

# Regional Transportation Plan Update

Discussion Document – Executive Summary

January, 2004



**New York Metropolitan Transportation Council**

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# **AN INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON A REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

## **Discussion Document – Executive Summary**

Where will the New York Metropolitan region go in the future?  
Will you help direct its course?

Congestion, air quality and safety are among the transportation issues the New York Metropolitan region will continue to face over the next 25 years. The population is forecasted to continue to swell at a rate that exceeds the capacity of the roads and transportation services that are in place. The Regional Transportation Plan, required by the federal government, is a guidebook for meeting and funding these challenges.

As the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) has a mandated responsibility to determine how federal transportation funds will be spent. NYMTC members (which include governments and transportation providers for New York City, suburban Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley) work in collaboration with related agencies and the public to write and periodically revise a long-range transportation plan for the region.

An update to the plan is currently underway, drafted through a collaborative process that includes agencies, governments and the public. A draft of the next update is required by April 1, 2005 to maintain eligibility for federal funding. This extract provides an overview of the discussion document. The complete discussion document is available at [www.nymtc.org/plan.html](http://www.nymtc.org/plan.html). You may request a copy by phone at (718) 472-3197 or by email at [NYMTC-RTP@dot.state.ny.us](mailto:NYMTC-RTP@dot.state.ny.us)

- When adopted in 2005, the Plan will impact growth and development, air quality and federal funding of transportation projects in your community, county and region for the next 20 years.
- The Plan will cover every mode of transportation, from walking and bicycling to highways, transit, ferries and freight transportation.
- The Plan will include Westchester, Putnam and Rockland counties, the five boroughs of New York City and Nassau and Suffolk counties.

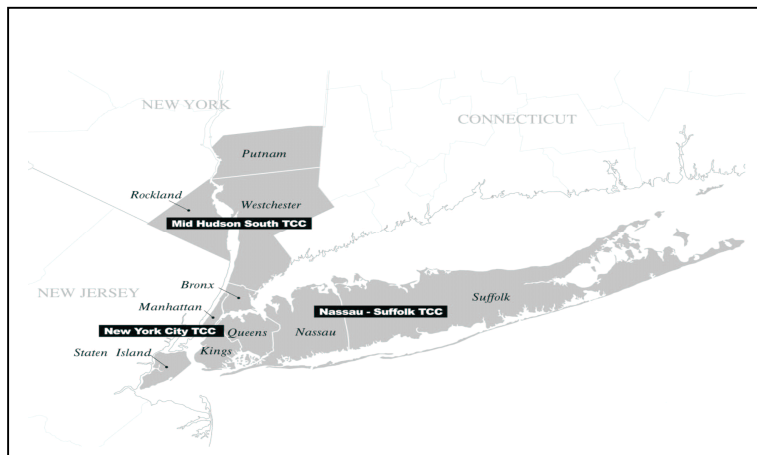
**Help make the Regional Transportation Plan an effective tool for securing Federal transportation funding and putting it to good use!**

# RTP Update—Background

## About NYMTC

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is a regional council of governments, which serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated by the Governor of the State of New York and certified by the Federal government for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley. NYMTC provides its region with a collaborative planning forum to address transportation-related issues from a regional perspective and to plan for and make decisions on the use of Federal transportation funds.

NYMTC's members include five suburban counties, the Departments of Transportation and City Planning in New York City, the New York State Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Advisory members include the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, other State and Federal agencies, and agencies from New Jersey.



### THE REGION

About 64% of New York State’s population lives in the NYMTC’s region, an area of 2,440 square miles and 12.2 million people.

There are 477 route miles of commuter rail, 225 route miles of rail rapid transit, 22,870 centerline miles of roads, streets and highways, several commercial airports and maritime facilities for passengers and freight.

The region’s transportation network carries 550,000 people per day on commuter rail, 3.1 million on buses, 4.6 million on rail rapid transit, 128,500 on ferries, 150,000 on airlines, and millions more on the region’s roads. Plus, 826,000 people move between New York and New Jersey by rail and bus, and thousands more via roads, bridges and tunnels.

## Goals & Organization of the Plan

As an MPO, NYMTC is required by the federal government to write, adopt and update a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). While the Plan's contents change over time, the planning factors that guide its preparation are consistent. The Plan should:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency;
- Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation and improve the quality of life;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

The RTP is organized around these planning principles:

- Sustaining the transportation system;
- Meeting the needs of our customers;
- Harmonizing the system with its surroundings;
- Creating a state-of-the-art transportation system; and
- Meeting the challenges of growth.

With these goals:

- Identifying current and future needs;
- Determining financial needs;
- Establishing a regional framework for future improvement and investments;
- Defining investment possibilities;
- Measuring the region's performance; and
- Identifying future planning work

It examines issues of the Environment:

- Air pollutant emissions
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Air quality
- Noise impacts
- Safety

Those pertaining to Energy:

- Reliance on foreign oil
- Energy security
- Energy consumption
- Energy efficiency

And those related to Economic Vitality:

- Regional growth
- Transportation patterns
- Technological changes
- Security and disaster recovery

## The Purpose of the Plan

The 2025 Transportation Plan for the New York Metropolitan region will provide a vision and a comprehensive long-range guidebook for moving people and goods safely and efficiently. It will define and achieve the balance of transportation resource, needs and priorities, through a partnership of the region's governments, businesses, stakeholders and residents.

