region at Risk: The Third Regional Plan for the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Area*. To succeed, each campaign will need the active support and cooperation of

government, business, and civic leadership. To the degree that our elected officials do not provide the necessary leadership, we must form new civic coalitions demanding change. These new "third sector" coalitions will build on one of the region's untapped strengths—its thousands of community, business, environmental, and other groups. New coalitions are already being formed that bring together competing interests and forge new ways of addressing old problems. These include coalitions between environmentalists and developers, between government and business, and between local interests and regional imperatives. By looking at the long-term and considering the interlocking goals of economy, equity and environment, we can build on our strengths and enter the next millennium strategically placed for another century of growth and prosperity. But we must act now. The region's competitiveness and sustainability in a changing world hangs in the balance.

Summary of Recommendations

Greensward

- Establish 11 regional reserves that protect public water supplies, estuaries, and farmlands and function as an urban growth boundary for the region.
- Reinvest in urban parks, public spaces, and natural resources, restoring and creating new spaces in urban neighborhoods and along waterfronts.
- Create a regional network of greenways that provide access to recreational areas.

Centers

- Strengthen the region's Central Business District by building a Crosstown light-rail system and district, expanding transit access to Lower Manhattan and the Jersey City waterfront, and revitalizing Downtown Brooklyn and Long Island City.
- Invest in 11 regional downtowns—New Haven, Bridgeport, Stamford, White Plains, Poughkeepsie, Hicksville, Mineola, Jamaica, Newark, New Brunswick, and Trenton—attracting new job growth and rebuilding communities rather than building on greenfield sites.
- Create incentives for new development and investment in transit- and pedestrian-friendly centers throughout the region, so they provide the quality of life that makes living and working in centers worthwhile.
- Support new institutions and uses in centers, such as “telematic” at-home businesses, mixed use districts, and arts and cultural institutions.

Mobility

- Build a Regional Express Rail (Rx) system that provides: airport access by connecting the Long Island Railroad to Grand Central Terminal, Lower Manhattan, Kennedy Airport, and LaGuardia Airport; direct access from New Jersey and Long Island to the East Side and Lower Manhattan; direct service from the Hudson Valley and Connecticut to the West Side and Lower Manhattan; through service from New Jersey to Connecticut and Long Island; and service between the boroughs in a new circumferential subway line.
- Promote congestion-busting through road-pricing and market approaches, such as tolls and employer incentives. Also finish missing links in the highway network that support existing centers or remedy notorious bottlenecks.
- Improve commercial transportation by building a freight rail trans-Hudson crossing and cutting congestion on the highway system.

Workforce

- Improve education in low-income communities by combining state financing of public education with local management reforms and teaching innovations.
- Reconnect education and the workplace with local school-to-work alliances linking schools to employers, state tax incentives to encourage continuous education for adult workers, and a tri-state council of business, labor, education, and civic leaders to coordinate workforce development initiatives.
- Bring immigrants and minorities into the mainstream economy by expanding English literacy programs, legitimizing informal economic activities, and seeking moderate reform of federal immigration statutes.
- Connect low-income communities by expanding support for community-based organizations, improving transportation links to job centers, and using new information technologies to expand job information networks.

Governance

- Coordinate governance in the region through state growth management plans, education finance reform, service sharing, and new regional coalitions:
 - * An annual "G-3" governors' conference to coordinate policies and investments to promote regional competitiveness and a regional compact between the three governors to reduce border warfare economic development policies.
 - * A Tri-State Congressional Coalition to fight for essential federal tax and regulatory reforms and infrastructure funds.
 - * A Tri-State Business Council composed of all the major regional chambers of commerce and partnerships to coordinate regional promotion and advocacy and develop a regional business plan.
- Create new public institutions to finance and provide regional services, such as a Tri-State Regional Transportation Authority, a restructured Port Authority, and a Tri-State Infrastructure Bank.
- Improve public and private decision-making processes, incorporating sustainable economics in accounting and tax and regulatory systems and utilizing smart infrastructure approaches to capital investments.

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HISTORY AND PURPOSE

For more than 75 years, **Regional Plan Association** has been the nation's most influential independent regional planning organization. Since 1922, **RPA** has worked to improve the quality of life in the 31-county New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan area by creating long-term comprehensive plans and promoting their implementation across political boundaries. **RPA** recommends policy initiatives and physical and human infrastructure investments and involves the public in considering and shaping its future. **RPA** takes positions on major current public policy issues and works constructively and cooperatively on a non-partisan basis with public and private sector interests to advance its agenda.

RPA's First Plan in 1929 provided the blueprint for the transportation and open space networks that we take for granted today. The Second Plan in 1968 was instrumental in restoring our deteriorated mass transit, preserving threatened natural resources and revitalizing our urban centers.

THE THIRD REGIONAL PLAN - ADVOCACY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The product of more than five years of research and consultation, the Third Regional Plan was released in February, 1996. *A Region at Risk* presents a broad vision for making the region more competitive in today's demanding global economy. The Plan says that this new competitive environment requires that we make bold investments in our quality of life if we are to attract and retain increasingly mobile people and businesses. We must improve our Economy, Environment and Social Equity if we are to create a prosperous and satisfying future for all of the region's citizens.

The Plan makes 77 specific recommendations organized into five campaigns: Mobility, Greensward, Centers, Workforce and Governance. **RPA's** staff is organized around these five campaigns for the long-term process of advocating and implementing the recommendations. **RPA** will involve broad coalitions of civic and business interests in these campaigns to create powerful constituencies for change. We will use our long history of independence and objectivity to bring together diverse views and present balanced, practical solutions to the key public policy debates of today.

ORGANIZATION

RPA is a 501(c)3 private, not-for-profit organization. **RPA** is governed by a 60-member Board of Directors which, with the assistance of advisory State and local Committees, sets overall policy and priorities. The Board selects **RPA's** president to oversee the day-to-day operation of the Association. With a staff of approximately 25 employees including interns, **RPA** is divided into four administrative departments: Research & Policy, Finance & Administration, External Affairs and Development. With its main office in Manhattan, the organization also maintains offices on Long Island, in Newark, New Jersey and Stamford, Connecticut, each staffed by a director.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

RPA's budget for the current fiscal year is approximately \$2.5 million. Approximately half of the organization's income comes from unrestricted general corporate and foundation support and from individual memberships. The remainder comes primarily from restricted foundation grants to undertake specific projects.

THE THIRD REGIONAL PLAN—ADVOCACY AND IMPLEMENTATION

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The Plan makes 77 specific recommendations organized into five campaigns: Mobility, Greensward, Centers, Workforce and Governance. **RPA** is involving broad coalitions of civic and business interests in these campaigns to create powerful constituencies for change. We are using our long history of independence and objectivity to bring together diverse views and present balanced, practical solutions to the key public policy debates of today.

Since the release of the plan, important progress has been made in each of the five action campaigns:

- The **Mobility Campaign** has already achieved important successes in the launching of the JFK Airport rail access project and public commitments to the Second Avenue Subway after it languished for a generation and for the Long Island Rail Road connection to Grand Central Terminal. **RPA** is now making sure that the new MTA five-year Capital Program will be successfully carried out. The centerpiece of this effort is **RPA's** proposed *MetroLink*, which will improve service on the East Side and Lower Manhattan, create improved access from Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx and provide a one-seat ride to JFK Airport.
- The **Greensward Campaign** succeeded in establishing Sterling Forest State Park, the Long Island Pine Barrens Commission and the Hudson River Park. **RPA** is now concentrating its efforts in three important region-shaping open spaces. In the New York-New Jersey Harbor, we are continuing our efforts to create new parks on Governors Island and the Brooklyn Waterfront, and launching new access initiatives elsewhere along the Brooklyn, Bronx and Westchester County waterfronts. In the Appalachian Highlands, we are working with the Highlands Coalition to develop a comprehensive strategy for preserving priority conservation areas in New York and New Jersey. We have teamed with National Audubon Society and others to create a Long Island Sound reserve of protected habitat and public access.
- In the **Centers Campaign**, **RPA** outlined redevelopment strategies for transforming two major suburban regions—the Nassau Hub and selected towns in New Jersey—into sustainable transit- and pedestrian-friendly places. **RPA** is also helping to propose a new Master Plan for the City of Stamford, Connecticut, a waterfront reuse plan for Hastings-on-Hudson and is actively involved in the revitalization of neighborhoods along the Brooklyn Waterfront.
- The **Workforce Campaign** has initiated the Regional Technology Careers Initiative, which has implemented a pilot professional development program in five high schools in the Bronx and Westchester and issued an evaluation of business-education partnerships. The Campaign is also developing a regional Access-To-Jobs plan to connect low-income residents to job opportunities and initiating a demonstration project to link East Harlem residents to opportunities created by the construction of a Second Avenue subway.
- The **Governance Campaign** has successfully promoted reform of New Jersey's "brownfields," reclamation laws, and is now working to replicate this initiative in New York and Connecticut. **RPA** is also promoting "Smart Growth" programs in all three states to help control sprawl, protect open space and promote growth in designated centers. **RPA** is working to strengthen New Jersey's State Development and Redevelopment Plan, with a special focus on the plan's proposed Area of Critical State Concern designation for the Highlands. In New York and Connecticut, **RPA** is working to promoting smart growth legislation that would create incentives for municipalities and state agencies to adopt smart growth plans and regulations, as 16 other states have done.

THE MOBILITY CAMPAIGN

THE CHALLENGE

Mobility throughout the Region is hampered by limited and fragmented transit service, a rail freight system that terminates on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River and congested and bottlenecked roads. Our major highways operate at capacity, and there is little or no room for their expansion. The Region's transit systems are hard-pressed to make the renovations needed to maintain a state of good repair on existing systems. And yet, these transit systems are already heavily overcrowded, and must be improved and expanded if the Region's economic growth is to continue. Funds for these improvements will continue to be scarce, requiring creative solutions to reduce project costs, and hard decisions to identify additional funding sources.

CAMPAIGN MISSION

Establish a public commitment to and the implementation of the Regional Express Rail (Rx) system, including MetroLink, RPA's proposal for a new transit system in NYC, a rail freight tunnel under the New York Harbor connecting New Jersey with Long Island and market-based traffic congestion relief measures.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- **MTA Capital Program** - In concert with the Empire State Transportation Alliance (ESTA), **RPA** developed a capital needs assessment totaling over \$18 billion dollars for the next five years and \$68 billion over the next twenty years. This would allow implementation of *MetroLink* and the LIRR connection to Grand Central Terminal, elimination of diesel buses, acceleration of signal upgrades on the subways and passenger information systems, station modernization reforms and the continuation of the necessary state-of-good-repair program. The MTA followed with a \$17.1 billion 2000-2004 Capital Program that advances the LIRR-GCT connection, a full-length Second Avenue subway and substantially cleans up the diesel bus fleet. This agreement was reached after an intense campaign by **RPA** with the assistance of ESTA. However, despite the agreement, it is currently uncertain whether the MTA's Capital Program is fiscally sound and whether the MTA is fully committed to its implementation.
- **MetroLink** - Revived the long languishing Second Avenue subway as part of **RPA's** four borough transit system to serve Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx, and offer a direct connection to JFK Airport from Manhattan. *MetroLink* builds upon the Second Avenue and Downtown Rx lines that were proposed in the Third Regional Plan. The new services would relieve crowding on the Lexington Avenue and Queens Boulevard subways, provide Metro North riders with a high-speed link to the Lower Manhattan financial district, provide subway service for the first time to the East Village and Lower East Side and provide direct service to East Midtown for subway riders in Brooklyn.
- **Long Island Rail Road/Grand Central Connection** - **RPA** supports this project enthusiastically but conditionally. Despite its value, it will make crowding on the Lexington Avenue subway worse, and unless the Second Avenue Subway is completed simultaneously, the Lexington Avenue line will be in worse shape than it is today.
- **JFK Access** - After adopting **RPA's** recommendation to develop a system that is compatible with existing rail technology, the Port Authority now has construction well underway for Airtrain. The system should begin operations in 2003. *MetroLink* would use Airtrain as a springboard for a one-seat ride to JFK, serving Downtown Brooklyn and Lower and Midtown Manhattan.
- **I-287 HOV Lane** - Influenced Governor Pataki to reject the HOV lane on Interstate 287 in Westchester. The Governor's Task Force created in its wake has now recommended consideration of a new Tappan Zee Bridge and a commuter rail across the Hudson. Serious questions remain about both, and until these are answered, **RPA** is unable to take position at this time.
- **Tappan Zee Bridge Value Pricing** - Influenced decision by NY State Thruway Authority to adopt variable time of day tolls for trucks to relieve congestion Tappan Zee Bridge. The concept for cars has been commended by the Task Force and **RPA** is urging its adoption.

- *Clean Fuel Buses* - **RPA** has been a key supporter in the Natural Resource Defense Council's "Dump Dirty Diesels" campaign, providing an important voice on planning and infrastructure issues regarding the MTA bus fleet. The campaign has been a success: the MTA has committed to purchasing new clean-fuel natural gas and hybrid electric buses, retrofitting their existing fleet with improved emissions control and they will retire their dirtiest buses—all by the end of 2003.
- *Connecticut Coastal Corridor Coalition (CCC)* - Helped convene and staff CCC and reached consensus on program of TDM (traffic demand management) measures—many of which are incorporated in a program announced by Governor Rowland. Some measures included selected parking expansion, intra-Connecticut rail fare reductions and cashing out of free parking. Continuing work to ensure that CCC recommendations are included in ConnDOT's implementation plan to reduce congestion in the I-95/Merritt Parkway Corridor by five percent by the year 2002.
- *Nassau Hub* - Developed plan for a light rail circulator and connection to the LIRR in the Roosevelt/Mitchel Field area in concert with a transit-friendly design of new development.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- *MetroLink* - **RPA** is working with a diverse group of civic, business and agency interests to develop support for *MetroLink*.
- *MTA Capital Program* - With ESTA, **RPA** continues a dialogue with the MTA and public officials on the size and scope of the MTA five-year capital program. We are currently focused on developing a sustainable financing strategy that will ensure continued restoration and completion of the Long Island Rail Road-Grand Central Connection and the full-length Second Avenue subway as well as a full commitment to State of Good Repair investments.
- *Gowanus Tunnel* - **RPA** continues to work with civic groups and engineering experts to examine the feasibility of building a tunnel to replace the Gowanus elevated expressway. A tunnel would remove a blighting influence from the Brooklyn waterfront neighborhoods of Bay Ridge, Sunset Park and Red Hook, unlocking the opportunity for these neighborhoods to bounce back.
- *Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor* - Earlier this year Governor Pataki's Task Force on Interstate 287 issued its report on the needs of this congested highway corridor extending from Suffern in Rockland County to Port Chester in Westchester County. The key recommendation of the report, which was coordinated by the New York State Thruway Authority and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, called for the replacement of the Tappan Zee Bridge, citing the cost of repairs as roughly equivalent to the cost of a replacement. The report also suggested that a transit line be considered that could be built in coordination with the new bridge. **RPA** served on the advisory committee to this task force and continues to closely monitor a wide range of issues that are of deep concern to us, including the need for short-term congestion relief measures and the feasibility and value of a rail transit crossing of the Hudson in the area.
- *Freight Tunnel* - **RPA** staff are working with the Port Authority, New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), and other key stakeholders to promote the development of a cross-harbor freight tunnel as part of a comprehensive regional goods movement strategy. NYCEDC recently released a draft report recommending construction of a cross-harbor tunnel. Such an investment, likely to cost at least \$2 billion, is most likely to gain public support for its implementation if it is linked to a pledge to develop improvements to the freight rail network in both New Jersey and New York City.

THE GREENSWARD CAMPAIGN

THE CHALLENGE

Two generations of decentralized growth have drastically increased the Region's urban land—by 60% in 30 years despite only a 13% increase in population—while draining people and jobs out of the Region's cities. This development pattern threatens both large areas of open land and critical environmental resources at the Region's outer edge as well as the vitality of our cities and mature suburbs.

CAMPAIGN MISSION

Create a regional open space system—a Metropolitan Greensward—that safeguards the Region's water supplies, biological heritage and recreational opportunities and shapes its future growth by integrating revitalized urban parks and open spaces, protected landscapes and a regional network of greenways.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- *Funding for Parks and Open Space* - Worked with state task forces in New York, Connecticut and New Jersey to secure dedicated capital funding for parks and open space. The three states and local government are now expected to spend approximately three billion dollars over the next 10 years to buy land and refurbish parks.
- *Hudson River Waterfront Park* - As an active member of the Hudson River Park Alliance, **RPA** has helped established the Hudson River Park. The Park, which stretches from Battery Park City to 59th Street in Manhattan, includes an innovative mix of commercial and open space uses under the shared jurisdiction of the State and City.
- *New York City's Urban Forest* - Together with Environmental Action Coalition, developed an Action Plan for improving the health and stewardship of New York City's urban forest. The Plan received extensive public attention and media coverage, including an editorial in the New York Times.
- *Greensward Publication* - Prepared and distributed a 24-page color summary of the Greensward campaign to advance the process of building a Greensward Network of committed business, civic and public organizations.
- *Highland to Ocean mapping (H2O)* - **RPA** has created a geographic information system and a set of advocacy maps showing the parks and natural resources of the Highlands to Ocean area—the estuary of the New York-New Jersey Harbor and the Appalachian Highlands of New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. The GIS maps are being used by The H2O Fund and other public and private partners to promote open space conservation in the Harbor, the Highlands and the watersheds that link them.
- *Governors Island* - The Governor, Mayor, Senator Moynihan and other elected officials have reached agreement on a concept for redeveloping the Island that clearly puts park uses and historic preservation front and center. The proposal to create a major new civic space in New York Harbor closely mirrors the vision that **RPA** first put forward in 1997.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- *Governors Island* - **RPA** is working with elected officials and the Governors Island Group coalition to secure transfer of the Island from the federal government to New York State for no cost. We are also continuing our efforts to create a Governors Island Conservancy to spearhead the preservation of the Island, and are sponsoring tours other interim uses for the Island that raise public visibility.
- *New York New Jersey Harbor Waterfront* - The redevelopment of the seven hundred miles of Harbor waterfront promises to change the way that we view our Region. **RPA** is undertaking three demonstration planning projects, researching alternative funding sources and institutional arrangements and working with Waterfront Parks Coalition, US Department of Interior, Port Authority and other partners to secure major new funding for waterfront parks and public spaces.

- *Appalachian Highlands* - **RPA** is working with the USDA Forest Service and the Highlands Coalition to identify priority conservation areas in the Highlands and initiate demonstration planning and forest management projects in the Highlands. These conservation areas could serve as the basis for increased federal and state involvement in Highlands conservation in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.
- *Long Island Sound* - **RPA** is creating a network of protected sites and environmental resources in and adjoining Long Island Sound in partnership with government and private land trusts.

THE CENTERS CAMPAIGN

THE CHALLENGE

Recent development patterns have shifted resources and investment away from the Region's cities and inner-suburbs, so that virtually all the Region's employment growth in the past 30 years has been located outside existing centers. Unless this trend is reversed, the Region will face ever-worsening problems of limited access to employment opportunities, wide income disparities, social isolation, environmental degradation and lack of affordable housing.

