

TKW Remarks
2018 Assembly
Big Ideas that Can't Wait

Morning Program (~12 minutes)

Good Morning!

I'm Tom Wright, President of Regional Plan Association. On behalf of the staff and board of RPA, thank you for joining us at the 2018 Assembly! We appreciate you being here with us today and have a terrific program to share.

I am especially excited and honored by our featured speakers:

RPA Chairman Scott Rechler and New York City Transit Authority President Andy Byford, who will talk about how we fix the subway and bus systems.

Governor Phil Murphy, who is leading New Jersey forward with investments in transportation, education, housing, clean energy and so many of our shared priorities.

Amtrak Chairman Tony Coscia, who will receive the John Zuccotti Award at lunch and is leading the effort to build Gateway, the most important infrastructure investment in the nation.

And Former US Senator and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, whose public service and life story provide inspiration for hundreds of millions of people across the globe -- including the 65 million people who voted for her.

As you probably know, just five months ago RPA released our Fourth Regional Plan. Following in the footsteps of our landmark plans in the last century, the Fourth Plan presents a compelling vision -- with detailed policies and investment recommendations -- for a healthier, more prosperous, sustainable and equitable metropolitan region. It is full of Big Ideas, things that might seem too ambitious, too daunting to take on in today's political environment.

And that's exactly the point. We have come together to do Big Things before and we believe we'll do it again.

I want to thank all our funders and partners who contributed to this effort, and especially Rit Aggarwala, who chaired the Committee on the Fourth Regional Plan, and the incredible staff of Regional Plan Association, who spent the past five years digging deep into data, reaching out to people throughout the region, and developing forward-looking strategies that will shape the metropolitan area for decades to come.

The process we used to create the Fourth Regional Plan was more inclusive than any we had done before. Before we began writing any recommendations, we started by talking with people. We commissioned a survey to find out what people thought about their quality of life. We conducted focus groups to listen to people talk about their hopes and fears, and what they wanted for the future. We invited civic and business groups to join our Committee on the Fourth Plan and partnered with community-based organizations. They enabled us to reach thousands of residents from communities that have traditionally been underrepresented in planning processes, and we incorporated what we learned from them into the plan.

We also had better data and analytical tools than we ever have before.

- To prove that we could put 250,000 units of housing in parking lots within a half mile of a train station, we generated maps of every station in the region and analyzed their potential to create new transit-oriented neighborhoods.
- To fill in the missing links in our region's trail networks, we mapped all our bike paths, sidewalks and trail systems and found over 800 miles of rail, utility and other rights of way that could be stitched together to form a 1,620-mile Tri-State Trail.
- To identify communities at risk of displacement, we mapped low income neighborhoods with high proportions of renters that were walkable and have access to jobs and transit.
- To analyze the relationship between public health and urban planning, we produced the first comprehensive analysis of health and its determinants in the tri-state region.

This data analysis helped us see just how profound the changes in our communities and regional economy were. In the past generation, almost 90% of our job growth was outside New York City, in suburban office parks. Today, almost 90% of our job growth is located inside New York City, and only one out of every ten new jobs created in the region is located in New Jersey, Connecticut, Long Island or the Hudson Valley. Meanwhile, over 80% of new commuters coming into the City are coming from West of the Hudson River, while Long Island has seen virtually no growth in commuters into New York City in a generation.

When we released the Plan last winter, it generated enormous attention. Many reporters and editorials noted that while the ideas seemed a bit far-fetched, if one looked at our prior plans, you would see that we have a history of proposing crazy ideas that actually get implemented.

I will add that if anyone is wondering how to get people to pay attention to a 25-year strategic plan in a 25-minute-attention-span world, I have one big piece of advice:

Suggest that portions of the New York City subway close overnight for repairs.

People will notice!

It wasn't the most popular idea in the plan. But we wanted to highlight the decisions we're not facing up to and the tough choices we need to make. We need to be honest about what it is going to take to bring back our system from the severe overcrowding, periodic failures and perpetual delays that we are all living with today. We cannot get the system we need without sacrificing in the short run. At RPA, we are going to support the MTA when they close the L Train for repairs, or Amtrak when they close a portion of Penn Station to do needed maintenance work. They are making difficult decisions, and we are going to support them.