It will seek to sustain the transportation system,

- Optimize government funding
- Identify new sources of funding
- Maintain and rehabilitate
- Improve efficiency

Strive to meet the needs of customers,

- Provide a mix of travel options
- Improve reliability and convenience
- Make safety a primary focus

Do so in harmony with its surroundings, and

- Link transportation and land use planning
- Engage local communities in planning efforts
- Focus on environmental responsibility
- Improve accessibility of communities
- Improve region-wide coordination

Create a state-of-the-art transportation system

- Employ best practices in planning, design and operations
- Apply state-of-the-art technology to development and maintenance

And meet the challenges of growth

- Assure the system can meet current and future demand
- Invest in the system to maximize capacity

## The Planning Process

NYMTC's planning process works toward a more regional approach to transportation planning and investment decisions by its members and throughout the larger tri-state region. A three-phased public involvement process was integrated into the development of this Plan update, with outreach techniques including:

- Focus groups
- Public planning forums
- Planning working groups
- Town hall meetings
- Surveys
- Website

Responses to public comments received during public review process are included in the Plan as an appendix.

## Trends and Projections

The NYMTC region will need to accommodate larger numbers of people and vehicles over the period of the plan:

- An increase of nearly 2.57 million people is expected in the 31-county New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region over the period of the plan.
- Employment is expected to increase by 11 percent over the period of the plan, with 750,000 more jobs added in the region.
- 700 million tons of domestic and international goods annually originate within the region with most the region's goods movement originating or terminating in the Northeast and, due to the relatively short distances involved, is transported by trucks.
- Use of single occupancy vehicles for work trips increased 1.3 percent, 1990-2000, ridesharing declined 8.0 percent and walking trips declined 5.8 percent in the region.
- In 2000, about 2.4 billion revenue passenger trips (transit) were made in the region.

## Regional Investment Options

The Plan details large-scale projects and studies with regional impact on the movement of people and goods, and which support the Plan's vision, guiding principles and goals.

### Northern Gateway

*Investment Proposals:*

I-287/Tappan Zee Bridge  
West Shore Rail  
Access to the Region's Core  
MTA Metro North Railroad Penn Station Access  
Hudson River Ferries  
Hudson Line/River Line Freight  
Albany Freight Barge

### New England Gateway

*Investment Proposals:*

I-95 Congestion Management Plan  
I-287/Tappan Zee Bridge  
MTA Metro-North Railroad  
Long Island Sound Ferries  
I-84/Newburgh-Beacon Bridge

### Northern Cross-Regional Gateway

*Investment Proposals:*

Major Deegan Expressway/Cross Bronx Expressway  
I-287/Tappan Zee Bridge  
I-84/Newburgh-Beacon Bridge

### Long Island Gateway

*Investment Proposals:*

East Side Access/Lower Manhattan Access  
Long Island Transportation Plan  
Sustainable East End Development Strategies  
MTA Long Island Rail Road Main Line Third Track  
Cross Harbor Freight Movement  
Pilgrim Intermodal Center  
Long Island Sound Ferries  
Nassau Hub MIS  
County Route 97/Nicholls Road

## **Southern Cross-Regional Gateway**

### *Investment Proposals:*

Goethals Bridge  
Staten Island Expressway  
Southern Brooklyn/Belt Parkway/JFK Air Cargo  
Gowanus Expressway  
Cross Harbor Freight Movement  
Port Redevelopment Strategies/Port Master Plan

## **New York Harbor**

### *Investment Proposals:*

Port Redevelopment Strategies  
Port Master Plan/Port Inland Distribution Network/Barge Pilots  
Cross Harbor Goods Movement/ Pilgrim Intermodal Center  
Harbor Navigation  
Portway  
Gowanus Expressway  
Comprehensive Port Improvement Plan

## **Airports**

### *Investment Proposals:*

AirTrain (JFK & Newark)  
LaGuardia Subway Access  
JFK Air Cargo/Van Wyck Expressway  
I-287/Tappan Zee Bridge

## **Regional Core**

### *Investment Proposals:*

Second Avenue Subway  
Access to the Region's Core  
West Shore Rail  
LIRR East Side Access/MNR Penn Station Access  
No.7 Subway Extension  
Lower Manhattan Rebuild

## **2012 Olympics**

The investment proposal, Olympic "X", is at the core of the transportation plan developed by NYC2012, a nonprofit corporation which is producing the proposal to make New York City the site of the 2012 Summer Olympics.