CAMPAIGN MISSION

Improve the quality of life and economic opportunities in the Region's centers, including not only the New York-New Jersey central business district but also downtowns throughout the Region.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- *Nassau Hub Land Use Transportation Study* - Initiated redesign of the Region's largest suburban activity center to create mixed-use nodes for new development linked by a new light rail system.
- *Newark Downtown Special Improvement District* - Convened a steering committee and staffed individual subcommittees that prepared sections of the Special Improvement District (SID) legislation, gained local approval and proposed the SID's budget and objectives. The Newark City Council approved the SID in 1998.
- *Newark Arts District* - **RPA** organized an Arts District planning process for Downtown Newark that builds on the work of the SID and focuses on the neglected Lincoln Park area and Symphony Hall.
- *Wassaic Extension* - Modeled impact of the proposed extension of the Metro North Harlem line to the hamlet of Wassaic. The project demonstrated the value of "transit-friendly" design.
- *Regional Center Design Workshop* - **RPA** convened a 5-day workshop in Somerset County, NJ that brought together renowned urban designers and landscape architects who illustrated new strategies for retrofitting "edge city" sprawl.
- *Milan-New York Planning Exchange* - **RPA** has completed the New York-Milan planning exchange that brought planners and urban designers from the Milan (Italy) region to New York City to investigate the reuse of underutilized industrial properties for new kinds of manufacturing. For one week, each of three teams studied sites in Long Island City, Queens, Raritan, NJ and Cohoes, NY. In April, a group of American planners studied comparable sites in the Milan region, completing the year-long project.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- *Stamford Masterplan* - **RPA** has embarked on a two-year comprehensive master planning process that will focus on transportation and growth management issues. Stamford was identified in the Third Plan as one of eleven critically important Regional Downtowns.
- *TCSP* - **RPA's** Centers and Mobilities campaigns are involved in this project to provide technical assistance to New Jersey communities that are trying to maximize the benefits of transit oriented design and development. **RPA**, along with its partners Project for Public Spaces, Downtown New Jersey and New Jersey Future, will be modeling the urban design impacts of improved rail access for a number of towns.
- *Hastings-on-Hudson Waterfront Revitalization Plan* - **RPA** is organizing a planning process that will bring together community-based organizations, elected officials, agency representatives, waterfront property owners and other Hudson Valley stakeholders to produce a plan for one of the most significant brownfield sites on the Hudson River, the industrial properties formerly owned by Anaconda.
- *Brooklyn Waterfront Revitalization* - In partnership with the Pratt Center, **RPA** is investigating the role enhanced transportation can play in joining and revitalizing the neighborhoods on the Brooklyn Waterfront. This effort builds on **RPA's** community design work in Sunset Park.

THE WORKFORCE CAMPAIGN

THE CHALLENGE

The emerging economy in today's global market requires a competitive, educated workforce to perform increasingly complex jobs. High-paying jobs in growing international service industries will be particularly demanding of new skills. But entire communities are being left behind by these trends, failed by the institutions and regulations that should allow them to become full participants in a growing economy.

CAMPAIGN MISSION

Develop a system of life-long learning and employment access in the Region that supports a competitive, sustainable economy and provides low-skill, displaced, minority and immigrant workers with the means to fully participate in the Region's prosperity.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ***Regional Technology Careers Initiative*** - Initiated a tri-state effort to prepare at-risk students for information technology careers. Completed model professional development program in five high schools in the Bronx and Westchester County to incorporate curriculum that teaches new learning standards through hands-on projects and work-based learning. Issued "Models for Regional Business-Education Partnerships," which assessed national initiatives and the potential for strengthening and expanding the partnerships in the Region.
- ***HUD Centers Project*** - Completed region-wide analysis identifying emerging economic opportunities for low-income communities. This report provides a framework for identifying promising strategies for reverse commuting projects, community development and education and training strategies.
- ***Business Services Development Initiative*** - Provided the Regional Business Partnership and Prosperity New Jersey with recommendations for a multi-faceted strategy to strengthen and expand the cluster of business service industries in northeastern New Jersey.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- ***Access-to-Jobs*** - Leading planning team to produce a Job Access and Reverse Commute Transportation Plan for the New York metropolitan region for the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council. The plan will guide the allocation of Federal grants to enhance access to jobs for public assistance recipients and other persons with low incomes.
- ***East Harlem Community Link Initiative*** - Developing a replicable community development model that will design a strategy to insure that East Harlem captures the full benefits of the MetroLink/Second Avenue Subway. RPA will work with the community to insure that design and construction maximize community benefits, and that the community is prepared to take full advantage of business, development and employment opportunities.
- ***New York City Working Group on Low-Wage Employment*** - Chairing subcommittee of group convened by NYS Comptroller, NYC Comptroller and the Community Service Society. The subcommittee is developing recommendations for policy actions, such as new public works projects, industry strategies and city-suburban job links that will generate new employment opportunities for low-income New Yorkers.
- ***Community Planning and Development Program*** - To intensify our efforts to provide communities with greater access to the life of the region, RPA is developing a program will integrate the community development activities that are part of RPA's five campaigns. The primary focus will be on the configuration of jobs, housing, transportation and education that determines economic opportunity for the residents of low-income communities. An important attribute of the program will be the development of civic leadership that connects community concerns to regional decision-makers.
- ***Job Link Demonstration Projects*** - Such as the Bronx-Westchester Initiative described above, RPA will attempt to demonstrate that collaborations of political, education, business and community leaders can be established to develop and implement broad-based workforce development strategies.
- ***Infrastructure Supported Community Development*** - Develop and promote policies that will enable communities to maximize the benefits of new infrastructure developments, such as RPA's MetroLink and Gowanus Tunnel proposals.

THE GOVERNANCE CAMPAIGN

THE CHALLENGE

The Region is composed of 20 million people living in 13,000 square miles governed by over 2,000 units of government, including counties, cities, towns, service districts and authorities. These political entities are funded primarily through the property tax, and the majority of them control their own budgets independently. The result is fiscal imbalance, inefficient duplication of services, degradation of natural resources, cumbersome land use regulatory processes and land use decisions which create sprawl and undermine both our economic performance and our quality of life. Our few regional institutions such as the MTA and the Port Authority are under attack from competitive political jurisdictions which perceive themselves ill-served and short-changed.

CAMPAIGN MISSION

Refocus state government and regional authorities to build and manage world-class infrastructure and promote adoption and improvement of state and regional Smart Growth programs.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- *Brownfields Legislation, NJ* - Successfully pushed for amendments that Governor Whitman signed into law in New Jersey in January, 1998. Continue advocating reforms in New Jersey, particularly regarding community involvement, while developing similar legislative packages for New York and Connecticut.
- *Northeast State Planning (NESP)* - After only two annual meetings the participants from eleven northeast states already have implemented ideas discussed with their peers, and a few states have initiated and built smart growth planning and community development schemes. The participants recently shared new ideas and success stories, addressed "the do's and don'ts" of building state planning programs, and took steps toward establishing an economic development program for the northeast corridor. They compared state growth management initiatives in the northeast to those occurring in the rest of the country, and they traded caveats and suggestions on how to sustain political support in the face of a changing economy, bipartisan politics and vast number of interests.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- *Smart Growth* - Promoting policies that connect **RPA's** "3e's"—economy, environment and equity—in state and regional plans. In New Jersey, **RPA** is continuing to collaborate with the State planning office to improve implementation of the State Plan by municipalities and state agencies. In New York and Connecticut, **RPA** is fostering development of new state or regional Smart Growth initiatives. **RPA** and the Lincoln Institute have formed the *Northeast State Planning (NESP)* Leadership Retreat, an annual collaboration which brings together high-level state officials to discuss current state planning issues.
- *The Mayors' Institute on City Design* - **RPA** is hosting the first in a series of workshops for mayors in the New York, New Jersey, Connecticut Metropolitan Region. This inaugural effort will spotlight New Jersey and will include Mayors of eight New Jersey cities and towns. The program would be modeled after and would build on the enormous success of the National Endowment for the Arts' national program, with which **RPA** hopes to formally create a joint-venture.
- *Brownfields* - Continuing to implement an Environmental Opportunity Zone tax abatement for Newark, and working with other Brownfield Programs throughout the Region to push for improved state legislative programs.
- *Newark Planning Initiatives* - Continuing to work with the City of Newark on multiple planning initiatives, including preparation of a Cross Acceptance report on the State Development and Redevelopment Reexamination Report, the Newark Master Plan, a Land Use, Economic Development and Transportation Plan; and planning programs for a Lincoln Park Arts District.

- ♦ *Climate Change* - Building on our initial surveys of government and business climate change activities by initiating a five point program that assesses the implications of climate change and climate change policy for the Region. Targeted assessment processes will serve to both inform and catalyze a diverse set of important constituencies around climate change issues: local government, the financial services industry and senior leadership in government and business.

The Committee on A Regional Plan of New York and its Environs was formed in 1922 to address the needs of a growing metropolis and published its landmark Plan in 1929. At that time, Regional Plan Association was incorporated as a permanent body to implement the proposals outlined in the Plan and to prepare new regional plans as they became necessary. The Second Regional Plan in the 1960s and now the Third Regional Plan, released in 1996, offered proposals on land-use transportation, open space preservation, economic development and social issues. The following partial list of achievements is based directly upon recommendations in these plans and interim studies.

1920s

- The Port Authority agreed to move the proposed George Washington Bridge—only the second crossing of the Hudson River—from 57th Street up to 178th Street, to better conform with the regional highway system envisioned in the First Regional Plan.

1930s

- The New Jersey skyway from Elizabeth to the Holland Tunnel was completed in 1932. The Whitestone Bridge connecting the Long Island highway system with the Bronx arterial system was completed in 1939. The Henry Hudson Parkway was built between 1935 and 1938.
- **RPA** identified specific natural areas that could be acquired for public use and persuaded various public agencies to purchase land, doubling the Region's park space. Early acquisitions were made in Nassau, Suffolk, Putnam and Dutchess counties, and in Flushing Meadows, Orchard Beach Park and the Palisades.
- **RPA** assisted local governments to establish planning boards, including a city planning commission for New York City. From 1929 to 1939, the number of planning boards in the Region increased from 61 to 204.
- **RPA** suggested the location of regional airports, endorsing the city's proposal for expanded operations at Idlewild Airport, now JFK. Later, **RPA** was instrumental in putting the administration of the three regional airports—Kennedy, LaGuardia and Newark—together under the Port Authority.

1940s

- **RPA** opposed Robert Moses' proposal to build a bridge from the Manhattan Battery Park to Brooklyn, favoring the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel that was eventually built.
- In 1949, New York Life Insurance Company completed Fresh Meadows, a residential development in Queens that embodied many of **RPA's** neighborhood unit principles—mixed-level residences, nearby schools and shopping, open spaces and pedestrian connections.

1950s

- The Verrazano Narrows Bridge, begun by the Port Authority in 1955, effectively completed the regional highway system that had been proposed by **RPA** in 1929.
- Development around Newark Bay, including the seaport and Newark Airport, followed **RPA's** recommendation that more Port Authority industrial activities should locate outside Manhattan.

1960s

- Between 1961 and 1973, local governments in the Region acquired 210 square miles of additional parkland, including \$2 million in federal funds for acquisition directly conforming to **RPA** proposals. Significant acquisitions included Fire Island, Sandy Hook and Breezy Point.

- **RPA** helped foster the creation of NJ TRANSIT and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The Mass Transit Act of 1964 adopted **RPA**'s principle of federal assumption of capital costs for urban mass transit. **RPA** convinced New Jersey officials to establish the Capital Needs Commission, which recommended a bond program that generated almost a billion dollars for critical infrastructure and capital investments.
- **RPA** lobbied for limited automobile access to the region's core, convinced the New Jersey Turnpike Authority to route new highway lanes to the George Washington Bridge, instead of to the Lincoln Tunnel; challenged a proposal to add a third tube to the Queens-Midtown Tunnel; and opposing a bridge across the Long Island Sound from Rye to Oyster Bay.
- **RPA** examined economic and demographic projections on which the need for a fourth major airport in Hunterdon County was based and built a successful campaign against the plan.

1970s

- In Paterson, New Jersey, **RPA** helped preserve an historic factory district by proposing that a new highway circumvent it.
- In plans for the New Jersey Meadowlands, **RPA** increased housing densities and reduced office development that would have further drained surrounding cities.

1980s

- **RPA** supported the MTA as it negotiated a capital budgeting program to rehabilitate buses, subways and commuter rail systems. Restoring funding commitments to that agreement is now a major priority. **RPA** also advocated a one-mile extension of Newark Airport's people-mover to connect the airport to the Northeast Corridor commuter line.
- **RPA** helped establish New Jersey Future to campaign for the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, which was adopted in 1992.
- **RPA** produced a report for Downtown Brooklyn that proposed a new development complex: Metrotech Center.

1990s

- In 1996, **RPA** released its Third Regional Plan, "A Region at Risk: The Third Regional Plan for the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Region." It issued an urgent call to public and private sector leaders in the 31-county Tri-state area to band together to harness the Region's superior human, economic and natural resources, and presented programs to improve the Region's cornerstones: its economy, environment and social equity.
- **RPA** helped form the Empire State Transportation Alliance (ESTA), a coalition of over 40 civic, business, labor and environmental groups, to promote sound investment in transportation infrastructure.
- The centerpiece of **RPA**'s new transportation program is *MetroLink*, a proposal for a modern rapid transit subway system that builds upon the Second Avenue and Downtown Rx proposals from the Third Regional Plan. *MetroLink* will serve Manhattan's East Side, Queens, Brooklyn and The Bronx. It will also provide major new service to Lower Manhattan, and a one-seat ride from Manhattan and Brooklyn to JFK Airport.
- Ground was broken in 1999 on the Port Authority project to link JFK to the subway and Long Island Rail Road at Jamaica. As **RPA** has vigorously recommended, the new rail link will be compatible with existing rail technology to preserve the future of a "one-seat ride" to the airport, which should begin operations in 2003.
- As proposed in **RPA**'s Third Plan, \$353 million have been included federal transportation legislation to advance the construction of the LIRR's connection to Grand Central Terminal, also part of the MTA Capital Program.

- **RPA** formed the Governors Island Group (a coalition of civic, preservation and business groups) and released a report which recommends that Governors Island become a great new public park and that commercial development be in keeping with the historic structures that exist there.
- **RPA** released a feasibility analysis advocating construction of a Gowanus Tunnel as an alternative to a re-built Gowanus Expressway. The report concluded that a Gowanus Tunnel was technically feasible and would also have lower total lifecycle costs than an elevated highway. Once the tunnel is completed, the elevated Gowanus Expressway could be torn down, sparking revitalization along the entire South Brooklyn waterfront.
- Construction and operation was begun on the 20.5 mile light rail line along the west bank of the Hudson River in New Jersey. Based directly on **RPA** studies in 1966 and 1985 to create a new urban landscape for the area from Bayonne to the George Washington Bridge, this new rail will be the first in the Region since the Newark subway was completed in the 1930's.
- **RPA** played a major role in securing federal, state and private funding to purchase the 15,700-acre Sterling Forest property for preservation as a State park.
- **RPA** helped create the *Newark Downtown Special Improvement District (SID)* for the area between Penn and Broad Street stations. Designed to capitalize on the momentum produced by the opening of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and a new Connection Newark street signage program, the SID will coordinate and maintain improvements to the area's parks, streetscape, amenity and quality of life.
- **RPA** has outlined redevelopment plans for major suburban centers. At the Nassau Hub, Nassau County's primary activity center, **RPA** described how a new kind of suburban center could be created by applying transit- and pedestrian-friendly design principles.
- **RPA**'s Metropolitan Brownfields Initiative provided impetus for important new legislation that was signed by Governor Whitman in January, 1998. **RPA** convened a national brownfields conference to review New Jersey's experience in reclaiming contaminated sites and to promote and expedite brownfields redevelopment throughout the Region.
- **RPA**, together with Environmental Action Coalition, developed an action plan for improving the health and stewardship of New York City's urban forest.
- In Somerset County, NJ, **RPA** brought together renown urban designers and landscape architects to illustrate new strategies for retrofitting "edge city" sprawl. **RPA** received several awards for this unique project, plus heavy press coverage which included an article in "Landscape Architecture" magazine.
- A coalition consisting of **RPA** and several other environmental, community and civic groups prepared an alternative to Donald Trump's proposal for Manhattan's largest development parcel. This plan, called Riverside South included provisions for relocation of the elevated Miller to allow for development of a major new riverfront park, affordable housing, improvement of the 72nd Street IRT subway station and design controls for residential buildings. **RPA** joined the Riverside South Planning Corporation to help implement this plan.

2000

- In concert with ESTA, **RPA** developed a capital needs assessment totaling over \$18 billion dollars for the next five years and \$68 billion over the next twenty years. After an intense campaign by **RPA** and ESTA, the MTA's five-year capital program includes a commitment to a "full-build" Second Avenue Subway from 125th Street to the financial district, advances the Long Island Rail Road-Grand Central connection and substantially cleans up the diesel bus fleet. This agreement was reached with the assistance of New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, who insisted on the full-build Second Avenue Subway.
- In January, state and city officials announced plans for the development of Governors Island. This proposal, which is strongly endorsed by **RPA**, includes a hotel and conference center, museum and a public park on the 172-acre island. The proposal closely mirrors **RPA**'s 1997 plan, which called for a balance of park space, educational uses and tourist amenities on the Island.

- **RPA** is participating in the creation of a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Stamford, Connecticut. The partnership will combine the professional expertise of one of the area's leading planning firms with **RPA**'s capabilities in growth management, transportation and urban design.
- **RPA** has created a geographic information system and a set of advocacy maps showing the parks and natural resources of the Highlands to Ocean area—the estuary of the New York-New Jersey Harbor and the Appalachian Highlands of New Jersey, New York and Connecticut. The GIS maps are being used by The H2O Fund and other public and private partners to promote open space conservation in harbor, the Highlands and the watersheds that link them.
- Construction began on the Hudson River Park will stretch from Battery Park City to 59th Street in Manhattan. The park includes an innovative mix of commercial, recreation and open space. The Hudson River Trust, a joint city/state public benefit operation created by the New York State Legislature in 1998, will govern this innovative approach to finally resolving New York City's urban waterfront. **RPA** was a key member of the Hudson River Park Alliance, which led the effort to make the park a reality after decades of diverse stagnation.
- **RPA** has organized a team of planners, architects and economists that is supporting the efforts of the Group of 35 convened by Senator Charles Schumer to expand technology industries in New York City. The Group, which is comprised of civic and business leaders, is engaged in an intensive effort to find appropriate sites and develop new commercial centers for these industries outside of the Manhattan Central Business District.

RPA

Regional Plan Association

Press Coverage

Hudson River Park on Restored Piers Approved by U.S.

By Barbara Stewart

After more than two years of study, the federal government gave its approval yesterday for the construction of Hudson River Park, clearing what is probably the last major hurdle in the plan to create a ribbon of parkland along five miles of the Manhattan riverfront from Battery Park City to West 59th Street.

The approval from the United States Army Corps of Engineers allows for construction to begin in the river itself, repairing the Civil War-era seawall and the 13 huge rotting piers that are the centerpiece of the plan.

"The West Side of Manhattan, along with the rest of the city, has been looking forward to this park for a very long time," said Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, who joined Gov. George E. Pataki at a news conference in Manhattan yesterday to announce that foundation work on the pilings in the river would begin as soon as possible.

"The park will ensure that the Hudson River is part of our everyday lives," Governor Pataki said, "not just as that waterway we see from the car."

Last September, the mayor and the governor opened the first phase of the park, running about 1,000 feet between West Houston and Bank Streets. When it is completed, scheduled for 2005, the park will have a continuous riverfront esplanade with lawns and flowers, bicycle and running trails and playgrounds.

For supporters of the park, the last two years have been particularly suspenseful. The approval of the federal government was not a foregone conclusion, and the fate of the plan has been fiercely debated for the last 15 years.

"We're New York City, and we have the crummiest waterfronts in the United States," said Albert K. Butzel, chairman of the Hudson River Park Alliance, a coalition of 35 community and

environmental organizations that support the project. "It's time to have a waterfront that celebrates the city, instead of the derelict waterfronts we have now."

But in the months to come, there will almost certainly be more legal challenges. Several national and local environmental organizations, including Friends of the Earth and the Clean Air Campaign, have long opposed the Hudson River Park and are threatening to sue. The park's opponents say that the many varieties of fish that migrate along that part of the Hudson, including striped bass and sturgeon, could be seriously harmed by construction work in the river. They say that a federal environmental impact study should be required for construction of this magnitude.

"You never do a 550-acre project that includes 400 acres of fisheries without a federal environmental study," said Marcy Benstock, chairwoman of the Clean Air Campaign, which was instrumental in stopping the Westway highway project that the state planned to build along the Hudson waterfront during the 1980's. "They're claiming it's a park, but it's really a development project."

Brent Blackwelder, president of Friends of the Earth, a national environmental organization that also opposed Westway, said: "This area is a key spot for more than a dozen fish that migrate up the river. They're trying to drape a park over it and say it will have no impact. These people have not a clue whatsoever."

But Joseph Seebode, chief of the regional branch of the Army Corps of Engineers, in New York, said that the state environmental impact study that had already been completed was exhaustive. He added that postponing the park's construction for two or three more years while a federal study was completed would have been repetitive and was

unnecessary because the repair and reconstruction work would be confined to structures that already exist.

The state environmental study and the Army's own investigation indicated that there would be "minimal impact on the Hudson River itself and on the fisheries and wildlife," Mr. Seebode said.