This Plan is guided by four basic values: prosperity, equity, sustainability and health. While the region is one of the wealthiest on the planet, our prosperity rests on the investments and actions of past generations. Unless we dramatically increase our infrastructure capacity, housing supply and productive capabilities, economic growth over the next 25 years will be half of what it was over the last 25. And without growth, we won't be able raise living standards, expand opportunity, or pay for needed investments.

So recommendations in the plan are designed to more than double the growth we can expect over the next generation, from 850,000 to nearly 2 million jobs, by building capacity in our housing, commercial spaces, and infrastructure systems. But as we have seen, growth alone is not enough. For the last generation, we've seen the paradox of strong economic growth and rising inequality. We believe that it is possible to grow in a entirely new way, one that will sharply **reduce** inequalities along racial, ethnic and gender lines, end homelessness, and make us one of the **least** segregated regions in the nation rather than one of the most.

We're seeing some real progress on these issues. Just yesterday, Governor Cuomo announced his support for having New York State join New Jersey and Connecticut in banning housing discrimination based on source of income, one of the Fourth Plan's recommendations on fair housing, moving us one more step toward a fairer and more equitable region.

Even if we succeed in creating a more prosperous and equitable region, what will it mean if we damage the environment that nurtures current and future generations? Particularly now, when climate change poses the most existential challenge that we've ever faced, we need a new relationship with nature that recognizes that the built and natural environment are an integrated whole. Over a million of our residents live at risk of periodic flooding today, and by the beginning of the next century, the homes of as many as 600,000 people could be **permanently** under water, along with some of our most critical infrastructure. As a region, we have already set out to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050. The Fourth Regional Plan will help us get there, by calling for investments in renewable energy sources such as Off Shore Wind, while greatly improving our resilience to both the flooding and extreme heat that are already baked into our future.

But even a region that is sustainable, prosperous and equitable will mean little if we don't have our health, perhaps the most fundamental measure of our well-being. Everyone deserves the opportunity to live the healthiest life possible, regardless of who they are or where they live. And we know that our physical environment — the type of housing we live in, the air we breathe,

how safe and easy it is to walk, and whether we have well-paying jobs — is a greater determinant of our well-being than our healthcare system. So the plan seeks to create the conditions that will enable everyone to live longer and be far less likely to suffer from mental illness or chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease, particularly in low-income communities and communities of color.

These strategies are embedded in everything we're talking about. We know that in Stockholm, when they implemented a congestion pricing system similar to what was proposed by the Fix NYC panel, rates of childhood asthma dropped by 50%. **Fifty percent!** If we only did half as well here, it could mean 22,000 fewer children suffering from asthma, which is now the leading cause of hospitalization of children in the United States. And by the way -- which county suffers from the highest rates of childhood asthma in the nation? The Bronx.

We also calculated that we have enough vacant land for 662,000 people to live near transit in walkable areas. If each of them walked 10 more minutes a day, collectively they could live one million more years.

Of course, these are not mutually exclusive goals. We can't become a healthier region without becoming a more equitable one, and we can't sustain prosperity without a life-sustaining environment. We are doing this by focusing on four major areas of action :

- Fixing the institutions that are failing us.
- Creating a dynamic, customer-oriented transportation system.
- Rising to the challenge of climate change.
- And making the region affordable for everyone.

We will talk more about those four areas, and what they mean specifically, over the course of today. And we're going to focus on a couple of key recommendations that need to move NOW!

Charging cars to enter Manhattan to manage traffic congestion and fund our mass transit is one Big Idea that we need to move on. How else can we raise the billions of dollars we need to fix our transit systems and simultaneously manage our limited street capacity?

We must also build Gateway to replace the Amtrak-owned, 108-years-old, over-a-million-trips-a-week, flooded-during-Superstorm-Sandy, shift-two-feet-every-day-with-the-tides, serve-20%-of-our-Gross-National-Product, Northeast Corridor tunnels under the Hudson River.