## **Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation**

The Plan includes proposals to maximize the use of non-motorized modes for recreation and transportation, with a focus on new facilities, walking centers, roadway project planning, data collection, safety, greenway system planning, system maintenance and education. It incorporates detailed local plans developed by each of NYMTC's three Transportation Coordinating Committees in cooperation with local and state agencies and the public, which address subregional issues and needs.

## **Intelligent Transportation Systems**

Travel becomes easier with the application of new technologies that allow agencies to use technology to better plan, monitor, control and secure transportation systems, resulting in programs such as EZ Pass and MetroCard as well as expanded information systems for travelers and improved communication during emergencies. Computer-related future plans include:

- Integration Strategy to promote information sharing among agencies and systems
- Application of national ITS architecture to a regional architecture to assure commonality and efficiency.

## Options for the Future

Additional investment proposals and planning studies that advance the Plan’s vision and provide the framework for future transportation improvements are identified for county and borough levels in the NYMTC region, with subregional maps of proposals, studies and forecasted traffic congestion. Lower Manhattan and pedestrian/bicycle proposals are described separately.

### Lower Manhattan

Federal funds totaling \$4.55 billion are available to support major transportation capital investments projects to rebuild lower Manhattan. The FTA Lower Manhattan Recovery Office and a transportation working group assembled by Governor Pataki (including the Governor’s Office, State Department of Transportation, Mayor’s office, Transportation Department of the City of New York, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and Lower Manhattan Development Corporation) have been working to identify transportation capital investment projects to be implemented with the available funding. Nine potential projects have been identified. Three are ready to move forward in project development:

- \$750 million for the Fulton Street Transit Center
- \$1.7 billion for the World Trade Center Transportation Hub
- \$400 million for the South Ferry Subway Terminal

Six additional projects are also under consideration:

- Bus Facilities and Street Restoration
- Improvements to Route 9A/West Street
- Access to Regional Airports
- Ferry Infrastructure
- East River Waterfront Improvement
- Brooklyn Battery Tunnel Decking

## Funding Issues

Over the past 20 years, the region has invested billions of dollars to rebuild its transportation infrastructure in an effort to reverse decades of disinvestment and deferred maintenance and provide a solid foundation for the future. Funding sources are still needed for required expansions—NYMTC will play a key role in advocated for the region’s funding needs.

Transportation investments are organized into Levels 1, 2 and 3, with a discussion of how available funding, currently about \$151 billion, might be allocated. While available funding will cover Level 1 and 2 transportation investments, Level 3 projects could cost significantly more.

## Where the money comes from

- Federal funding
  - TEA-21 for infrastructure renewal and network expansion
  - Credit assistance programs
  - Matching share provisions
  - Loan programs
- State and local funding
  - Expected to remain at same level as 2003/04
  - State Infrastructure Bank
  - NYS Transportation Trust Fund (for highways and bridges)
    - ♣ Petroleum Business Tax
    - ♣ Motor fuel (gas) Tax
    - ♣ Highway Use Taxes and Fees
  - Department of Motor Vehicles Registration Fees
  - Industrial Access Program (NYSDOT)
- Metropolitan Transportation Authority Resources
  - Revenue bonds
  - Pay-as-you-go funding
  - Interest earnings
- Other
  - Self-funded authorities (Port Authority and NYS Thruway Authority)
  - Amtrak (federal)
  - Toll revenue
  - Public/private partnerships
  - Matching grants

## Where the money goes

- **Level 1** Investments needed to bring the region's existing infrastructure to a state-of-good-repair and maintain normal replacement cycles thereafter.
- **Level 2** Projects that have already been identified as important enhancements to the region's mobility. These system expansions have already received some level of commitment and should be in place by 2025.
- **Level 3** Projects that are currently being evaluated, with no proposal recommended. Many of these projects are listed in Chapter 3.

To keep the region's infrastructure in a state of good repair through 2025 will cost approximately \$120.9 billion:

- **\$97.6 billion for NEW YORK CITY**  
*\$15.7 billion for roadways, \$32.5 billion for bridges and \$49.7 billion for transit.*
- **\$12.1 billion for LONG ISLAND**  
*\$1.9 billion for roadways, \$1.6 billion for bridges, and \$8.6 billion for transit.*
- **\$10.9 billion for LOWER HUDSON VALLEY**  
*\$1.1 billion for roadways, \$2.0 billion for bridges and \$7.8 billion for transit.*

## **Why transportation investment matters**

- Regional competitiveness in the global economic market
- Importance of mobility to economic development
- Access to jobs
- Movement of goods and services
- Infrastructure that supports retail, financial, cultural and entertainment activities
- Access for visitors

## **The benefits**

- Improved mobility
- More business investment
- Reduced highway congestion
- Improved air quality
- Shorter travel times
- Short term job creation and tax generation

## **The financial issues**

- Significant portions of the highway system operate at or near capacity most of the day
- Highway and rail system unchanged for decades, except maintenance and rebuilding
- Continued need to bring infrastructure to state of good repair
- Normal replacement cycles
- System modernization
- System expansion
- New projects to improve mobility
- Barriers to delivery of freight by truck