Before allowing the work to proceed, the Army Corps of Engineers held several public hearings and made significant changes in the initial plans.

Plans for a marina were canceled, and many restrictions were added to protect the fish and their habitat. Dredging will not be allowed, and construction work will be forbidden during periods of heavy fish migration, Mr. Seebode said.

While lawsuits are possible, many of the groups that challenged Westway have given their support to the Hudson River Park, including the National Marine Fisheries Service, which is part of the Commerce Department, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

"This park is the best guarantee for the fisheries," said Jim Tripp, a lawyer at Environmental Defense, a private environmental group. "It's the best guarantee there will be green habitat along the Hudson River."

There's tremendous commercial pressure to build on that waterfront. If you want to see hotels and retail there, don't allow this park to happen."

The Hudson River Park is expected to cost \$330 million to \$350 million. So far, \$100 million has been set aside by the city and state. The state and city have pledged to provide at least another \$120 million. The rest is to come from private donations.

The plans include an esplanade and a bicycle trail running parallel to the riverbank. The parkland is to cover 550 acres. Of that, about 400 acres is the part

of the river that stretches between the 13 piers on the West Side, and will be used for fishing and boating. The remaining 125 acres includes the narrow strip of land stretching from Battery Park City to West 59th Street, as well as the huge piers, some of which cover an area the size of several city blocks.

Besides the existing passenger ship terminals and the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum, commercial development will be limited to the already-existing Chelsea Piers, a private gymnasium and recreation club, and to Pier 40, which is now a parking lot, said Noreen Doyle, vice president of the Hudson River Park Trust,

the government agency that is in charge of planning and building the park.

The park is the culmination of a 30-year effort to transform the rundown Hudson River waterfront into an asset instead of an eyesore. The struggle dates to the early 70's and the demise of the shipping industry, when the state took over the riverside from the Battery to Midtown to build a huge roadway called Westway. The highway drew vociferous objections, and opponents sued in federal courts, citing, among other problems, damage it could do to striped bass and other migrating fish.

After the collapse of Westway, about 1986, the state and city governments

convened a task force and started anew. The process was complicated by territorial problems -- the state owned the stretch from the Battery to 35th Street and the city owned the area north to 59th Street.

In September 1998, Governor Pataki signed the state's longest and costliest urban waterfront park into law as a joint project between the city and the state. But the plans stalled again. It took nearly a year before the Hudson River Park Trust was created to manage the park's creation. Then came the long permitting process conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers, which ended yesterday.

The Hudson River Park, on Track

New York City residents have long hoped to reclaim their Hudson River shoreline south of 59th Street by restoring rotting piers and replacing the parking lots and other bleak spaces that now exist with an inviting mix of walkways, playing fields and modest commercial development. The last major obstacle to that dream has now been removed. On Thursday, the United States Army Corps of Engineers gave final approval for work to begin.

The focus now shifts from the approval process, which has had supporters of the park in a state of high anxiety for two years, to the Hudson River Park Trust, which is in charge of the project and has no further reason for delay. There is \$100 million in state and city money in the bank. Architectural plans should be completed in short order and contracts put out for bid, with actual construction to commence as soon as possible.

The plan envisions a five-mile-long waterfront esplanade, from Battery Park City north to 59th Street, with bicycle and running paths and a narrow buffer of lawn and open space between the West Side Highway and the river. The park's main attraction, however, will be 13 huge piers, now falling apart, that will be rebuilt for recreational purposes and for a limited number of small-scale commercial enterprises like restaurants.

In September 1988, the State Legislature approved a bill authorizing the park. But the project could not proceed without corps approval. Opponents, worried about development and the impact on the river's striped bass, urged the corps to

undertake a full environmental impact statement, a process that could have delayed the project for two more years. The corps chose not to do so for several reasons. First, New York State had already done a massive impact statement. The corps also decided that the park would have "no significant impact" on the marine environment and that a full-scale federal assessment was therefore not required under the National Environmental Policy Act.

This page has long argued that environmental impact statements are an essential tool for protecting the nation's natural resources. But in this case such an assessment would have been largely redundant. Moreover, environmental law requires a full-scale federal assessment only when preliminary investigation suggests that a project might have "significant impact." The corps was right to conclude that this project would not. All the reconstruction work will be done within the "footprint" of the piers that now exist, so that when the work is completed, the fish habitat will be essentially as it is today. There will be no new platforms and no new landfills. Indeed, the National Marine Fisheries Service concluded that the project would actually improve the fish habitat because it will safeguard the piers, which are important to the fish.

The critics warn of further lawsuits. But their objections have been thoroughly examined and, in our view, forthrightly addressed. Indeed, some of their earlier complaints led to useful improvements in the original plan. They should take pride in that accomplishment, and let the plan go forward.

M.T.A. Drops Opposition to Ad Criticizing the Subway

By RANDY KENNEDY

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority decided yesterday to drop its objections to a subway advertisement planned by riders' advocates that compares the average morning commute to a trip in a cattle car.

The authority had argued that the ad, which the Straphangers Campaign and the Regional Plan Association, a private planning group, wanted to post during April, violated an M.T.A. rule against ads in the transit system that harm the agency's commercial interests. In this case, they said, the ad would probably persuade people not to ride the subway.

But faced with the likelihood that they would lose a lawsuit charging censorship, filed last week in Federal District Court in Manhattan by the New York Civil Liberties Union, officials at the authority relented.

"After extensive discussions and review," said Tom Kelly, a spokesman for the authority, "we've decided to let them post it."

Gene Russianoff, a lawyer for the Straphangers Campaign, praised the decision and said the disputed ad and another with the same theme come at a critical time for riders because

of M.T.A. budget negotiations.

On Tuesday, Sheldon Silver, the State Assembly speaker, threatened to hold up the state budget this year until the Pataki administration committed to building a Second Avenue subway line the full length of Manhattan instead of one now proposed by the M.T.A. that would serve the East Side only from 125th Street to 72nd Street.

The Second Avenue line has been envisioned since the 1960's as a way to ease congestion on the Lexington Avenue subway lines and East Side bus routes. The line is now the centerpiece of transit advocates' plans to encourage riders to pressure Gov. George E. Pataki and state legislative leaders to pump more state money into the city's subways and buses.

"We're going to be communicating with the riding public at the very time when the future of the transit system is being debated 150 miles north in Albany," Mr. Russianoff said.

The ad rejected by the M.T.A. shows a packed subway car with the headline: "With livestock it's called animal cruelty. With people it's

Posters likening a morning commute to a ride in a cattle car will be allowed.

called a morning commute."

"I can promise you we did not retouch the picture," Mr. Russianoff said. "We did not add bodies."

The ad also says: "We can reduce subway overcrowding and shorten waiting times by buying more subway cars and running trains more often. And we desperately need a full-length Second Avenue subway and improved signaling."

Another ad, initially rejected by the authority but then approved before the lawsuit was announced, shows a clean and orderly Washington Metro station — part of a system built in the 1970's — and tells riders: "It's modern. It's reliable. Unfortunately, it's not in New York."

The two 22-by-21-inch ads, which cost \$60,000 to \$75,000 to produce and

place, will begin appearing in 2,280 subway cars, or about 40 percent of the system, on April 1.

Both ads encourage riders to visit a Web site — www.bettertransit.org — with built-in promotional letters that can be sent to Governor Pataki and leaders of the Legislature.

M.T.A. officials would not discuss exactly why they decided to allow the ad. Jeffrey M. Zupan, a senior fellow at the Regional Plan Association, said: "I think they saw from a free speech point of view that they really had no choice. I hope we can now turn this into a cooperative thing."

Mr. Russianoff said the battle over the ad was the first time that the authority had stood in the way of the Straphangers Campaign since it began posting critical ads in the subways in 1993. It has posted ads that have compared trains to snails, riders to sardines and one that drew attention to two fatal subway accidents and a lack of transit funding with a picture of a coffin.

"I'm unaware of them ever rejecting an ad they thought was too tough on them," he said. "It never happened before, and in a free society, it should never happen."

Transit Gridlock?

Yes, NYC needs a full-length 2nd Avenue subway, but it also needs a timely state budget.

What is it with Gov. George Pataki?

New York State's budget surplus checks in at around \$4.2 billion this year. New jobs continue to crowd into Manhattan. Downstaters are more optimistic than they've been in years.

And yet, when it comes to construction of a desperately needed Second Avenue subway

line down the East Side of Manhattan, Pataki is oddly cool. And Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan) hints darkly that the state budget may be delayed again as a result.

How cool is Pataki? Well, at the moment, planners for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which Pataki controls, don't even

want to build the whole thing. They have in mind a "stubway" that would run from 125th only to 72nd Street before it merges with the N-R tunnel at 63rd Street. The problem is that the MTA will still push forward with another crucial project — its plan to bring the Long Island Rail Road into Grand Central Terminal. The stubway wouldn't even get that far. So by 2009, when the LIRR is scheduled to dump thousands of daily commuters onto the already overstuffed 4, 5 and 6 subway lines, there will be no relief in sight.

Two things need to happen: 1) Pataki must understand that the stubway idea is a joke. It may be more convenient and affordable for the bureaucrats to design, but it won't go where it is needed the most. 2) A real Second Avenue line — the length of Manhattan with links to Brooklyn and the Bronx — should be built in tandem with the LIRR link to Grand Central.

The next five-year MTA capital plan, under political dissection in Albany now, provides \$700 million for the Second Avenue stubway. With an extra \$300 million or so, Silver says, the MTA could chart a less laughable project. For maybe \$2 billion, says the Regional Plan Association, the MTA could be ready to start construction on a first-class line in five years.

Pataki must find the money for a first-rate line. Times are good, New York is beginning to look like a world-class city once again — and if the state's politicians can't do this project now, they never will. At the same time, though, Silver should not forfeit the moral high ground by holding the whole state budget hostage to a deal. That game may win a battle, but it does vast damage to the whole state.

M.T.A. Rejects Ad Criticizing Packed Trains

Riders Group Plans Suit, Claiming Censorship

By ROBERT D. McFADDEN

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority was accused of censorship and threatened with a federal lawsuit yesterday after it rejected a proposed subway advertisement depicting a scene all too familiar to rush-hour straphangers: riders packed like sardines in a subway car.

"With livestock it's called animal cruelty," the big print of the poster ad says. "With people it's called a morning commute."

That line, the M.T.A. said in rejecting it, would be bad for business.

The ad, which the Straphangers Campaign, a riders advocacy group, and the Regional Plan Association had hoped to post in 2,280 subway cars during April as part of a \$500,000 campaign to promote transit improvements that would ease the crush, ran afoul of an M.T.A. rule against subway, bus and commuter train ads that would harm the agency's commercial interests.

"That headline we find to be not in our commercial interests," said Christopher Boylan, a spokesman for the M.T.A. "Our job is to promote ridership. This absolutely runs contrary to that purpose."

But Gene Russianoff, a lawyer who speaks for the Straphangers Campaign, scoffed at the M.T.A.'s reasoning. "Essentially," he said, "their argument is that people will see the ad and realize for the first time in their lives that subways are crowded, that they will flee and the system will lose tons of revenue. It is an argument that does not pass the laugh test."

H. Claude Shostal, president of the Regional Plan Association, a nonprofit group specializing in transportation and planning issues, concurred. "The M.T.A. cannot stifle public discourse whose sole purpose is to build support for a real Second Avenue subway and other transit investments," he said.

Mr. Russianoff and Mr. Shostal said the New York Civil Liberties Union would file a lawsuit this week charging the M.T.A. with violating the First Amendment by rejecting ads promoting the building of the long-delayed Second Avenue subway and new funding for subway cars, buses and other transit improvements.

In recent years there have been numerous battles, in and out of court, over the refusal of government-subsidized agencies to accept advertisements with a frankly political point of view. In 1995, the National Resources Defense Council bought back-of-the-bus ads that said, "Standing behind this bus could be more dangerous than standing in front of it." The M.T.A. rejected it but relented after the council sued, saying the First Amendment had been violated.

And in 1997, New York magazine lampooned Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani with a bus campaign that said the magazine was

M.T.A. Rejects Ad Critical Of Crowded Subway Cars

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"possibly the only good thing in New York Rudy hasn't taken credit for." The M.T.A. tried to block it, but a federal court ruled that there was "no irreparable injury" and let it proceed.

While the focus of the quarrel yesterday was the ad, the underlying dispute is over the M.T.A.'s five-year, \$16.5 billion plan for capital improvements in the transit system. The plan was rejected by the Legislature last fall, but state officials are

A \$16.5 billion plan for improvements to transit is at issue.

expected to reconsider it later this year.

The riders advocacy group and its allies want much more for city transit, what they call a "full-length" Second Avenue subway that would link all the boroughs but Staten Island and would cost many billions of dollars. They also want 1,000 more buses and 500 more subway cars than the plan envisions, as well as the elimination of diesel-powered buses in favor of those using alternate fuels, like compressed natural gas.

To promote their viewpoint, a Web site — www.bettertransit.org — has been established by the Straphangers Campaign and the Regional Plan Association with little built-in promotional letters that people can send to Gov. George E. Pataki and leaders of the Legislature. And they have developed an advertising campaign.

The first two ads, both aimed at subway riders, are slaps at the subways. One ad displays a picture of a spanking clean Washington Metro station — part of a system built in the 1970's — and says: "It's modern. It's reliable. Unfortunately, it's not in New York." The second is the riders-as-sardines ad.

The M.T.A. at first rejected both, citing a rule approved by its board in 1997 that let the agency ban ads that were "sexually suggestive," "patently offensive, improper or in bad taste" or "directly adverse to the commercial or administrative interests of the M.T.A." Its previous rules had banned only obscene or false ads or those that promoted illegal products.

Mr. Boylan said the M.T.A. relented on the ad picturing Washington's Metro system. "We can live with that," he said. "It's not flattering, but we doubt that it is going to drive customers away. But the other one is a much more significant negative in terms of ridership."

He said Mr. Russianoff, a perennial adversary of the M.T.A., had been asked to tone down the headline about "animal cruelty" but had re-

**With livestock
it's called animal cruelty.
With people it's called
a morning commute.**



We can reduce subway overcrowding and shorten waiting times by buying more new subway cars and running trains more often. And we desperately need a full-length Second Avenue subway and improved signaling systems. Elected officials will soon make decisions that will affect the quality

of our subways, buses and commuter trains for years to come. Let them know how important transit funding is to you. Join New Yorkers for Better Transit. We'll show you how to send a message that is heard. And we'll keep you posted on the fight for transit funding.

Fight for Better Transit. Send the politicians a message loud and clear.

www.bettertransit.org

The M.T.A. said this ad would be bad for business, but a critic called it silly to think that it had never occurred to riders that they are packed in

fused. "We hoped to work with him," Mr. Boylan said. "We both want positive things for the system. But he flat-out refused even to discuss it."

Mr. Russianoff, for his part, said that fundamental rights were at stake. "Free speech shouldn't end

when you board an A train or get on the No. 7 line," he said. "It would be a tragedy for the First Amendment and the future of the subways if the M.T.A. gets away with treating the Constitution like it's an expired MetroCard."

Spurring Profit To Protect History

\$350 Million Plan Is Unveiled To Open Governors Island

By BARBARA STEWART

It takes seven minutes for the Governors Island ferry to cross the half-mile stretch of New York Bay from the Battery, but visitors land on a spot that could not feel more different from downtown Manhattan, with its claustrophobic bustle.

Since 1755, when the Royal Americans, a regiment of redcoats, were stationed there, Governors Island, where Dutch and British colonial governors of New York once lived, has belonged to the military. Few civilian New Yorkers have any idea of its curious mix: a small town with 18th- and 19th-century military forts, and spectacular views of the Manhattan skyline.

"It's Brigadoon," said Carol Teller, who lives on the Lower East Side and taught at the Governors Island elementary school, P.S. 26, for six years, until the Coast Guard closed it in 1996. "I went from this messy city to this little paradise every day. You don't have to lock the car. You can walk around very freely in fresh air. Parents had cupcakes for their children. It was very friendly — everybody was from the Midwest or something."

In 1997, while the Coast Guard was moving out, President Clinton made an offer to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan to sell the island to New York State and New York City for \$1 if the city and state could agree on a use for it that benefited the public. Yesterday — three years after the offer — Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani and Gov. George E. Pataki announced that they had agreed on a development plan. [Page B4.]

But the plan is an attempt to strike a delicate balance. The area with the historic fortifications and mansions is protected by the federal government, and the public provided with education and recreation. But at the same time, the

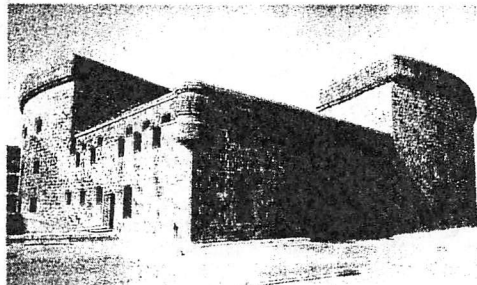


Governors Island, a seven-minute ferry ride from Manhattan, was a military base from 1755 to 1996. The 1906 St. Cornelius Chapel, left, is a 14th-century English design.



Photographs by Ozier Muhammad/The New York Times

Officers' houses in Nolan Park, above. "It's Brigadoon," a former teacher said. "I went from this messy city to this little paradise every day." Castle Williams, left, the stockade, once held Rocky Graziano and Walt Disney.



island has to generate at least enough income to cover the annual \$22 million maintenance and some of the estimated \$150 million state and city contribution to the projected \$350 million development cost.

The plans presented yesterday are a compromise, an effort to include everything: ball fields and tennis courts, small museums for art, ecology and military history, an inexpensive motel, some artists' studios. Most of the biggest and most impressive buildings would be used as a conference center.

"We want a Central Park-type place

for downtown," said Sheldon Silver of Manhattan, a Democrat and the Speaker of the State Assembly. "A place where people can spend a Sunday, with no vehicle traffic, and see the beauty and glory of New York."

Describing the vision for the island in even more grandiloquent terms, Robert J. Piranis, director of the nonprofit Regional Plan Association, said it would become "a catalyst and symbol of the rebirth of the city."

"It's been off-limits to ordinary New Yorkers," he added. "They don't know what they're missing. But all of us who have been out there have gotten infected."

The biggest hurdle may be persuading

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Spurring Profit to Save Governors Island's History

Continued From Page B1

Congress, which has to approve the deal. Federal budget forecasters have estimated that the island could sell for as much as \$500 million. But no private developer has approached the federal government with an offer to buy the property.

Although Republicans in Washington may be reluctant to give away the lovely 172-acre island, a refusal might seem churlish, since New York State gave it to the federal government 200 years ago.

The hodgepodge of history and the mundane artifacts of present-day life make strolling Governors Island a slightly disorienting experience. It is deserted and shuttered.

Golfers who played the nine-hole course could see the massive, Revolutionary War-era Fort Jay on one side and the World Trade Center on the other.

Not far from the Admiral's Quarters, the elegant Queen Anne-style mansion used for a summit meeting between President Ronald Reagan and President Mikhail S. Gorbachev in 1986, are apartment buildings that resemble 1960's public housing elsewhere in the city.

A stone's throw away is Nolan Park, where the officers lived and which resembles a quintessential small town, with brick streets and two-story clapboard houses with gabled roofs. One can practically hear the mothers calling to small boys with catcher's mitts. Yet the small town has spectacular views on all sides — the bay, the Statue of Liberty, the Manhattan skyline. One of the oldest barracks stretches almost the width of the island, and on the northwest point is a medieval-looking Civil War-era stockade, Castle Williams, where Walt Disney was imprisoned during World War I for going AWOL.

The city and state plan would turn the long barracks and the gabled officers' houses in Nolan Park into a profit-making conference center.



Ozler Muhammad/The New York Times

Nolan Park on Governors Island resembles a quintessential small town, with brick streets and two-story clapboard houses with gabled roofs.

A meeting center is to aid preservation as green eyeshades replace redcoats.

Since that would limit the use of the island's most comfortable and architecturally striking buildings to paying customers, Congress might question the public advantage of the plan.

But advocates for the development plan assert that the money to be made by a conference center is necessary and that it would be limited to 400 people, too few to interfere with people taking the ferry over for the day.

"It can't all be public," said Tony Bullock, chief of staff for Senator Moynihan. "And whether it's poets from New England colleges or salesmen from tire companies, they won't overwhelm the island." In a world where money was not a factor, he

added, a college or university branch would take over the island and make it a self-contained center of learning, with cultural events for the public.