But that investment, as large as it is, will not provide all the commuting capacity we need for the next generation of job growth. So we're going to talk about our T-REX proposal, and how to use Gateway as the first step to building a 21st century commuter rail system that handles an additional million trips every day.

We desperately need more housing to serve our growing economy, and we have an extraordinary opportunity to do it close to transit, especially as technology offers us new ways to get around. So let's plan differently for these prime locations.

Our first instinct is often to rebuild after storms flood our coastal areas, but in the face of rising seas, there are going to be some communities that we just cannot harden, and places where we need to pull back from the water's edge. A regional commission can make these tough decisions, provide funding to make this transition, and ensure that our communities aren't working at cross purposes in the face of climate change.

These are some of the Big Ideas that we want to advance with your help today. The Fourth Plan is ultimately an optimistic document. We believe in the power of the people in this region to think differently, to do big things and to continue to shape the region and its destiny for the better.

We will focus on regional solutions, because if we try to tackle these issues on a city-by-city basis we just wind up pushing problems over to the next municipality or fall short of a budget that can build the solutions needed.

And we won't expect the federal government to bail us out. If the past twelve months have taught us anything, it is that we should not be looking 250 miles south to the nation's capital for help. We're pushing hard for them to fund their fair share of the Gateway tunnel and other essential needs, and have seen extraordinary leadership from many of our federal representatives. But we need to harness the resources and creativity that we have here at home to get big, important things done.

Few problems have become as acute over the past year as the crisis of our transit network. According to the MTA, overcrowding delays on subways have increased by 500% in the past six years, which has driven on-time performance of the system down from 80% in the past to 64% last year. On the IRT lines on the east and west sides -- the 2, 3, 4 and 5 lines -- only 30% of trains reported completing their runs on time.

Meanwhile, bus ridership has declined by 10% since 2004, despite our growing population and workforce, and in Manhattan ridership has declined by a whopping 32% since 2007! That shouldn't be much of a surprise, since buses in Manhattan have an average speed of only 5.7 miles per hour, making them some of the slowest buses in the world.

We're going to hear next from RPA's Chairman Scott Rechler and the President of the New York City Transit Authority Andy Byford, about what we can do to turn these trends around.

Before I turn it over to Scott, a small housekeeping note: I want to encourage all of you to participate in this next section of the program by sending us your questions. You can ask questions at anytime, or "like" a question that someone else suggested by using your phone's browser to visit

W-W-W-[DOT]-S-L-I-D-O-[DOT]-[COM].

And enter the code RPAASSEMBLY (all one word).

Your questions will appear on the big screen and Kate Slevin, RPA's Vice President for State Programs and Advocacy, will be monitoring throughout the next session and we'll get as many as possible in front of Scott and Andy at the conclusion of their remarks.

It is now my honor to turn the podium over to our Chairman, Scott Rechler. Scott is certainly well-known to many of you. In his day job, he is the CEO of RXR Realty. He serves on the board of the MTA and was previously Vice Chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. And he is active with many other cultural and civic institutions, including the TriBeCa Film Festival and Drum Major Institute. Most recently he has been making waves on the issue of gun control, including rallying business leaders to respond to the tragedy of the Parkland shootings and pushing for common-sense gun-safety solutions.

Please join me in welcoming RPA's Chairman, Scott Rechler.

Conclusion of Morning Program (~3 minutes)

Thank you Governor Murphy for joining us this morning.

And with that, I'd like to conclude the morning program. Next we have four terrific breakout sessions on:

- **Growing the middle class in a technology-charged economy;**
- **Creating more homes with the buildings we have;**
- **Expanding the region's carbon market;** and
- **Improving transit options in our suburbs and outer boroughs.**

In your programs, you will find the specific rooms for each of these sessions and we have staff and volunteers posted throughout the halls to help get you to where you need to be.

Thank you, and I will see you again at lunch.

Lunch Opening (~ 1 minute)

Good afternoon, everyone, and for those of you who have just joined us, welcome to the 2018 RPA Assembly. If folks could please take their seats. We're going to start off with lunch service and will start the program shortly after 12:30.

Lunch Program Welcome and Video Introduction (~5 minutes)

Good afternoon. I'm Tom Wright, President of Regional Plan Association.