But Tony Goldman, who has been a major developer in SoHo and South Beach near Miami, and who was consulted on the Governors Island project by the planners, said in an interview yesterday that nearly all the Mayor's and Governor's plans were "very small thinking" and a waste of the "most important piece of real estate in New York City" rather than creating "the quintessential public space for the millennium."

Mr. Goldman said that if he were in charge, the first images visitors would see from the ferry would be the flutter of dozens of windmills and brilliantly colored flags and flowers. Alighting, visitors would find a center of the arts, of crafts, of science, of philosophy. The barracks would be studios for dance, sculpture, filmmaking and laboratories for ecology and scientific study.

"There would be a painter's house," Mr. Goldman said. "A poetry

house, a music house, a house for fine cabinetmakers." They would spend their time working, attending concerts and plays in an amphitheater in Fort Jay, and engaging in discussions in what would be "the ultimate ongoing salon," he said.

The Admiral's Mansion, he concluded, would be "for heads of state, for heads of culture." While the New York governments' planners may not be envisioning the ultimate artists' and scholars' retreat, they, too, want art and science on the island. Under the plan, the southern end of the island, where the bowling alley and a Burger King used to be, would be the site of a sculpture garden, an ecology learning center and a maritime museum. There would be a museum of military history in the north, by the old forts, and perhaps animated exhibits in the Castle Williams stockade. And a little group of artists' studios are included in the tentative plans.

New York City museums are more than welcome to consider opening a branch there, said Mr. Bullock in Senator Moynihan's office.

Along with the riverside promenade and soccer fields, Mr. Silver, the Speaker, said he would like to see a football field that Columbia and New York Universities would share.

Mr. Piranis of the Regional Plan Association envisions a "new kind of park" incorporating ideas from already successful cultural and recreation areas. It would be "Central Park on the harbor," complete with a "Great Meadow, as well as a conference center like Tarrytown's, with a spa and golf course. In the summer, he said, it would be a Tanglewood, with concerts and plays in the amphitheater. A sculpture garden would resemble the Storm King Arts Center.

"We want a place where people can learn something, have some fun, and that will make a little money," Mr. Piranis said. "We don't want to create a white elephant."

Good Bye, Feds, Good Buy, N.Y.

Named for the residence of New York's one-time royal governors, Governors Island has a history stretching back to the city's earliest Colonial days. Now, after exactly 200 years as a federal possession, the island has a great opportunity to rejoin New York. Congress must not stand in the way.

Located in Upper New York Bay, at the meeting of the Hudson and East rivers half a mile from the southern tip of Manhattan and near the Brooklyn shore, Governors Island had been America's oldest continuous military post until the Coast Guard picked up and left a few years ago.

In 1995, Sen. Pat Moynihan persuaded President Clinton to offer the island to New York for \$1, provided the state and city could come up with a suitable public use. Finally, after much wrangling and debate, they have. Last week, Gov. Pataki and Mayor Giuliani unveiled a plan to create 50 acres of parkland on the island, plus university playing fields and museums — all to be financially supported by a conference center, hotel, dining spots and limited retail shops.

Problem is, Congress wants to unload the island, with its magnificent vistas of the skyline and the Statue of Liberty, as surplus federal property. Some think it could fetch \$500 million. That would be a major mistake. A place with so much history, and such strong links to New York, should not be put on the block for the highest bidder.

In 1623, Governors Island was the first European settlement in the area, even before Manhattan. In 1637, then called Notten or Nutten Island, it was purchased by the Dutch for two hand axes, a handful of nails and some glass beads. Later, with its command of the harbor, it became a garrison for British and American troops.

The northern part of the island is studded with the historic remnants: Governor's House (1708), Fort Jay (1798), Castle Williams (1811) and the Admiral's House (1840). The southern part, built on 1901 subway landfill that doubled the acreage, is less interesting and more suitable for development.

In this century, the island was the scene of many early flights. In 1909, Wilbur Wright flew from Governors Island up the Hudson River to Grant's Tomb and back. It was the Wright Brothers' first flight over water. The next year, Glenn Curtiss made the first flight from Albany to New York City, landing on the island. In the 1930s, Mayor LaGuardia wanted to use Governors Island for the new airport that later would bear his name. Instead, he settled for a site in northern Queens.

On Feb. 15, 1800, New York State ceded the island to Uncle Sam. It has served its nation well for two centuries. But all the while, it had New York written all over it. It's time for Washington to give it back.

A Plan for Governors Island

Governors Island in New York City's busy harbor has remained tantalizingly off limits for years while city and state officials decided how best to use it. A developer's fantasy island and a park lover's open-air dream, the 172 acres include antique fortresses, vintage all-American houses and a patch of distinctly ugly buildings constructed more recently on the leftover fill from construction of the New York subway system. Now, after suggestions for using the outpost for everything from an artists' haven to a casino complex, Gov. George Pataki and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani have agreed on a plan that seems to meet the approval of a wide range of normally contentious New Yorkers. While the proposal should be regarded as a work in progress, it is a promising start, worthy of the effort it will take to get the White House and Congress to go along.

Released with much fanfare this week, the new plan for Governors Island provides for more than 50 acres of parkland and miles of public shoreline, plus a Colonial Williamsburg-like family center and private conference facility to help pay for the entire package. The National Park Service would have to take over the forts, and the shoddy structures that are said to be unsafe by today's standards would be leveled to make room for green

space. Governor Pataki's proposed Hudson River institute, his "Woods Hole on the Hudson," could be housed on the island as well. Both the commercial and public facilities need close study to make sure the best use is made of the rare opportunity the island offers.

The hurdles for this venture are still fairly high, especially in Washington. A few years ago President Clinton promised Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan he would sell the island to New York for \$1 if the state and city could agree on a plan that served the public needs while finding private funds to pay for its upkeep. Since then, Congress has upped the bill to a whopping \$500 million, a price tag that was used more as a budget gimmick than a real assessment of the island's worth. Congress should drop the gimmick, since the president is willing to stick to his earlier promise to Senator Moynihan.

Next comes the Empire State Development Corporation, which would begin filling in the crucial details. At that point, environmental groups, politicians and public-interest planners like the Regional Plan Association, which now strongly endorses this proposal, must monitor progress day by day. What looks like a good plan must evolve into a public treasure with plenty of public access and plenty of open space.

A Good Plan for Governors Island

Gov. Pataki and Mayor Giuliani have come up with what looks like an excellent proposal to turn abandoned Governors Island into a world-class tourist attraction.

As first reported by The Post's Fred Dicker, the plan would make the island home to a cultural and commercial complex, including a convention center, hotels, museums, parkland and educational and recreational facilities. The project will be funded by a mixture of private and public money -- with the bulk of the maintenance costs coming from the private sector.

Even at this early stage, the proposal works both aesthetically and economically. A "mixed usage" approach -- cultural, educational and commercial -- is a perfect reflection of what best represents New York. Moreover, there look to be enough potential commercial interests to pay for the project without overly burdening public coffers -- a major, and valid, concern of the mayor's.

This proposal represents a huge step forward in the often-awkward relationship between City Hall and Albany -- and just in time: If no agreement on the development of the 172-acre former Coast Guard base is reached by 2002, Congress can auction it off to the highest bidder.

To be sure, that remains a possibility: The proposal must still be approved by the feds, and sentiment in Congress has favored auctioning off the island to the highest bidder. Clearly, then, this is not yet a done deal -- and the final agreement could indeed look far different. But given what's currently on the table, we're optimistic.

Kudos should also go to Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who got President Clinton to support handing the island over to the city and state for a token payment of \$1, provided the governor and the mayor could reach a compromise on its use.

All in all, this is good news to kick off the new year.

Time for Courage on the New Subway

Rare is the day we find ourselves on the same page as Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, the Straphangers Campaign or even such estimable—if often overreaching—organizations as the Regional Plan Association.

But that day has arrived. We all favor the construction of a full-blown, 12-plus-mile Second Avenue subway.

We all think the MTA's plan for the 3.5-mile, 125th Street-to-63rd Street "Stubway" along Second Avenue is insufficient and misguided. The purpose of a new line is to relieve pressure on the groaning, jammed-to-capacity Lexington Avenue line. The 4, 5 and 6 trains carry almost 30 percent of the TA's subway passengers—and the Lexington line simply cannot carry more.

But building the real deal—a Second Avenue subway running from the top of Manhattan to the South Street Seaport—won't be cheap. Estimates are that it will cost \$15 billion, and that's likely an

understatement.

So, whence the money? There are a variety of sources, which we will examine in depth soon, but make no mistake: The subway fare will have to be raised to help pay for it.

And that's where politicians like Silver and supposedly populist groups like the Straphangers are going to have to show real courage and talk real sense. They know, as well as we do, that there's no way to raise the money necessary without a fare increase. There's no such thing as a free subway ride—subway line, either—and it's unrealistic and unfair to pretend otherwise.

Right now, at \$1.50, the price of a ride is one of New York City's great bargains, and an extra quarter isn't going to kill anybody.

There's a rare political and social consensus in this town on the need for this new subway line. Now is the time to talk turkey about costs—and fare increases.

Half-measures won't do for a project critical to the future of the city

NEW YORK CITY needs a subway underneath Second Avenue that runs the length of Manhattan's East Side—12 miles of track to solve the worst commuting problem in the Big Apple.

The time is now.

It will take political will and real gumption to make it happen.

Half-measures won't do. Compromise is unthinkable. The demand is too great, the need too critical.

But right now, the plans under discussion in Albany are approximately \$12 billion and nine miles of track short.

Time to change the plans.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority wants to draw up blueprints for a new subway line that will run a paltry three miles down Second Avenue and then head west along existing tracks.

That won't do.

The MTA would leave millions of New Yorkers still underserved by mass transit—and will give tens of thousands of new commuters no place to go but into the maxed-out Lexington Avenue line.

The MTA needs to think big in the finest tradition of New York City.

Why now?

Well, the Transit Authority has never been this flush, and the finances of the city and state have never been in such good shape. And there is a rare consensus among politicians, planners and activists that the Second Avenue subway must be built—and must be built all the way from Harlem to the South Street Seaport.

That consensus is the fuel that will keep the project going. Without it, the MTA will not be able to do some painful and necessary things—like raising the subway fare to help pay for it, which will be inevitable.

Why does the city need a full-length Second Avenue Subway?

Here's why.

The Lexington line (the Nos. 4, 5, and 6 "green" trains) now carries almost 1.5 million commuters daily. That's 30 percent of the TA's workday passenger total, on less than 10 percent of the system's track.

This is unacceptable now. Just imagine the mess when the ambitious Long Island Rail Road link to Grand Central Terminal—also approved last week—is completed 10 years from now.

The Regional Plan Association imagined just that, and it's enough to give any East Side subway user nightmares. The association estimates a 30 percent increase in Lex line ridership, which it correctly terms "a physical impossibility."

Something must be done.

But the \$17.5-billion, five-year capital construction plan approved by the MTA last week didn't contain a nickel for a Second Avenue line that would extend the full length of Manhattan.

The authority opted instead for a truncated, three-mile "stubway" that would cost \$3.5 billion and run from 125th Street to 63rd Street before heading west along the N and R tracks down Broadway.

The "stubway" would be useful for Upper East Siders and East Harlem riders. But by going west at 63rd, it would do absolutely nothing to move the 50,000 new riders who will be dumped into Grand Central Station every day because of the planned commuter connector—and will have nowhere to go but the Lexington Avenue trains into which not a single extra person can fit today.

The MTA is really failing to consider the needs of the city in the new millennium.

New York City's economy is booming as never before—and, now more than ever, all the wealth-generating machinery is physically concentrated in Lower Manhattan. There's no more manufacturing in the outer boroughs. And there never will be again.

Forevermore, the action is to be in Manhattan—specifically, Lower Manhattan. And the people who make it happen must be transported to their jobs every morning, and gotten home again at night.

This means mass transit.

And that means, mostly, subways.

If the city (working with Albany, which controls the MTA) cannot summon the will to do something as fundamentally simple as thread a tunnel down the East Side, then it will suffer the consequences.

Simple doesn't mean cheap. Even the most conservative estimates put the cost of a full-length Second Avenue subway line at more than \$15 billion.

But the money to build it can be found—just as it was found almost 20 years ago, when billions were raised from a variety of sources to renew a subway system that had been neglected for decades.

The alternative was too terrible to contemplate.

Anyway, compare \$15 billion—spread out over the years that it would take to build the new line—with the billions generated by Wall Street every year (every week, actually) and what it would mean for the city 10 years out when mass-transit gridlock finally strangles the golden goose.

Now, that's too terrible to contemplate.

What's needed right now is vision and courage—plus the \$2 billion down payment the RPA says is needed over the next five years "to plan, design, review and complete the first year of construction of a true Second Avenue subway."

That's subway.

Not stubway.

We applaud a politician we normally don't have much in common with—Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, who is fighting hard to force the MTA to rejigger its plans and commit itself to the full-length Second Avenue line.

Over the next few weeks, we'll be exploring ways to build, finance and maintain the new subway line in fiscally sound and innovative ways.

It can be done.

It must be done.

Let's do it.

In America

BOB HERBERT

Underground Dreams

It could happen. I'm not saying it will happen. But the stars are moving ever closer to a favorable alignment. A subway line under Second Avenue in Manhattan — a dream that has tantalized commuters for most of this century — is now approaching the realm of the possible. Don't bet the mortgage just yet. The cynics and the naysayers are still holding the high cards. But it could happen.

And if you are one of the unlucky thousands who ride to work while being poked and jostled by the unruly elbows, backpacks and umbrellas on the hopelessly and sometimes dangerously overcrowded Lexington Avenue line, you know for sure that it should happen.

Construction of the city's subway system began 100 years ago. William McKinley was President and Robert Van Wyck was Mayor, the first Mayor of all five boroughs. The subways soon became indispensable and shortly after World War I East Siders were being told that a Second Avenue subway line was in their future.

They had no idea how far in the future. For one reason or another — a Depression, a World War, a lack of vision, a fiscal crisis — the Second Avenue subway never happened. Highways and bridges and tunnels and vast acres of parking lots materialized during those decades. But no subway under Second Avenue.

"The East Side of Manhattan was developed around the Second and Third Avenue els," said Bob Yaro, executive director of the Regional Plan Association, which is part of a coalition of civic and business groups that is calling for work to actually get

Eyeing a deal on 2d Ave. subway.

started on creation of a Second Avenue line.

"When the els came down, the East Side was zoned with the understanding that there was going to be a Second Avenue subway replacing those elevated lines. But it hasn't been built. Consequently, the Lex is jammed well beyond its carrying capacity, to the point where it just doesn't work. People can't get on and off the trains. The platforms and stairs can't carry the numbers of people that are there. It is literally approaching an unsafe situation at the most crowded stations."

In the mid-1950's a full-scale Second Avenue line probably would have cost a few hundred million dollars. Now it would cost several billion. And yet, Mr. Yaro and many others are saying, "I think its time has come."

There are several reasons to be at least somewhat optimistic. To get the subway line built you have to have the support of top state officials. It so happens that Gov. George Pataki very much wants to build a tunnel connecting the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central Terminal. That would keep thousands of suburban Long Island commuters from having to travel to Penn Station on the West Side of Manhattan and then doubling back to the East Side by subway to get to work. (It would also add thousands of

new passengers to the daily crush of the Lexington Avenue line.)

And it just happens that the Speaker of the State Assembly, Sheldon Silver, represents the Lower East Side, which is woefully short of subway service and would benefit tremendously if the Second Avenue subway were built.

One has to keep in mind, of course, that for Mr. Silver's local constituents to benefit, a full-length Second Avenue line would have to be built, not the truncated 125th Street to 63d Street proposal being considered by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Mr. Pataki, friend of the suburbanites, meet Mr. Silver, who says he's a champion of the urbanites. Let's make a deal. If not now, when? The number of New Yorkers using mass transit has soared over the past couple of years. And these are the best of economic times, with the Federal, state and city governments all running surpluses. All we need is a little vision.

"We're running out of capacity to move people into the central business district," said Gene Russianoff, the senior attorney with the Straphangers Campaign, which is also part of the coalition supporting a new subway line. "If we want to have the jobs of a growing economy, we have to be able to get the people to them. And we've maxed out. The Lex is at 140 percent of capacity during rush hour. It's a nightmare."

There is wide support for the new subway line, ranging from the Auto Club of New York to the New York City Partnership and the Environmental Defense Fund. The stars are in alignment. All we need is leadership.

Mr. Pataki? Mr. Silver? □

Push the MTA So Transit Plan Doesn't Go Halfway

In case the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is wondering what to build next, the Regional Plan Association and nearly 50 allied organizations came forward yesterday to offer some helpful advice. The short list goes like this: Dig the Long Island Rail Road a new tunnel into Grand Central Terminal on Manhattan's East Side and simultaneously build a full, new Second Avenue subway line.

Meanwhile, says the group - known as the Empire State Transportation Alliance - the MTA must keep up the fine work of restoring the transit system to a state of good repair.

It all adds up to an excellent exhortation, but you may assume that the MTA is less than thrilled with the advice. The agency is now drawing up its next five-year capital plan - due Oct. 1 - and unlike the RPA, the Long Island Association and every other member of the alliance, it must sweat the bottom line.

The alliance says the East Side access work would demand \$1.5 billion over the next five years, the Second

Avenue project would need \$2 billion, and efforts to keep the system in a state of good repair and other projects would cost \$14.7 billion. All told, the alliance has \$18.2-billion worth of work in mind.

The problem is, the coalition isn't saying how the state might raise this money for the MTA. Well, never mind those questions for now - the details can be hashed out in Albany later. It's better to outline the best regional transit system possible and then scare up the money. Why should the MTA cut its losses before the game even starts? Yet that is precisely what it shows signs of doing. Example: It is looking at a proposed Second Avenue subway line that would end at 63rd Street. But what will happen when the LIRR suddenly dumps thousands of new subway riders in Grand Central on East 42nd? Answer: Without a new subway, the stuffed Lexington Avenue line would have a nervous breakdown. The MTA wouldn't (usually) give customers a half-ride. Why half-measures?

Year 2000 Problem Held Minimal for City Services

But Planners See Some Risk of Disruptions

By BARNABY J. FEDER

Year 2000 computer problems are unlikely to prevent residents of the New York region from getting water, food and health care, from completing their commuting, or from getting rid of their wastes, according to three studies to be issued today by the Regional Plan Association.

Among the good news items:

¶New York City's Health and Hospitals Corporation, which serves many poor, inner-city residents, has one of the most aggressive Year 2000 preparation programs.

¶The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has completed work on all the computers and equipment necessary to run trains and buses with only record-keeping systems still to be updated.

¶Water, sewer and garbage services run on equipment that can be operated without help from computers if necessary.

But the planning group warns that the studies found that there was still an "unquantifiable risk" of major disruptions. Its concerns include the complex relationships among the basic service sectors, like the reliance of nearly everyone on power and phone service, and the impossibility of locating and testing every computer embedded in larger pieces of equipment.

The reports also warned that, as in the rest of the country, small businesses, nonprofit organizations and communities in the region appear to be lagging in preparations. The group is also concerned that Y2K, as the computer problem is popularly known, is widely mentioned in popular media and everyday chat but poorly understood by most people.

"People need a contingency plan for themselves and their companies so that they are not caught panicking at the 11th hour," said Brendan J. Dugan, a banker who is co-chairman of the group's Y2K Task Force with Bishop Joseph Sullivan, an executive with Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

The Regional Plan Association's effort is the first broad Year 2000 study of the three-state metropolitan area, which is home to nearly a tenth of the nation's people.

The reports include a variety of details to reinforce various points. The health care report, for instance, tempers the generally good news by citing several institutions like the financially troubled Flushing Hospital Medical Center that may have difficulty finishing computer repairs by the end of this year. It also notes that contingency planners are just

Y2K is well known but little understood, according to new regional studies.

beginning to turn their attention to some issues that may be critical to some citizens, like locating people whose lives depend on uninterrupted power for home medical equipment.

The reports should serve as a starting point for New York's scheduled "Community Conversation" on July 28, organized by the Regional Plan Association, said James Devlin, a Citibank vice president who served on the task force. The Community Conversation program, which was recently initiated by President Clinton's Council on Year 2000 Conversion, asks local business and political leaders to be hosts for an open meeting to answer public questions about local Year 2000 readiness and contingency planning.

New York is behind many cities in public discussion of Year 2000 work, according to Regional Plan officials and many Year 2000 experts. But today's report, the July 28 meeting and several other initiatives like the major expansion two weeks ago of the city's Year 2000 Web page at www.ci.nyc.ny.us/html/y2k may begin to close that gap.

"I see this kind of in-depth study from a community perspective as a model for the rest of the country," said Charles Halpern, president of the Nathan Cummings Foundation, which sponsored part of the work and donates money to Year 2000 community preparedness programs around the country.

The Year 2000 problem stems from the longstanding custom in computer programming of using two digits to refer to the year in dates, like 99 for 1999. That practice saved valuable memory space, but it left many computers and software programs vulnerable to breakdowns when confronted with 00 in dates.

Some computers treat 00 as 1900 instead of 2000, and others cannot interpret it as a valid date. Faulty computers and electronic equipment may generate bad data, crash or fail to restart if turned off.

The Regional Plan Association task force made nine recommendations, including calling for public and private sector leaders to make a priority of identifying individuals and groups most likely to be hurt by any disruptions, urging more effort to involve the public in preparations, and sharing of emergency planning efforts with community leaders.

The group also urged churches, synagogues and volunteer groups to get involved in preparing for disruptions and to be ready to provide emergency services.

The recommendations were written in such general terms that even within the task force, there were disagreements on how to read some of them. One, for instance, suggests curtailing "programs that would further stretch limited emergency response resources."

Mr. Halpern of the Cummings Foundation said the message was that New York City should do whatever it could to discourage crowds of visitors from coming to Times Square on New Year's Eve. But that cautious approach was not widely shared on the task force, said Aram Khachadurian, vice president of the Regional Plan Association.

The Full Second Avenue Subway

New York City began construction of its subway system 100 years ago, a fact that should not surprise any veteran customer, especially those using the old Lexington Avenue line along Manhattan's East Side. The oddly designated green line is too often excessively dirty, noisy and hot. Its cars are groaning with so many passengers that City Councilman A. Gifford Miller complained this week at a press conference before a City Council committee hearing that "if the subway represents the arteries of our city, the Lexington Avenue line is about to cause us cardiac arrest."

The strain on the system worsens when the passenger load increases, a problem that could occur under a five-year capital plan being considered by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The M.T.A. is expected to propose building a tunnel connecting the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central Terminal, an idea favored by Gov. George Pataki, who also controls the current M.T.A. board. This new tunnel could overload the already overcrowded Lexington Avenue line, but instead of building an additional full line along Second Avenue on the eastern side of Manhattan, the M.T.A. board is considering a truncated Second Avenue line that

would stretch only from 125th Street to 63d Street. Called "the stub" by critics, this shortened line would send trains over the N and R tracks at 63d, producing a partial solution to a longer-term need for relief along the East Side.

The authority, which is expected to approve a new five-year capital plan at its next board meeting in less than three weeks, should endorse the full Second Avenue line, even if it still needs to find the funds, to help balance the passenger load that will be created by Mr. Pataki's new tunnel from the suburbs. This full line would feed into financial and residential pockets of lower Manhattan, supporting new economic growth with an expanded subway system.

Both projects are expensive. At least \$4 billion would be needed for the L.I.R.R. connection and up to \$15 billion for the subway, which means the lobbying for Federal, state and city funds is still a crucial part of any future package. But these additions are a down payment on the city's growth. As one transit advocate said recently, New York has used up the transportation system built by its grandparents. It is time now to start constructing a route or two for the grandchildren.

The New York Times

July 5, 1999

Isle w/ History, Harbor Vus

During a helicopter ride with Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan on Oct. 22, 1995, President Clinton offered to sell Governors Island to New York City for \$1. More than three years after the President's generous offer, the city still lacks the kind of credible, comprehensive proposal for the 172-acre island's redevelopment that Congress and the White House will need before they can approve any deal.

The Giuliani administration wasted 1998 in futile pursuit of casino gambling as a source of tax revenue to cover the island's annual upkeep. City Hall shelved that idea after Albany wisely showed no interest in authorizing legalized gambling there. Now Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has an informal task force reviewing proposals from developers, universities and museums, among others. Its meetings have been consumed by a search for businesses whose revenues would help maintain the island.

What the task force apparently has not done is draft a set of principles for redevelopment, guidelines that would insure public access to the island's vast open spaces and its landmarks. The island's historic structures, including Castle Williams, are grand repositories of the nation's Colonial and wartime past, stretching from the Revolutionary War to the cold war.

The absence of guidelines has yielded some misbegotten ideas. The Danish amusement park operator Tivoli Gardens, for example, would like to use the island's historic north end as the backdrop for one of its entertainment projects. Americans should not have to buy an amusement park ticket to experience their patrimony. Nor should this area be fenced off. A rule book might have steered this company elsewhere on the island.

City Hall's commercial ambitions may have another side effect. Some in Washington, including Mr. Moynihan's office, say this strategy dooms the

chances of resurrecting the \$1 deal or executing any deal that conveys the island for a nominal sum. In general, surplus property can be sold for a song if the buyer is a public entity with a clear public purpose. Others believe that with a few strokes of creativity it will still be possible to satisfy the legal requirements of a \$1 deal, provided Mayor Giuliani and Gov. George Pataki are willing to work cooperatively.

Without delay, City Hall and Albany should pool their intellectual capital and create a public corporation ready to own and operate the island in the national interest. Within this mandate there should be sufficient room for a limited number of commercial uses that help pay the island's bills and are compatible with its character. By no later than Labor Day, Mr. Giuliani and Mr. Pataki should give Washington a plan that places the preservation and appropriate treatment of landmarks and open space ahead of commercial uses.

Even then, acquiring the island for \$1 or a nominal amount will not be easy. Mr. Moynihan will need to secure passage of legislation canceling the 1997 balanced-budget clause requiring a sale at fair-market value in fiscal 2002. Washington values the island at \$500 million — a fanciful figure given the costs of restoring seawalls and historic structures.

Endowed with magnificent views of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, Governors Island ought to become the third jewel in New York Harbor. Both the city and the state should be willing to commit public funds to attract Federal aid. The early-17th-century Dutch acquired Nooten Eylandt from the Manahatas Indians for a pittance. So long as the city, Albany and Washington cooperate, the new deal should be just as advantageous for all Americans. Without flexing much governmental muscle at all, the Mayor and the Governor can insure that the fourth anniversary of the \$1 deal this fall is not the start of another year of procrastination.

Tax, fare hikes sought to fund big MTA plans

Business, labor
say money needed
for transit lines;
opposition likely

BY PHILIP LENTZ

A coalition of business, labor and advocacy groups is launching an uphill campaign to generate support for a new mass transit capital plan that will require higher taxes or fares—or both.

The alliance is hoping to create public pressure to maintain and expand the region's transit systems and overcome strong political resistance to raising new revenue.

But there seems little appetite in

Albany for new taxes or other funding schemes, leading some advocates to fear local mass transit will not be able to keep up with increasing demand in a booming economy.

"We saw what happened in the late 1970s when you don't invest in the transit system—it can literally fall apart," says Lee Sander, head of the Center for Transportation Policy and Management at New York University. "As New York grows, we have to make sure that transit grows with the city."

Mr. Sander, a former city transportation commissioner, and Bob Yaro, executive director of the Regional Plan Association, have created the Empire State Transportation Alliance to lobby



MOTORMEN: Bob Yaro of the Regional Plan Association and Lee Sander of the Center for Transportation Policy have created an alliance to lobby for mass transit.

Tax, fare hikes sought to fund big MTA plans

state leaders for mass transit.

Among the groups in the alliance are the RPA, the New York Building Congress, the Real Estate Board of New York, the state AFL-CIO, the General Contractors Association of New York, the Transport Workers Union, the League of Conservation Voters and the Straphangers Campaign.

The group is still hammering out its priorities, but it has already raised \$100,000 for a media advertising campaign later this year.

"In order to do what needs to be done, there will be some controversy—it will require some new revenue streams," says Mr. Yaro. "This is going to need a broad-based campaign by civic, business and environmental leaders."

The main target of the coalition is the five-year capital plan the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is required to submit to the Legislature by Oct. 1. The plan would replace the five-year \$12.5 billion capital budget that expires at the end of the year.

Experts say that just maintaining the MTA's current infrastructure—rebuilding subway stations, buying new subway cars and improving track and communication equipment—will cost \$12 billion.

Ridership at all-time high

On top of that, there is considerable pressure for new projects to expand capacity as mass transit ridership approaches all-time highs. The most viable are East Side Access, which would bring the Long Island Rail Road into Grand Central Terminal; a Second Avenue subway; and a rail link to La Guardia Airport.

Construction on these proposals is years away. But the MTA is being pushed to finance planning, engineering and initial construction costs for all three in the new five-year plan. That could boost the price tag to between \$15 billion and \$18 billion.

Experts say available MTA revenues amount to only about \$8 billion to \$9 billion. Coming up with the rest is a hot potato that will likely fall in the Legislature's lap either later this year or early next year.

The alliance has already raised \$100,000 for an advertising campaign to build public support.

The menu of possible revenue sources contains no surprises. The list includes fare increases, tax hikes, higher vehicle fees and new bridge tolls, all of which are considered anathema in a political environment focused on cutting taxes, not raising them.

"Money is always the toughest question," says Gene Russianoff, staff attorney for the Straphangers Campaign. "The role of people like me is to show that the need is out there and let elected officials make the hard choices about who pays."

The issue of new revenue is so sensitive that there is not even a consensus within the transportation alliance over

what sources should be used to fund the capital plan.

MTA officials are under strict orders not to talk about the capital budget, and that has generated a great deal of speculation over how large a plan the agency will recommend—and how it would be financed.

Forcing advocates' hand?

Some observers believe the MTA will propose a bare-bones budget of \$10 billion, forcing advocates to suggest unpopular revenue sources to pay for projects left out of the initial recommendation.

Others believe the agency's plan could reach \$14 billion, with the bulk of the money targeted for maintaining the current system and the East Side Access program, a priority of Gov. George Pataki's.

But Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver wants money for a Second Avenue subway that would reach his district in lower Manhattan; the MTA is considering only a subway line that would go from 125th Street to 63rd Street on the Upper East Side.

Mayor Rudy Giuliani wants money to build a La Guardia link and extend the No. 7 line to the far West Side, where he would like to construct a sports stadium. The city would contribute nearly \$1 billion to the MTA's next five-year plan, giving it a major say in how the money is spent.

Finally, there is a danger that the MTA could lose some of the money it is already counting on to finance the capital plan. Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., has proposed major reductions in federal mass transit support for New York and California, which if enacted could cut up to \$800 million for local transit projects.

An Investment Strategy for the Subways

New York City's economy could not function without the subways. Yet for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan's East Side and Queens, "rapid transit" is notoriously slow, infrequent or a half-mile hike away. Even when it's accessible, riding it at rush hour sentences straphangers to levels of overcrowding that the Regional Plan Association describes genteelly as "elbow to rib." The association's remedy is MetroLink, a plan that makes a compelling case for the first major expansion of the subway system since the 1940's.

In the decades ahead, the city could gain hundreds of thousands of jobs. Motivated by a desire to see them materialize and to help people reach them, MetroLink would resuscitate the partially built Second Avenue subway. This line would run from the Bronx south through Manhattan and on to Brooklyn's Atlantic Terminal, where it would connect to the Long Island Rail Road. The Second Avenue line would also intersect underused rail lines, along which four new subway routes would be created to give residents in the Bronx, south Brooklyn and

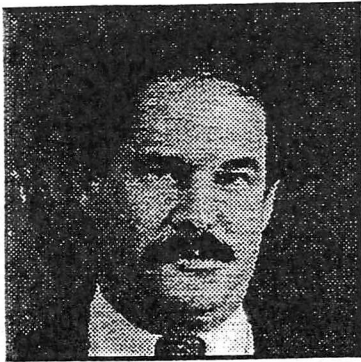
southeastern Queens express service to Manhattan. One route would give midtown and Wall Street business travelers a one-seat ride to Kennedy International Airport. Over all, MetroLink, which calls for 19 miles of new tunneling, would improve service for 250,000 rush-hour riders.

MetroLink's unveiling has provoked grousing by state and city officials and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. They do not disparage the vision but assault its \$13 billion price tag. Their lukewarm response, however, should not derail efforts to make the transit investments essential to the city's economic prosperity.

New York spent \$1.57 billion a year on subway and commuter rail investments from the mid-1980's to mid-1990's. In the same period, Tokyo spent \$16.25 billion a year, Paris \$1.63 billion and London \$1.08 billion. Per capita annually, New York invested \$81. That is close to London's \$87, much less than Paris's \$153 and a fraction of Tokyo's \$511. Selecting rapid-transit projects that spur the economy and complement 21st-century residential realities is far more important than new sports stadiums.

'We're All in This Together'

Regionalist Yaro says regional revitalization begins with transportation



Robert D. Yaro of New Canaan has been executive director of the Manhattan-based Regional Plan Association since 1990. The plan's 1996 final report, "A Region at Risk," set forth strategies to sustain the competitiveness, environmental quality and social equity of New York, Connecticut and New Jersey through investments in transportation, communities, education and the environment. Yaro was in New Haven March 23 to speak at an forum presented by the International Festival of Arts & Ideas. BNH caught up with him that day.

Are cities, as cities, dead?

The way urban thinkers, scholars and, increasingly, practitioners are looking at metropolitan regions is that these places are the building blocks in the global economy — not cities or suburbs or even states. When you get beyond the platitudes about the global economy, what you find is that with capital and entrepreneurial people more or less freed from nation-states, that it really is regions that are driving global markets. The third thing is that the success of regions and their cities and suburbs are highly correlated — that is, if center cities are doing well across the country, the regions are doing well. If the center cities are doing badly, the regions are also underperforming. The fourth new reality is that the successful places are the ones that are finding new ways to collaborate, creating new regional outlooks and institutions that are getting over the divisions between cities and suburbs.

Of course, in Connecticut those divisions have been institutionalized for centuries.

Yes. We're living with these political boundaries that were left to us by our 17th-century predecessors. I think of

Connecticut's 169 cities and towns as Charles II's revenge. Charles II had a special distaste for New Haven, because the three gentlemen who killed his father, Charles I [regicides Whalley, Goffe and Dixwell], were given refuge here. We've had this static political system here even though the economy has changed, transportation systems, environmental systems, we now understand, cut across political boundaries. These 17th-century political boundaries have really become an impediment to the effective management of these systems. If you look at the economy of the state and the region, Connecticut has essentially been static in terms of population for 30 years. It was the only place in the country to lose both population and employment in the first half of the 1990s, and we're only now getting back to 1990 employment levels. If you ask the question, Why aren't we growing, the answer is that probably 100 of our 169 communities have pulled up the drawbridge. They've made it very difficult for housing markets to operate as they should; housing prices are very high, our roadways are very congested, and so on. Some of this has been self-inflicted.

Is New Haven the center of its own metro area, or merely the last eastern outpost of the New York metro area?

I really think of New Haven as part of three different regions: We are in different ways part of the two models you've suggested, and there's even a third way, and that is as part of a regional corridor that I call 'Guilwich,' which runs from Guilford to Greenwich, this coastal corridor which is really where our transportation system is. I don't think these [three] things are mutually exclusive. In greater New Haven you've had real problems with rivalries between cities and suburbs, and yet the city obviously is the commercial and service and education center for that immediate region. With 'Guilwich,' you have a larger economy, the western end of which is the wealthiest place in the country. We just haven't built on our connections with that economy. We're not positioned at the moment to get our share of it. In 'Guilwich' we have the potential to be the intellectual center, a major service center with the hospitals, theater and so forth. In greater

New Haven [the city's role] is obviously services, culture, health care, education. New Haven needs to build on its assets and advantages to build a role in all three regions.

Where does New Haven fit into the New York metro area?

In the tri-state [New York, New Jersey, Connecticut] region, New Haven can cast itself as kind of an edge city in this region. The bookend to New Haven at the other end of this region is Princeton, N.J., which also happens to have Princeton University as well as office parks, is a major center of the reinsurance industry in the country. One of the things that's happening for the first time since the late '80s is that we're looking at activities in Manhattan that don't have room to expand, or that can't afford to have their operations in that expensive real estate market, so they're looking for places to go. There are creative people who are looking for places to go as well. One potential role for New Haven in this region is to become 'the Upper West Side, with trees.' It's got a great urban fabric, it's urbane, it's historic — but it's also green, and has got lower density than most of the urban centers to the west. A second opportunity is to see if we can pull some back-office operations and some research activities out of points west — not just Manhattan, but Stamford as well. It's pretty much built out. There's no capacity in the transportation system to handle much more, anyway.

What do we have to do in order for that to begin to happen?

One of them is the transportation system. At the moment we've got a commute [to Manhattan] that's about an hour and 40 minutes; we need to trim that back. We've had some very preliminary discussions with [the state's Department of Transportation] and Metro North about the potential to run some high-speed express trains from New Haven into Grand Central.

Amtrak is going to begin high-speed service as well.

These services have the potential to complement each other. Eventually they want to get down to just over an hour. Amtrak is a premium express service which connects New Haven not just with

New York, but also with Boston. It also gives a direct tie to Newark Airport, which is now the region's busiest airport. The Metro North service in some ways might be more important, because while it might be just a few minutes longer, it delivers people to the East Side, which is where three-quarters of the destinations are. You really need to push both of these things to make it possible for businesses and individuals to start making locational decisions around these services.

What else has to happen?

As far as the residential stuff, the city has to focus on the public-safety issues, as it already has, as well as appearance. The perception has to be of the place being attractive and safe and well-run. But the transportation link may be the most important thing we can do.

In greater New Haven you have a lot of suburbanites who fear and refuse to identify with the center city. Is that unique to our community?

No, you see this across the region and across the country. But there are a number of places where they're beginning to rethink these center city-suburban relationships. The Denver area collaborates around the arts. Chicago has got a new regional plan. The most striking one is Salt Lake City, where they're developing a new regional strategy for transportation, the environment and growth management. The realization that we're all in this together — that Branford's well-being depends on New Haven's — we're not there yet. We need to move in that direction.

How great a role does race play in this?

It's a big part of it. Unfortunately, race and class and income are still highly correlated here. However, one of the great successes of the past few decades here and across the country is that we've integrated the workforce, and we now have a black and Latino middle class in New Haven and across the tri-state area. And the black and Latino middle class is now moving to the inner-ring suburbs. The irony is that West Haven and New Haven now probably have more in common than they have separating them. BNH

After 24 Years, Subway Line for Second Avenue Gets Another Look

By THOMAS J. LUECK

It was a grand idea left in a shambles by New York City's fiscal crisis of the 1970's: a subway running under Second Avenue, from the northern Bronx all the way to Wall Street, connected to a new tunnel under the East River. Started in 1972, the project was abandoned three years later, with only the river tunnel and three short links finished.

Twenty-four years later, the idea is getting a second look, although officials still differ over whether its huge costs can be justified, and they warn of difficult political hurdles.

In the most ambitious proposal, released yesterday, the Regional Plan Association, a nongovernmental planning group, said the long-abandoned excavation should serve as a centerpiece for a greatly expanded subway system, with 5 new subway lines, including 19 new miles of tunnels and 8 miles of new track above ground.

The proposal's vast scope — a 13-year effort with an estimated \$13 billion price tag — is also its greatest obstacle. And any decision will be largely driven by Gov. George E. Pataki, who holds a tight rein over the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. While Mr. Pataki has asked the M.T.A. to look at the Regional Plan Association's idea, he is reserving judgment on it.

But a spectrum of business people and public officials, including M.T.A. executives,

The scope of a transit project could be its undoing.

are showing a keen interest in an expansion of the subway system, with Second Avenue as its anchor.

The association laid out a blueprint for 35 miles of new or refurbished subway track, 750 additional cars and new service extending from the East Side to Grand Central Terminal, Wall Street, Kennedy International Airport and Co-op City in the Bronx.

Coming from a group that has long embraced expensive, politically divisive and often unattainable goals for the New York City region, the proposal appeared to set a highly ambitious standard for expanding the public transit system, now flush with more riders and far better finances than it was in the 1970's.

Asked about an abbreviated version of the proposal 10 days ago, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani dismissed it as "something of a pipe dream." The Mayor's skepticism was underscored yesterday by Rudy Washington, his deputy mayor for community development, who said the proposal was "over-

reaching" at a time when there are "many other demands for improvement of the public transportation system."

The M.T.A. is conducting a \$5 million study of the Second Avenue corridor. "The R.P.A. proposal is not at all inconsistent with what we are looking at," said Christopher P. Boylan, the authority's deputy executive director. Although Mr. Boylan declined to discuss preliminary findings of the study, the transit agency is widely believed to be focusing on a much more limited approach, mainly consisting of a new Second Avenue line from 125th Street to 63d Street.

But Mr. Boylan said the proposal by the Regional Plan Association might resolve several problems facing the M.T.A., including easing congestion on the Lexington Avenue subway line, providing a more convenient link from Grand Central Terminal to Wall Street and improving airport access. Transportation experts have maintained for decades that a new line under Second Avenue is needed because of the high population density on the East Side of Manhattan.

Whether any work is resumed on the Second Avenue subway project, and what it would entail, are questions high on the agenda of the M.T.A. as it prepares a five-year capital spending program for submission to



The New York Times

There is new interest in a Second Avenue subway line, but cost is a concern.

Continued on Page B6

Years Later, Subway Line Gets 2d Look

Continued From Page B1

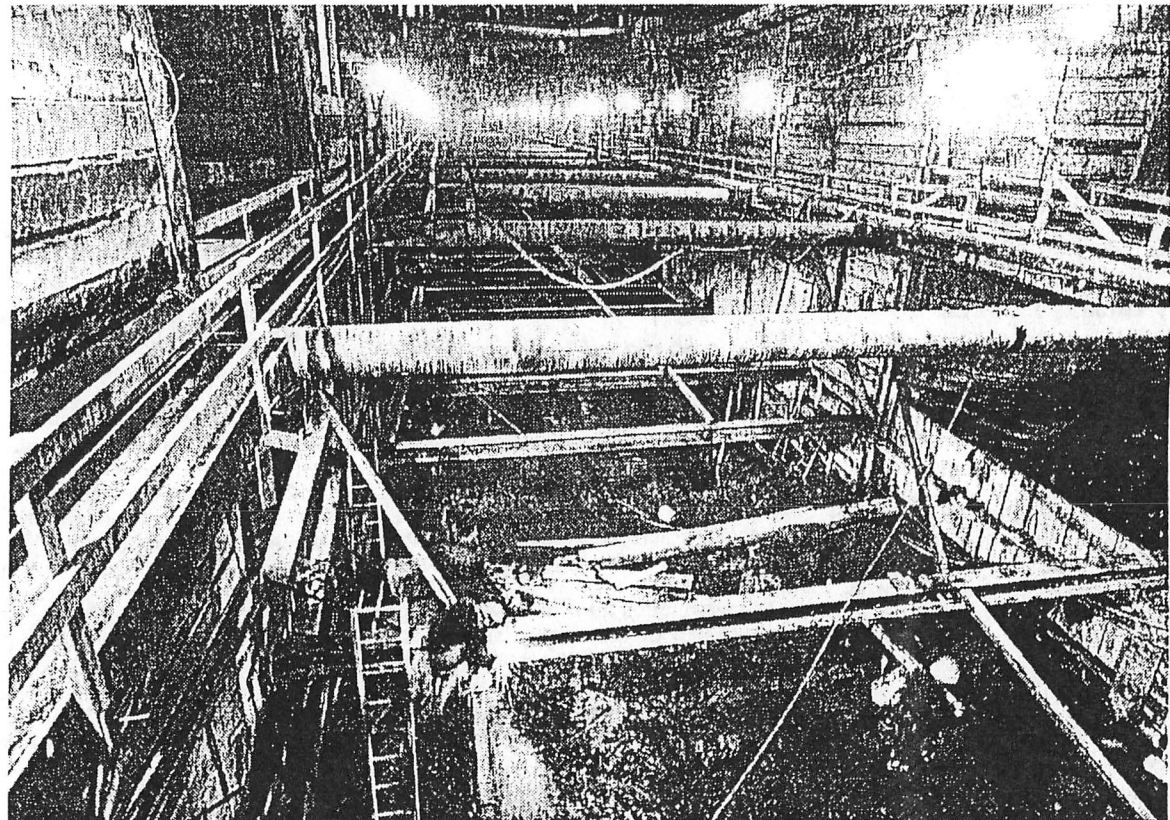
Governor Pataki by the end of October.

Michael McKeon, a spokesman for Mr. Pataki, said yesterday that the Governor had asked the M.T.A. board to look at the Regional Plan proposal, but he said the Governor's priority is for the M.T.A. to "make upgrades on the subway system's long neglected infrastructure" before expanding the system.

Before the original project was abandoned in 1975, only the East River Tunnel at 63d Street and three short links of the Second Avenue Tunnel — at 120th Street, 110th Street and Canal Street — had been completed. Among the biggest service improvements in the Regional Plan proposal would be a new subway line extending from Co-op City in the Bronx down Second Avenue to the Battery in Manhattan, and from there through a new harbor tunnel to downtown Brooklyn. A separate branch of that line would extend through a section of the East Village in Manhattan that is now far removed from subway service.

To better serve commuters coming into Grand Central Terminal, the plan would include another new tunnel running east from the terminal to Second Avenue, where it would connect to the new line and provide an alternative to the congested Lexington Avenue line for those traveling from midtown to Wall Street.

Some transportation experts suggested yesterday that even the \$13 billion estimate by the associa-



Edward Hausner/The New York Times

Construction was begun in 1972 on a subway under Second Avenue, which was to have run from the Bronx to Wall Street, but was abandoned in 1975. Here, welders reinforced second-level bracings at 113th Street.

tion would be too low to cover the sweeping extent of tunneling, new tracks and subway car purchases involved. Recent studies by the M.T.A. have assigned an approximate cost of \$1 billion per mile for new tunnels, suggesting that the vision of 19 miles of new tunnels, plus assorted above-ground tracks and new trains, would cost far more than the association's estimate.

Robert Kiley, president of the New York City Partnership business group, who was chairman of the M.T.A. from 1983 through 1990, said

the association's proposal "would have looked much better to me if they would have taken a serious look at the financing it would require."

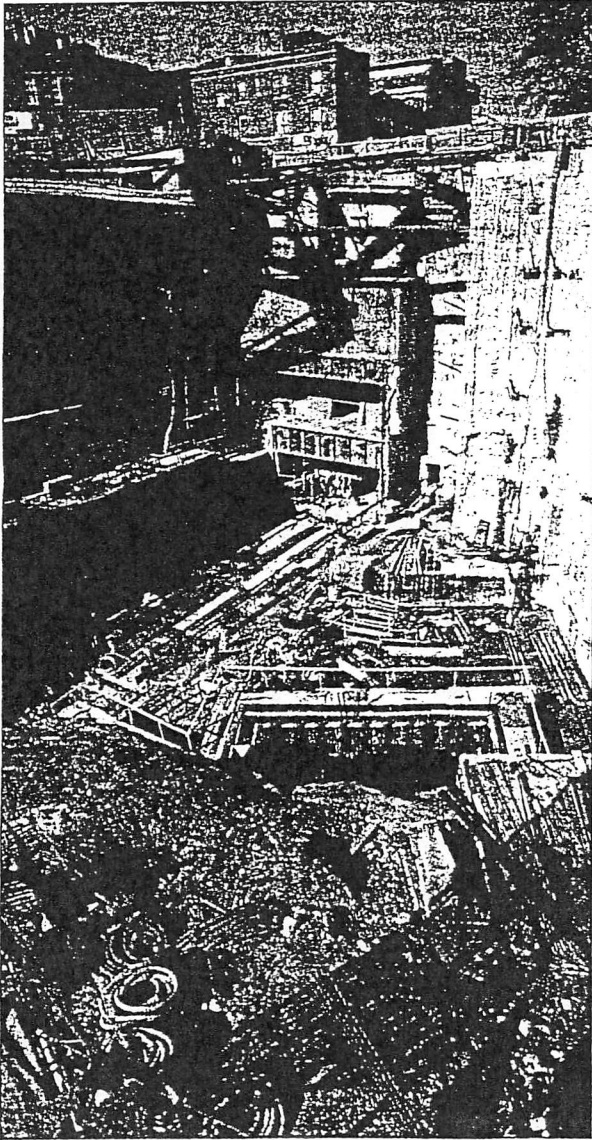
He said anything approaching a \$13 billion investment would require more than money raised through the sale of municipal bonds, the mechanism normally used by the M.T.A. to finance large projects, and might depend on charging higher fares for some customers on its subways and buses. Nonetheless, he said the proposal was a "thought-provoking plan that sets the tone and agenda."

Executives at the Regional Plan Association acknowledged that the cost of their proposal made it ambitious, but they said the scope of the subway service additions they had outlined would make them more politically attractive than a limited project.

"This plan makes it possible for almost everyone in the city to benefit," said Jeffrey Zupan, a transportation analyst with the association. "Despite the price tag, people will say it's worth it, if it does enough for enough people."

January 27, 1999

13B rail plan offers new Second Ave. line



COREY SIPKIN

NEW ROUTE: New Queens Boulevard line would utilize the 63rd St. tunnel, now under construction, to enter Manhattan.

By **JAMES RUTENBERG**

Daily News Staff Writer

A transit policy group yesterday unveiled a proposal for a major subway system expansion that would offer train service to neighborhoods that have never been served, and substantially cut commuting times for hundreds of thousands of city residents.

The Regional Plan Association — a business-supported planning group — says its \$13 billion proposal would increase the size of the underground system by 20% and cut the time of the average ride by 40%.

More importantly, it would alleviate serious crowding — caused by new discounts and previous improvements — that otherwise promises to get worse, the planners said.

With a Second Ave. subway line at its heart, the proposal would also improve service for Queens, Bronx and Brooklyn riders.

If implemented, it would make room for an additional 240,000 daily riders. Ridership is now at 4 million daily.

At stake, said association leaders, is the city's economic future.

"What we have is a system designed 100 years ago trying to serve the needs of the 21st century," said Jeff Zupan, a senior fellow with the association.

"Ridership is up, trains are packed and ... there are jobs that will not materialize without the capacity to get more people to work."

Called MetroLink, the plan would mark the first real expansion of the subway system in 60 years. It could be completed in 12 years.

The Second Ave. subway line, a one-seat ride to Kennedy Airport, a new route to the lower East Side, new express service between Jamaica, Queens and downtown Manhattan and a spur to Laurelton are all features of the proposal.

Riders in Southeast Queens would see the trip from Jamaica to downtown Manhattan reduced from an hour to 15 minutes. Riders in the northern Bronx would see the commute from Co-op City to City Hall cut from 63 minutes to 30 minutes.

Upper East Siders could see their trip from 86th St. to Wall St. reduced to 16 minutes from 34, association leaders said.

The main feature of MetroLink is a line running from Co-

op City in the northeast Bronx, down Second Ave. in Manhattan, and on to Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn. That line would feed into a new lower East Side route, a faster Queens Blvd. line and, finally, into Long Island Rail Road tracks that would be converted for subway use and head for JFK airport.

The plan would require a new tunnel along Second Ave. and in parts of the Bronx, but would in large part rely on existing track that is either unused or underused.

It would be up to Metropolitan Transportation Authority officials to make the proposal a reality.

MTA brass said they would review the proposal as they devise another five-year building plan in the coming months, but added that any expansion has to be weighed against current maintenance needs.

"We're going to look at their stuff," said Christopher Boylan, deputy executive director for the MTA.

"But we have to balance future expansion with current maintenance needs."

He said the MTA has been looking at similar expansions. Its proposal for a Second Ave. subway — which cuts over to Broadway at 63rd St. — has been criticized as falling short of the area's needs.

Mayor Giuliani called the Regional Plan Association proposal a "pipe dream," saying it tries to do too much.

Beverly Dolinsky, who supports the plan, said the main problem will be with the price tag, which she believes would be larger than \$13 billion.

But former MTA chairman Robert Kiley — who serves as an informal transit adviser to Giuliani — said he's all for MetroLink.

"This is do-able," said Kiley, president of the New York City Partnership.

"The time is at hand to think about a substantial expansion in transit capacity."

Also optimistic was Gene Russianoff, staff attorney for the Straphangers Campaign.

"In 20 years of doing this, this is the first real open window to any kind of system expansion I've ever seen," he said.

AT-A-GLANCE TRANSIT VISION

Here are the main features of the proposed subway system expansion.

- A new Second Ave. subway line that could deliver riders from Co-op City, the Bronx, to City Hall in 34 minutes.
- A one-seat ride to Kennedy Airport that could deliver straphangers to JFK from downtown Manhattan in 20 minutes.
- A spur that could deliver people from Jamaica, Queens, to Wall St., Manhattan, in 15 minutes — with stops in downtown Brooklyn.
- A spur serving formerly unserved Laurelton, Queens.
- A new route serving the formerly unserved lower East Side and Alphabet City.

Whitman pushes plans to save open acreage

By BRUNO TEDESCHI
Trenton Bureau

NEW YORK — Governor Whitman's interest in preserving open space didn't begin with her inaugural speech in January, when she outlined an ambitious goal of saving 1 million acres of undeveloped land in the next 10 years.

It actually began years ago in conversations around the dinner table with her mother, Eleanor Schley Todd, who was on the board of directors of the Regional Plan Association, an organization with an interest in controlling suburban sprawl in the tri-state region.

Whitman recalled those "lively discussions" during a speech to the association's annual meeting Tuesday in New York City, where she talked about her desire to strengthen the state's master plan and preserve 300,000 acres of open space before leaving office.

"One of the reasons we are so concerned about containing sprawl in the Garden State is that, like the rest of the region, we are seeing precious open space dwindle every year," Whitman said. "Every time we lose an acre of land, it cannot be replaced."

Whitman was preaching to the choir. Most of those in attendance were planners, academics, and environmentalists who wholeheartedly subscribe to the association's goals of containing suburban sprawl, revitalizing older cities,

“Every time we lose an acre of land, it cannot be replaced.”

Governor Whitman
Speaking to Regional Plan Association

and improving mass transit. Her late mother, who served as a director from 1977-86, is credited with helping to create Gateway National Recreation Area in New York and New Jersey.

For Whitman, however, those goals only became a priority in January, environmentalists say. Whitman's first term was marked by a weakening of regulations and deep cuts in the Department of Environmental Protection, the agency she will now rely on to achieve many of her second-term goals, they say.

"We've done a complete U-turn from the first term," said Bill Wolfe, acting director of the New Jersey chapter of the Sierra Club. "The administration recognized that some of the things the department was doing were ill-advised and bad public policy."

Political analysts say Whitman's interest in conservation issues is not out of character — especially considering she is closely

associated with the moderate wing of the Republican Party.

"The conservation movement was originally pushed by progressive Republicans like Teddy Roosevelt," said Steve Salmore, a retired professor of political science from Rutgers University who still serves as a Republican consultant. "It's more likely that's where her interest in it derives, rather than simply an attempt to come up with a popular issue that might give her some boost in the polls."

Still, Whitman must contend with the other side of the Republican Party that is keen on protecting property rights and cutting taxes — issues that are at odds with Whitman's second-term environmental agenda.

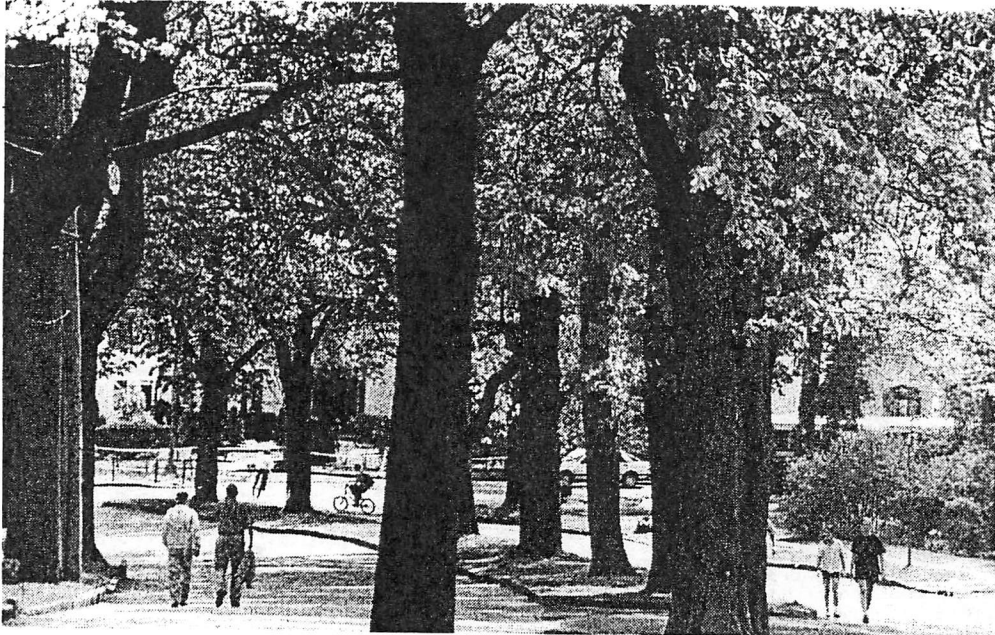
Whitman has to come up with a funding plan to pay for her ambitious open space plan. The governor said Tuesday that she will have a plan ready by the end of the month to put on the November ballot. Legislative leaders have already balked at some of her administration's earlier proposals.

The Governor's Council on New Jersey outdoors has issued a report recommending tax increases and new fees to raise \$200 million for open space acquisition and park maintenance.

"We're right now trying to put together the package that makes the most sense and does the most good and reaches the goals that we want," Whitman said.

The New York Times

April 23, 1998



Photographs by Librado Romero/The New York Times

A tree census says that 34.4 percent of the area around Fieldston Road in Riverdale, the Bronx, is covered with trees and sees a disparity between tree cover in such affluent areas and in the city's poorer sections.

Care of City's Trees Is Inadequate, Study Says

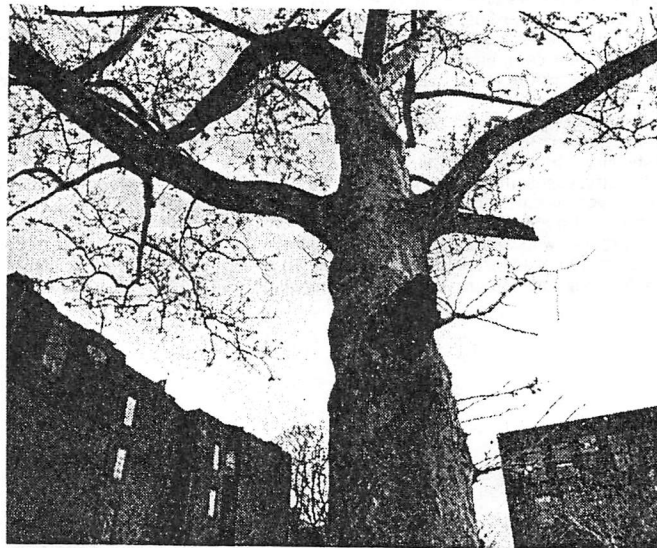
By DOUGLAS MARTIN

New York City is not doing enough to replenish its supply of trees, nor is it taking the steps needed to assure that its existing trees are protected, according to a study released yesterday by the Regional Plan Association and an environmental group.

The two groups conducted what they called an exhaustive census of the city's trees and found that the percentage of land in New York City shaded by trees is smaller than in comparable northeastern cities.

Trees are considered a vital part of the urban landscape not only for their ability to produce oxygen, but also because of their cooling effect and their ability to absorb dust and other pollutants. The report found that despite programs to increase the number of trees in the city, many newly planted trees in New York City die within a year.

"We need to change our focus from simply planting trees to making sure they get bigger," said Robert Pirani, director of environmental programs for the Regional Plan Association, an advocacy organization for planning issues that conducted the study with the Environmental Action Coalition.



One of the few trees in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx stands on 141st Street. Trees cover only 3.9 percent of the area.



The study said satellite images, airborne observation and direct observation were used for what it said was the first estimate ever made of the total number of trees in the city. It found 5.2 million trees in the five boroughs along streets and highways, in parks, in woodlands and on private property. About 484,000 trees were on city streets, 1.3 million in the older stands of trees in parks like Forest Park in Queens and Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx and more than 3 million in manicured settings, like parks and private yards.

The United States Department of Agriculture did much of the work on the actual census, the authors said.

The study, titled "Keeping the Green Promise," found that 16.6 percent of the land in the city is covered by trees, compared with a national average of 31 percent. Comparable northeastern cities like Baltimore, Boston and Philadelphia ranged from 19 to 22 percent.

Moreover, the report documented that the poorest areas of the city had by far the sparsest tree cover. For example, only 3.9 percent of the land in the district of Community Board 1 in the South Bronx was covered, compared with 34.4 percent in Board 8's district in Riverdale. Part of the reason, the report suggested, is that more affluent communities are better at lobbying the city to plant and prune trees.

The study, released on the eve of Arbor Day, criticized many aspects of the city's tree policy. It said trees in the city, especially those in public parks, were not inspected routinely. It also said the 6,000 acres of public and private woodlands in the city were scarred by invasive plants, illegal dumping and soil erosion.

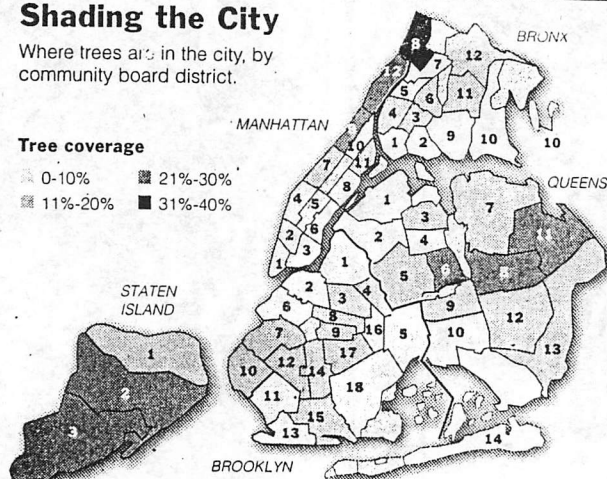
KEEPING TRACK

Shading the City

Where trees are in the city, by community board district.

Tree coverage

0-10% 21%-30%
11%-20% 31%-40%



Source: "Keeping the Green Promise," a study by the Regional Plan Association and the Environmental Action Coalition

The New York Times

"Trees in New York are a public and private resource conservatively valued at \$23 billion," the report said. "Yet there is no comprehensive inventory, collective vision or overall management plan."

The city's Parks and Recreation Department, which is responsible for tree policy, took sharp issue with the criticisms. Edward Skyler, a spokesman for the department, said that since 1994, the department had planted 50,000 street trees, its most rapid pace of planting ever. It conducted the first census of street trees, counting nearly 500,000, Mr. Skyler said. It

persuaded city officials to make the killing of a tree a felony, and it has forced 105 people convicted of injuring trees to make restitution for their crimes, he said.

The Parks Commissioner, Henry J. Stern, long an advocate for trees, said: "We're glad people take an interest in the subject and they write a report. We think we're trees' best friends. If they can't find more things we could do, there wouldn't be any report."

The report recommended regular tree maintenance in parks and more care in the planting of trees.

The New York Times

April 27, 1998

Struggling Trees

Long before builders planted skyscrapers named Woolworth, Empire State and Chrysler, New York boasted vast stands of towering trees, including elm, oak, hickory and chestnut. Yet New York's affinity for bricks and mortar has always dwarfed its interest in the urban forest. An arborists' report in 1914 bemoaned New York's status as the only city of its size that snubbed its trees and woodlands. According to a valuable new study, the city still invests too little in its trees. This is no way to treat a multibillion-dollar asset that cleans the air and enlivens the streetscape.

The report by the Regional Plan Association and the Environmental Action Coalition found that less than 17 percent of New York is covered by trees, compared with 19 percent to 22 percent for Baltimore, Boston and Philadelphia and 31 percent for cities nationwide. There is a predictable if dispiriting correlation between poor neighborhoods and the shortage of significant parkland and street trees. Even neighborhoods of one- and two-family homes are not as leafy as residential areas in other cities.

New York City's Department of Parks and Recreation plans to spend \$18.1 million on trees this

fiscal year. While the report urges a modest annual increase of \$9 million for maintenance and plantings, many of its ideas have little to do with money. For instance, it recommends the rapid adoption of more effective planting techniques, including bigger tree pits and better soil mixtures.

The department welcomes these suggestions, although it bristles at the accusation that it has done a poor job of maintenance, noting that it has adopted a 10-year pruning cycle, compared with the old cycle of 50 years. Nevertheless, New York's mortality rate for young trees in the first five years of life is estimated to be as high as 36 percent, which the report's authors say can be cut by half with better maintenance techniques and public education.

The department usually fares poorly in the city budget — inevitable, perhaps, in a city whose crumbling schools and infrastructure can lay powerful claim to public resources. But if and when the department can show that it is doing the best possible job of increasing and nurturing the urban forest with the money it has, it may then be possible to open a discussion of whether it deserves a dedicated revenue stream for new initiatives.

The Story of Stamford's Economic Renaissance

Fairfield County Business Journal ■ March 9, 1998

Stamford

Planning Board retains consultant to draw up master plan

The Stamford Planning Board has hired a consultant to draw up the city of Stamford's master plan for the 21st century.

In the next two years, the consulting team — which includes Abeles, Phillips, Preiss, Shapiro Inc. of New York City and the Regional Plan Association — will work closely with the Planning Board and with community and business organizations throughout the city to set the direction of Stamford's development for the next 10 to 15 years.

A master plan is a document, consisting of Feb. 27, 1998, drawings, maps and many pages of text, governing land use for every square foot of the city. Its purpose, according to the Planning Board, is "to provide a comprehensive and coordinated set of goals and policies for decision-making in order to guide the future development of the city."

"Traditionally, it sets the framework, goals and a vision or direction for land use," said Robert M. (Robin) Stein Jr., chief of the land use bureau. Zoning regulations must conform to the master plan, and the city's charter stipulates that no zone change can be made that would conflict with the master plan. The last comprehensive master plan for Stamford was adopted in 1977, and it

was substantially revised by amendment in 1985. There have been nearly 30 more amendments since 1985.

The master plan directly affects every property owner in the city because of its control over zoning regulations. It also governs how developers can alter land uses. If a radical land-use change is contemplated for a parcel, the Planning Board must amend the master plan or reject the proposed change. Thus the plan forces the city to think carefully about how proposed changes will work with neighboring properties and with the available traffic network.

The plan will be created through a collaborative process involving the public, the Planning Board, the consultant and everyone else with an interest in shaping land-use policy in Stamford. Master plans in the past often were drawn up by professional urban planners and planning boards without much public comment, but the collaborative planning process is "more and more the norm" for city planning, said Stein. The Planning Board intends by late spring to establish a community advisory committee representing a broad range of municipal, business and community interests, he said, and "we want to have community involvement all the way through the process."

Transportation issues will exert a major

influence on the master plan. Transportation and traffic problems connected with land use have been a "lightning rod" at public hearings, Stein said, arousing strong feelings about traffic density and pedestrian safety.

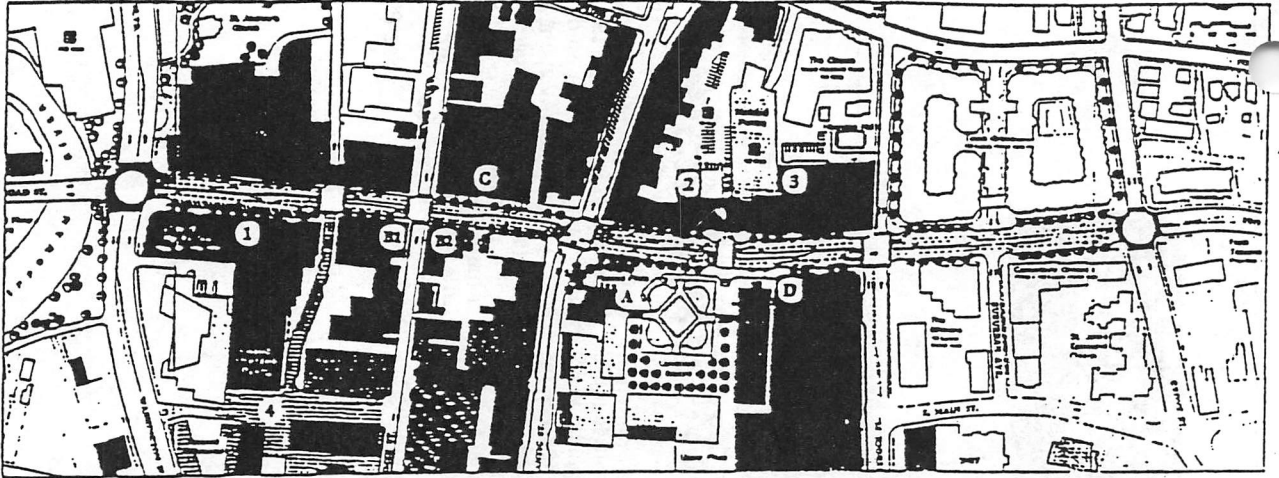
To accommodate the expressed concerns, the new master plan will deliberately seek to balance land use with the attendant impact on the traffic network. It also will establish strategies for "traffic calming" in

residential neighborhoods and will seek to "improve transit usage to make it more pedestrian-friendly," he said.

One such improvement under consideration is to encourage greater use of bicycles for downtown transit. A proposal is currently before the board, for example, to use the Mill River Corridor for bicycle transit between the railroad station and UConn.

See: Planning, page S10.

Stamford



Above: Broad Street Retail Plan. 1) Potential for 360,000 square feet of mixed retail and office space across the street from future UConn campus. 2) 290 feet frontage on Broad Street. 3) Corner location on Broad Street and Greyrock, across the street from a nine-screen, 1,800-seat movie theater and the Stamford Town Center. 4) Landmark Square 81-82) Corner of Broad and Summer Street C) Caldor site. D) Macy's site.

Planning —

Continued from page S7

Stein said he is talking with the state Department of Transportation about putting bike lockers in the station, so commuters can ride in on the train and complete their commute on bicycles they keep there. "It's more comprehensive than a bikeway study," he said.

The central business district and the South End have generated the most amendments to the 1977 and 1985 master plans, according to Stein. While 80 percent of them have been insignificant, he said, the cumulative effect has been such as to require a completely new master plan to take all the changes into account and to envision a new direction for the city's development.

The consultant plays a crucial role in the process of developing the master plan, leading or facilitating public meetings and hearings to obtain comments on the proposals for the plan. The consultant must possess a combination of technical skills, people skills, visioning powers and creativity. When the plan is completed and the consultant has moved on, the people of Stamford will be the beneficiaries of the plan or the victims of its inadequacies. Thus, the consultant selection process was a painstaking search for the right combination of qualities and skills.

Stein expects the creation of the plan to take 18 to 24 months and to cost \$250,000. The completed master plan should remain in effect for 10 to 20 years after it is adopted early in the year 2000, he estimated.

New mission for Governors Island

By **H. CLAUDE SHOSTAL**
and **ROBERT PIRANI**

FOR MORE THAN 200 years, Governors Island has been a military reservation, existing in splendid isolation from the American citizens who are its true owners.

That will change soon when the Coast Guard, the current occupant, departs. The question is, how will Governors Island be opened to the public — and how will it be financed? There is an answer.

Because of its seclusion, Governors Island has preserved its extraordinary heritage of 18th and 19th century architecture, fortifications, wooded lanes, open lawns and spectacular views.

The Coast Guard leaves this summer, and a federal disposition process will determine the island's future owners and uses. That provides an opportunity for New Yorkers to recast it as a vital element of the city's landscape.

To help stimulate a public debate about the island's future, the Regional Plan Association and the Governors Island Group, a coalition of 20 civic and business groups, asked 11 urban designers, real estate experts and park managers to spend a long weekend touring the island, meeting with public officials and members of civic organizations interested in its future.

The panel's conclusion: Governors

Island has an enormous potential to transform the harbor and adjacent waterfront neighborhoods. But it can be realized only if the island becomes a public place — a new kind of park with a variety of attractions, including cultural and educational activities related to the harbor and the island's history.

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*It has enormous
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well suited to house such functions. And the panel's analysis shows that charging a reasonable rent to the hotels, educational facilities, studios and stores could pay for the maintenance of the 93-acre historic district.

Filling the buildings with compatible uses will help insure that they are protected over time. The 80 acres on the southern half of the island would be reserved for various park uses, including ballfields and a marina.

By investing in the civic use of the island, New York would spur economic development in lower Manhattan, Red

Hook and the Brooklyn waterfront while enriching the entire city's quality of life.

The Clinton administration has offered to turn the island over for \$1 if the state and city come up with a plan that broadly benefits the public.

Mayor Giuliani and Gov. Pataki have taken important first steps. They've reached an agreement that — given adequate funding — will insure proper maintenance of the island during the disposition process. And the city has created a historic district to help govern any changes to the historic buildings.

The mayor and governor now need to work with the New York congressional delegation on a long-term plan to address the public interest. The plan should not necessarily impose a litmus test that requires any development proposals for the island to be financially self-sustaining. If such a self-sustaining criterion had been imposed in the past, civic improvements like Central Park and the recent redevelopment of 42d St. would never have come about.

The benefits of a public park on Governors Island deserve to be judged on a broader scale. An appropriate gauge is history and whether we are building a city just for the next fiscal year — or for future generations.

Shostal is president and Pirani is director of environmental programs for the Regional Plan Association.

Study Backs Tunnel to Replace the Gowanus

By GARRY PIERRE-PIERRE

Replacing the Gowanus Expressway with a tunnel would be cheaper in the long run than rebuilding the crumbling elevated highway and would revive moribund neighborhoods in southwestern Brooklyn, according to a study by a private planning group.

The study by the Regional Plan Association, to be formally released this morning, found that it would cost about \$2.4 billion to build the tunnel, compared with the \$1 billion it would take to shore up the aging highway, a major transportation link used by about 175,000 vehicles a day. But the planning group said the underground road would cost far less to maintain, saving tens of millions of dollars a year in repair costs.

While the tunnel idea has been around for years, this is the first comprehensive study of the costs and potential benefits.

Over the years, state officials have put the cost of building a tunnel as high as \$7 billion. But the planning group called that estimate too high.

"We believe that dollar for dollar, it's cheaper," said Albert F. Appleton, a senior fellow at the Regional Plan Association who was the study's coordinator. "We think you've got to go with this."

In addition, a tunnel would allow the city to reclaim waterfronts in Bay Ridge and Red Hook for esplanades, parks or light-rail systems, Mr. Appleton said. The study cited similar projects, in cities from Boston to Oslo, in which congested surface or elevated roads are being replaced with tunnels.

Under the proposal recommended by the planning group, the tunnel would run roughly from 72d Street north to the interchange with the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel and the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway. The plan also calls for permanently closing the section of the Belt Parkway

that circles Bay Ridge, rerouting that traffic to the new tunnel.

The state has set aside \$750 million, mostly in Federal funds, for the 3.8-mile elevated part of the Gowanus, but officials say no decision has been made on whether the money will be spent on overhauling the highway or building a tunnel.

"If this turns out to be the best option, we'll go with it," said Alex Dudley, a spokesman for the State Department of Transportation. "We've made no decision on which

*Less cost for repairs
and new access to
the waterfront.*

way to go."

State officials said the Regional Plan Association's study left many unanswered questions. For one thing, they said, it failed to deal adequately with how various roads, including the Belt Parkway and the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, would be connected with the tunnel.

It is also unclear whether the state could find the extra money needed to build the tunnel.

Curt Ritter, a spokesman for Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, said the Mayor was remaining neutral while awaiting for more information on the tunnel option. In January, Mr. Giuliani voiced his support for the construction of a \$900 million tunnel beneath New York Harbor to carry rail freight.

Neighborhood and business groups have complained bitterly for years that the state had not seriously studied the possibility of a tunnel for the Gowanus and its potential benefits for Sunset Park, Carroll Gardens,

Park Slope, Bay Ridge, Brooklyn Heights and Midwood.

"The most important thing to realize about this monstrous highway that is there and give back the waterfront to the community," said Paul Harrison of Transportation Alternatives, a private group. "Unfortunately, the state is just dead set on rebuilding this elevated highway."

But four months ago, state officials hired a consulting firm to do a study of the tunnel option. That study is expected to be released in a few months, Mr. Dudley of the Transportation Department said, and the state is doing a detailed review of the Regional Plan Association's study.

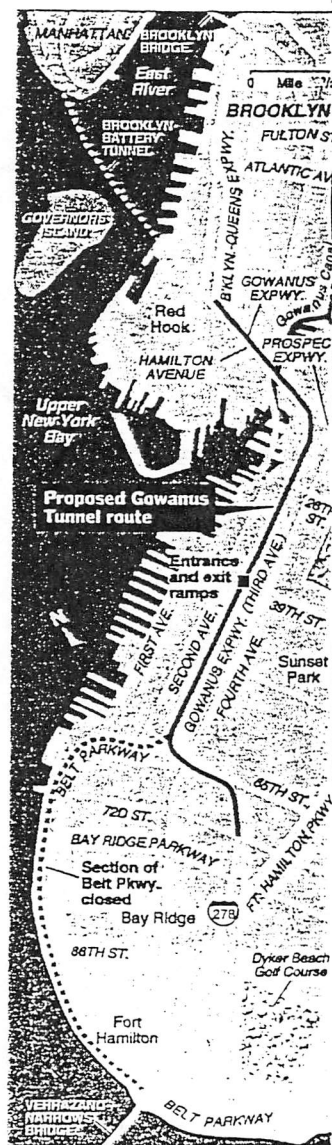
The highway is too important to be shut down, even briefly, so reconstruction work would have to be done piecemeal. That would take six years, about the same time that it would take to build the tunnel while keeping traffic moving on the existing highway, the report said.

About 60 years ago, Sunset Park and Red Hook were bustling working-class communities whose life and livelihood were tied to the waterfront. The heart of Sunset Park was Third Avenue, a lively commercial and social street that was the border between the industrial area of the harbor and neighborhoods inland.

But the Gowanus Expressway, a Robert Moses project, cast an unwelcome shadow over the area, chasing away many businesses and residents. Parts of the area have become desolate, with grit, fumes and a thunderous roar of traffic from the highway. The road also limited access to the waterfront and cut Red Hook off from the rest of the city.

Yesterday, community groups said the study was some measure of vindication for their long fight.

"We're going to see a revitalization of the waterfront," said Tony Giordano, executive director of Sunset Park Restoration.



The New York Times

A planning study favors replacing the Gowanus Expressway with tunnel instead of rebuilding it.

The New York Times

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An Infrastructure Summit

Perhaps inspired by the holidays, regional politicians have been promising us gifts in the form of discounts and tax cuts. Joseph Bruno, the New York State Senate majority leader, made the latest offer when he suggested devoting a chunk of Albany's \$2 billion surplus to tax cuts. Unfortunately, this seasonal generosity tends to emphasize current gratification at the expense of long-range needs. Chief among these needs, and essential to the New York metropolitan area's economic future, are smart, well-aimed investments in infrastructure — its schools, roads and mass transit.

Let us be the first to stipulate that the phrase "infrastructure investment" lacks the cachet of "tax cut." But the obvious shortcomings of the region's basic systems, particularly the overburdened road and rail networks, ought to be on every politician's lips as the millennium approaches. The current officials surely do not want to be known as the crowd that stiffed public needs and stunted employment and revenues in the decades ahead.

The stress is everywhere. West of the Hudson River, for example, New Jersey Transit is mulling whether to double-deck some of its trains to speed moving commuters to their New York City jobs. Come 2006, about 388,000 students will fill a New York City high school system that today accommodates 311,000. Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew's call for year-round school to relieve overcrowding, even if ratified by Albany, cannot solve it. Meanwhile, decay has kept the two subway tracks on the Manhattan Bridge's south side unused since 1990, lengthening the N train ride. Service will not be restored until repair work is done, sometime after the millennium. In Fairfield County, Conn., riding the Metro-North trains to and from Grand Central Terminal may be easy enough. Negotiating the Stamford

station and reaching one's car is almost impossible.

This is, in short, a regional problem requiring a regional response. The three Governors and New York City's Mayor should pledge to develop a consensus list of major projects that are in the region's economic interest. They should also call for infrastructure summit talks that yield fast-track projects and innovative regional financing.

White papers for such a summit conference will be available soon. Early in the new year, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority will release their Access to the Core study on how to add and extend rapid-transit lines. At least one published report says that the study will recommend a \$3.5 billion project encompassing a second rail tunnel under the Hudson River and a tunnel between Penn Station and Grand Central. One obvious benefit of this plan would be to increase access to the city's East Side for New Jersey commuters and make the West Side more accessible to commuters from Westchester County and Connecticut.

Later, the M.T.A. will issue a study for a Second Avenue subway and other options for ending overcrowding on the Lexington Avenue line. New York State is to issue a study on replacing the decrepit Gowanus Expressway, and in late 1998 the Port Authority will release its study on where to dredge, dig a tunnel and build a cargo-handling port.

Each study should be required reading for leaders and citizens alike. The studies could also form the basic text for a meeting of leaders throughout the region to pick those projects that offer the best hope of leaping colonial-era political boundaries and building a transportation system that serves the entire region. Such a meeting would be a wise investment in the future of the metropolis.

New mission for Governors Island

By H. CLAUDE SHOSTAL
and ROBERT PIRANI

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The Metro Section

L 25

The New York Times

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1997

Suburban Nassau, at 50, Attempts to Create a Central Hub

By BRUCE LAMBERT

GARDEN CITY, L.I., Jan. 17 — "When the Islanders won the Stanley Cup, they had a hard time figuring out where to hold a parade, so the motorcade drove around and around the Nassau Coliseum parking lot," H. Claude Shustal recalled. "In a way, it's humorous, but in a way serious. There's no local point, no there there."

Although it has a population of 1.3 million, Nassau County has no real Main Street or Broadway, or even a sense of a central core.

But now, half a century after the founding of Levittown, the leaders of suburban Nassau are trying to remold decades of mid-county sprawl into something different: a central core to be known as the Nassau Hub.

"We see real national implications," said Mr. Shustal, the Regional Plan Association's

president. "Can you retrofit suburbs and recapture some of the values, the sense of community that people value?"

If it were a city, Nassau would rank sixth in the nation, more populous than Atlanta, Boston, Las Vegas, Nashville, New Orleans, San Francisco or Washington, to name a few. Yet those places are instantly recognizable by symbols like cable cars, the French Quarter, Faneuil Hall market, the Grand Ole Opry and the Lincoln Memorial.

In Nassau, bizarre incidents like the shootings on the Long Island Rail Road or the Amy Fisher case sporadically blaze into the national consciousness, but the county has had no distinguishing profile.

On Wednesday, however, dozens of public officials, planners, developers, executives, educators, retailers and other leaders gathered at the Marriott Hotel here, summoned

by County Executive Thomas S. Gulotta to refine the Hub concept.

"We can and we will create our own identity," Mr. Gulotta said in an interview.

The Nassau Legislature's presiding officer, Bruce A. Blakeman, agreed. "We want to let the world know this is a great place to do business," he said. "It's worth visiting, and certainly great living here."

What may sound like boosterism has a goal of making the Hub a destination for Long Islanders, tourists and conventions, and of attracting businesses.

The Hub plan would not create a traditional crossroads or town square. It calls for building new projects at Nassau's center here to reach a critical mass of public attractions. New mass transit, possibly a monorail, would serve that core and link it with shopping malls, office towers, parks,

government buildings, restaurants and colleges. That entire midcounty area would be promoted as a unified Hub. To bolster the Hub, Mr. Gulotta wants private investors to finance a new or expanded Coliseum, convention center and hotel.

Nearby, he envisions entertainment centers, sports stores, a museum row for aviation, science and firefighting, a relocated children's museum and a new hall of fame for female athletes. For recreation, a \$25 million indoor aquacenter and \$23 million track and stadium are being built for the 1998 Goodwill Games.

"You can't call it a city," said Gary M. Rodolitz, chairman of Mr. Gulotta's Development Review Committee of Developers and Environmentalists. "It's different."

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IN THE NEWS

Nassau County Seeks to Create a Central Hub

Continued From Page 25

We're in new territory."

As a pioneer post-World War II suburb — this year is Levittown's 50th anniversary — Nassau developed as an escape from New York City, the antithesis of a city.

That remains important. "People still don't want an urbanized center," said Dr. Barbara M. Kelly, director of Long Island studies at Hofstra University.

Although many call the Hub a downtown, the Long Island Regional Planning Board's chairman, Morton L. Certilman, recalls at the term as suggesting "a 42d Street, a downtown where people hung out and security is a concern."

Another critical issue: will suburbanites use mass transit to get around the Hub? While Mr. Certilman talks of "out-of-car transportation," some say he might as well be talking about an out-of-body experience. Separating a Long Islander from a car, one local leader said, is like taking a horse from a cowboy.

A pilot Nassau Hub shuttle bus has been running for a year, charging a

25-cent fare subsidized by businesses. Transit officials call it a success, but daily ridership averages only 230.

A de facto Hub, a virtual downtown, has already evolved on its own, planners say. It includes Roosevelt Field and its satellite malls, the government and legal center in Garden City and Mineola, parks, golf courses, a college and two universities, three hospitals and four hotels, with plans for two more announced this week.

Although mostly spread out and low rise, this unplanned Hub resembles a city. The centrally located Eisenhower Park is the same size as Central Park. The coliseum approximates Madison Square Garden, and the EAD Plaza has a Christmas tree rivaling Rockefeller Center's.

"Nassau has all the elements of a major city, but doesn't have one," Mr. Shostal said.

Balkanization is a hurdle to the Hub, which spans the independent villages of Garden City, Hempstead, Mineola and Westbury and the communities of Carle Place and New Cassel in North Hempstead Town, and of East Garden City, Salsbury,

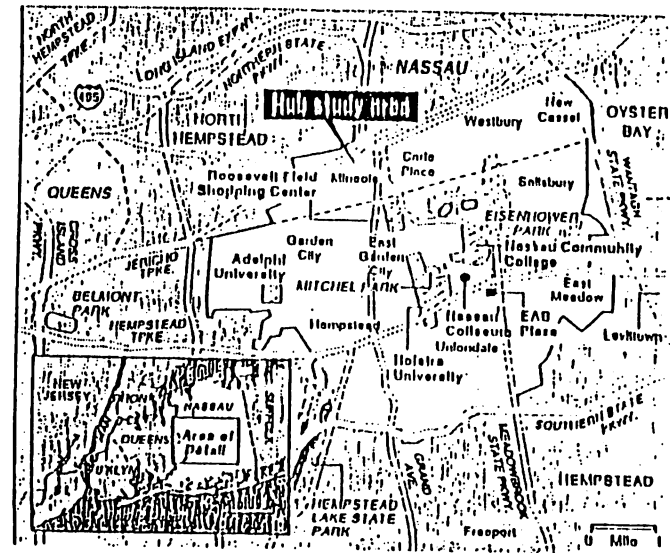
East Meadow and Unlandate in Hempstead Town.

"We have been plagued by too much government," said Bruce Nyman, the Legislature's Democratic minority leader. "Everyone has to give up a little of their turf if we're going to be known for something besides Amy Fisher and Joey." But he warned against promoting the Hub at the expense of struggling village centers like Freeport.

The Hub idea is not new. In 1961, Robert Moses proposed an industrial complex at Mitchell Field, an old military base. A few years later, the administration of Eugene Nickerson, Nassau's only Democratic County Executive, conceived a suburban Lincoln Center, a monorail, housing and other projects. Political resistance killed everything but the Coliseum.

Hub skeptics cite high taxes, high electricity rates and other problems.

"I hope I'm wrong, but I think it's too late to salvage much," said Viki De Jong, chairwoman of the Citizens Committee for Civic Action, a non-profit group. "A monorail sounds nice, but I don't believe it will solve the problem, even if it becomes



The Nassau Hub would include Eisenhower Park, Nassau Coliseum and EAD Plaza, whose Christmas tree rivals Rockefeller Center's.

reality."

But Mr. Rodolitz said he was excited. "Just as Nassau County led America into suburbanization," he said, "we

are leading America into a new suburban center that's not really a city but has all the goods and services of a city."

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81 beyond the greater New York metropol...

Report Warns That New York Area Could Decline

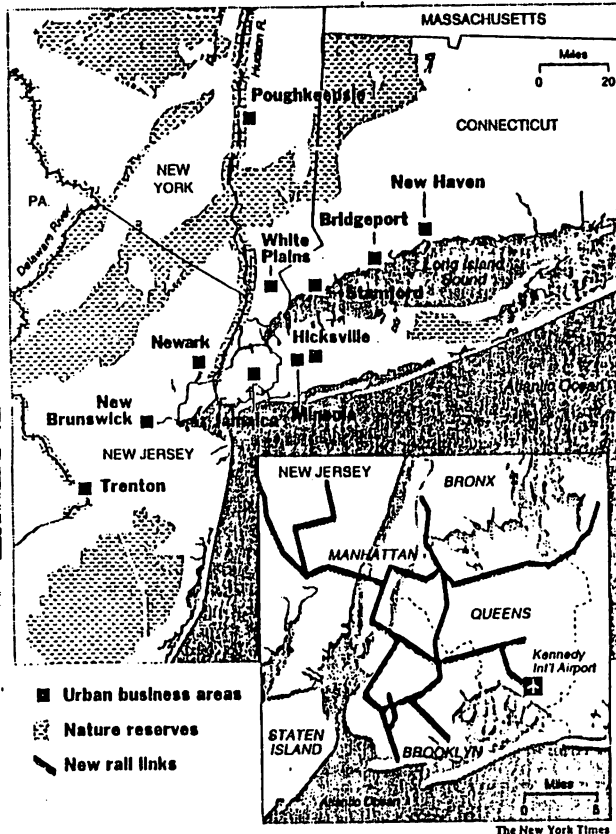
Huge Transit Programs Are Recommended to Save Economy

By KIRK JOHNSON

The New York metropolitan region — the nation's pre-eminent urban center, and a worldwide symbol of opportunity — faces the threat of a long-term economic decline in the 21st century unless residents and politicians summon the will and resources to begin a multibillion-dollar campaign of transportation improvements, education reforms and urban rejuvenation, a major planning group said yesterday.

The report, based on a five-year study by the Regional Plan Association, a private research group based in Manhattan, looks ahead 24 years to the year 2020 and predicts two very different possible futures for the 31-county, three-state metropolitan area stretching from Litchfield, Conn., to central New Jersey.

One view features a bleak landscape of crumbling urban cores, increasingly isolated wealthy enclaves, transportation paralysis, deteriorating air and water quality and feeble economic growth. In the alternative vision, residents zip about in high-speed trains on a fully interconnected regional rail system patterned after the Paris Métro, the aging urban centers have been recaptured as places to live, work and play, and lifelong adult education and job banks connect the population to new opportunities in the global economy.



The 25-year plan by the Regional Plan Association is centered on proposals to establish a system of nature reserves, bolster 11 urban areas and fill critical gaps in the area's rail network.

The report said that the first portrait would emerge as the region's future if current trends remained unchanged, and that making the second one a reality would require sacrifice, ingenuity and a rethinking of some of the region's most treasured tenets, from self-government in every small community to the historically arrogant self-identity that holds that the world will always beat a path to New York's door.

"It may be the last opportunity we have," the association's president, H. Claude Shostal, said at a news conference in lower Manhattan. "If we don't do it, we're going to be left behind."

As a small private organization, the Regional Plan Association has no power beyond the persuasiveness of its vision. But it has a history of imprinting that vision on the region, and it has connections. Its board of directors — which includes academics like David C. Chang, president of Polytechnic University in Brooklyn, and officials like Robert R. Kiley, former chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority — move in the upper circles of the region's business and politics.

While the authors of the report acknowledge that the governors of the three states have won office with an emphasis on cutting taxes, they say that such views are too much aimed at the next election or next budget and not at the long-term risk.

The association, the oldest urban planning group in the nation, has gazed ahead twice in this century, in 1929 and in 1968. Both of those studies concluded that harnessing uncontrolled growth was the New York region's gravest threat.

The new report starts from a fundamentally different place: the risk now, it states, is outright decline. That thought, even if only subconsciously adopted in the political and

New York Region Is Headed for Economic Decline, Report Warns

Continued From Page A1

business communities, could reframe the debate about where the region is headed and how it will get there. The myth of New York as a tireless colossus, building and rebuilding itself through some untended machine of growth, is over, the plan's authors say.

"The issue is no longer how to manage growth, but how to find growth to manage," said the association's chairman, Gary C. Wendt, who is also the president and chief executive of the G.E. Capital Corporation in Stamford, Conn. "Our success is no longer guaranteed."

Another fundamentally changed assumption in the study concerns the suburbs. For the last 30 years, they were the engines of economic growth and job creation, as corporate office parks grew in the region's outer ring. But the deep recession of the late 1980's and early 1990's, and the weak recovery since then, have ren-

dered those old distinctions moot. Every part of the region suffered just about equally; there was no immunity of place.

"It shattered the myth of suburban economies' being independent and isolated," Mr. Shostal said. "You can't hide now."

The globalization of the world

***A vision of what
could be: High-speed
trains zip about
revitalized cities.***

economy, the deep recession from 1989 to 1992, and the region's weak recovery since then provide the backdrop and context of the study. The report concludes, for example,

that the lavish commitment by governments in competing world business capitals like Singapore and Paris are making the flaws of New York region's infrastructure all the more glaring.

Competition within the United States is becoming just as intense. In the decade from 1982 to 1992, for example, the report said that employment in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region grew by the smallest percentage of any of the nation's 15 major metropolitan areas.

But the constant theme of the report is also that the region has immense strengths and half-fulfilled promises that if capitalized upon, would create strong competitive advantages. The system of commuter railroads and the New York City subway, for example, were built totally without coordination and planning by private developers in the 1800's and early 1900's. But the report says that only 25 new miles of

On Line: Planning In New York Region

Robert Yaro, executive director of the Regional Plan Association, will discuss the outlook for the New York area tomorrow night in a live interview for computer users at 8 P.M. on @times, The New York Times's service on America Online. Questions may be sent in advance by e-mail to YaroRPA@aol.com.

track, much of it laid in bits and pieces around the region, would interconnect the various systems, allowing single-ticket travel of the sort that many major urban systems around the world have long since adopted.

Money is of course the great hurdle for the plan. The total capital costs, according to the report, would total \$75 billion over 25 years. And while all three governors and Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani said generally supportive things yesterday in videotaped comments played at the association's news conference, none embraced any new system of taxation to raise money.

Polling research by the association also concludes that residents would not trust government with all that new money anyway. Robert D. Yaro, the association's research director and chief planning officer, said that a majority of residents of the region, questioned in a poll last year, said they would be willing to support higher gasoline taxes, as long as the proceeds were dedicated to specific capital improvements. That led to the idea of a tristate infrastructure bank that would distribute the new revenue stream, insulated from political pressures.

Highlights of the Report by the Regional Plan Association

Government

Overhauling The Bureaucracy



A new Tri-State Infrastructure Bank would provide the financing mechanism for the plan's capital spending agenda, raising money through a regional gasoline tax of up to 20 cents a gallon, increased charges

for use of the region's bridges and tunnels during periods of congestion, and fees tied to the use of water and sewerage systems.

The plan also recommends restructuring tax policy and government bureaucracies to encourage more coordinated planning and better management of the region's schools and transportation network.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority would be all but dismantled, to be replaced by a regionwide authority, the Regional Transportation Authority.

The new authority would be in charge of all commuter rail service, including the New Jersey PATH system, the Metro-North Commuter Railroad and the Long Island Rail Road. Bridges and tunnels owned by the Port Authority would also be transferred to the new agency.

The report says that school financing in the region, based largely on local property taxes, should be overhauled with a system of state financing of public education. It says the states could levy part of the property taxes in towns and cities, or impose a sales tax to pay for education.

KIRK JOHNSON

Work Force

Advocating Full Participation



Access to lifelong adult education and retraining in the rapidly changing world of work will be central to prosperity in the next century, the plan contends. But shifting population patterns will also mean that minority

residents and immigrants — the fastest-growing segment of the population — will need to be helped past the barriers of lan-

guage and discrimination that now hinder their full participation.

The plan thus advocates two tracks that on some levels appear to conflict. It says that strenuous efforts must be made to help immigrants and minority group members assimilate into the mainstream economy through education, job training and the learning of English. But at the same time, it urges recognition and encouragement of the informal economy that operates in many ethnic neighborhoods off the tax rolls and often in violation of various laws.

The plan also envisions a new kind of job information network that would help poor inner-city residents learn about job opportunities, and a campaign to push for immigration changes that would encourage more skilled immigrants with work-related visas to move to the region. A regional council of business, government and community leaders should be formed to guide the creation of a lifelong learning system, the plan says.

THOMAS J. LUECK

Mobility

Improving Links With the Suburbs



Because of the network of rail lines and highways already in place, the Regional Plan Association estimates that a mere 25 miles of new rail lines and a "handful" of miles of new highways would "bring the region to-

gether, and put almost all of it within everyone's reach."

Sounds modest. But in a congested, costly region like New York, the tab for that 25 miles of new rail lines would be \$25 billion. The plan offers no cost estimate of highway construction.

Most of the transportation recommendations center on what the plan calls Regional Rail Express, a collection of rail projects that would tie together suburban commuter lines with the New York City subway.

Among more than a dozen proposed railway projects would be the opening of an unused tunnel under the East River at 63d Street, and laying short sections of track in Long Island City, Queens, to give Long Island Rail Road trains access to Grand Central Terminal. L.I.R.R. trains would also gain direct access to Kennedy International Airport with a new link and short additions of track at Jamaica Station.

In Manhattan, the plan recommends completing the long-stalled Second Avenue subway tunnel from 161st Street in the Bronx to Water Street in lower Manhattan, with a connection to Manhattan's West Side in an unused tunnel under 63d Street and Central Park. The plan also calls for an expansion of Grand Central Terminal to provide a transfer to the proposed Second Avenue tunnel, thus giving commuters on the L.I.R.R. and Metro-North Commuter Railroad quicker access to lower Manhattan.

Recommendations for road improvements include widening heavily traveled commuter highways with an additional lane reserved for cars with two or more occupants. The plan also calls for several projects to correct what it calls "missing links" in the region's highway grid, including the completion of New Jersey Route 21 in Passaic to link with Route 46, and the construction of a new connector on Interstate 28 to provide access to downtown Newark.

THOMAS J. LUECK

Environment

Preserving Space For Work and Play



While many aspects of the region's environment have improved over the last 25 years, several decades of suburban expansion and urban shrinkage mean that the threats are now such diffuse sources as lawn chemicals and the exhaust from expanding fleets of commuters' cars.

The plan says that continued improvement in environmental quality can come by refocusing industry and commerce — scattered during decades of suburbanization — in downtown areas, including Bridgeport, Conn., White Plains, Newark and Trenton. Such a trend would streamline the handling of goods and waste, the plan says, and reduce pollution by making mass transportation into central zones of commerce more attractive than driving.

It would also lessen the impact of human activities on surrounding green space. And maintaining a galaxy of open spaces across the region — ranging from parks to dairy farms to reforested city lots — is the other critical concern of the regional plan. Such "green infrastructure" not only refreshes the human spirit, the report says, but also

helps clean the air and filter the water.

The plan calls for the creation of 11 regional reserves to protect and build on such resources as miles of marshes around the New York and New Jersey harbors and a long stretch of green hills running from central New Jersey across the Hudson Valley into western Connecticut.

With these green swatches identified and protected, the plan says, surrounding communities would reap environmental benefits and development would be contained within ecologically sustainable boundaries.

ANDREW C. REVKIN

Centers

Strengthening The Urban Cores



The long-term vitality of the region as a whole is inextricably tied to the health of its urban downtowns, from the central business district of midtown Manhattan to the urban cores of Bridgeport, Conn., and Newark, the

Regional Plan Association said in its report. These business centers must not only be desirable places to live and work in the 21st century, but must also be better linked with each other through a more interconnected transit system.

Lower Manhattan and the financial services centers in Jersey City and Long Island City, Queens, must all be better connected by rail service, the plan maintains, to assure the region's pre-eminence as a global financial center. Growth must be channeled into the downtown areas throughout the region to preserve open space, reduce transportation needs and create jobs.

This so-called centers campaign would cost about \$17 billion, according to the plan, with most of that money going to housing initiatives to encourage moderate-income home ownership in these downtown areas. Improving the housing stock for moderate-income buyers would strengthen these centers economically, the plan contends, as big corporations in the region continue to retool into smaller, leaner organizations that depend on the labor that these residential areas can provide.

Historic preservation and encouragement of the arts will further strengthen the centers, but the plan also calls for gradually encouraging companies to locate in the urban downtowns.

KIRK JOHNSON