On behalf of RPA and the Board of Directors I want to welcome you to the RPA Assembly. Today marks the 28th year RPA has hosted the Assembly, bringing together government, civic and business leaders from across the region and the country. We could not be more excited to have you all here.

To kick off our luncheon program, we have a very special short video that frames what's at stake if we don't act. Let's cue the video please.

Lunch Program Thank You Sponsors and Special Guests (~5 minutes)

The energy in this room is incredible. We have the best turnout EVER for an RPA Assembly and we are so grateful to all of the people who helped make this a not-to-miss event, including a few folks you'll hear from in the next few minutes.

We are very excited to have so many big thinkers and distinguished leaders with us here today.

[Roll call of VIPs that Kate will give you]

We are honored to have you all with us.

Thank you also to our terrific speakers and panelists this morning and afternoon.

I especially want to add a huge thank you to the staff at RPA who have been working for months to put this event together and are working every day to move the ideas from the Fourth Regional Plan into action.

Can I ask RPA staff to stand and be recognized?

[SHOUTOUT TO CHRISTINE FOR ORGANIZING ASSEMBLY]

I also want to take this opportunity to recognize RPA's board of directors. We are deeply grateful for your support and your hard work on behalf of the entire metropolitan region. Can I ask members of our board to please stand and be recognized?

I also want to thank all our funders and supporters, without whom none of this would be possible. In particular, Thank You to The Durst Organization; the General Contractors Association of NY; Hudson Yards / Oxford / Related; SL Green; Two Trees; and of course RXR for being our Platinum sponsors this year. And to Tonio Burgos & Associates for generously sponsoring our Speakers & Sponsors' Reception yesterday.

But really -- to all of our sponsors and contributors -- your support of RPA is an investment in the future of our city and region, and the people who live and work here now and will in the future. You've participated in preparing the Fourth Regional Plan by sharing your greatest concerns and best ideas. In working sessions, like the Milstein Forums that RPA convened in partnership with The Howard and Abby Milstein Foundation, we engaged stakeholders and leaders and identified solutions that we can now drive forward.

Thank you all.

Ninety-six years ago, a group of civic and business leaders had an audacious idea: to plan the future of the tri-state metropolitan region around New York City. In 1922, New York City itself was a new form of metropolitan government, and the city was growing fast. In just 25 years we had built over 500 miles of subways; 10 bridges and 11 tunnels spanning the East, Hudson and Harlem rivers; and had grown in population from 3.4 to 5.6 million people.

But this rapid growth also brought new challenges. The Lower East Side of Manhattan, with a population density of almost half a million people per square mile, became the most crowded community in the history of our species and a breeding ground for cholera, influenza and other infectious diseases. The automobile opened up vast new areas for development and activity, but also caused more traffic and increasing fatalities on city streets. Industries which had brought new prosperity were also polluting our air and water.

Just as today, there was no public agency at the federal, regional or state level that was thinking about the future of the metropolitan region and its economic, social and environmental well-being.

The First Regional Plan of 1929 identified where highways, subways and commuter rail lines should be built. We promoted new opportunities for workforce housing and identified regional landscapes, from the majestic Palisades to the beaches of Long Island, that should be permanently protected. We proposed new locations for our seaport and airports, and designed parks and civic structures that would endure.

Nearly 100 years later, we continue to provide that long-term vision. Of course, now we do it in partnership with hundreds of civic, policy and community-based organizations that promote transit, housing, public health and environmental stewardship in communities around the region.

But RPA continues to be unique in its ability to think about these issues across silos, over political boundaries, and beyond political timeframes. Our ideas carry no weight of law, but they have been extremely influential in the past -- and working with the people like those in this room today, will be in the future.

I want to encourage everyone to check out the Fourth Regional Plan -- fourthplan.org -- to see what we're recommending, and help us as we:

- Reform public institutions so that they have the funding, capacity and independence to deliver the investments and services we need;
- Modernize our transportation system, including commuter rail, subways and buses, but also by expanding our airports and redesigning streets to accommodate bikes and pedestrians;
- Rise to the challenge of climate change by adapting our coastline, creating a greener energy system, and improving the natural and built systems that sustain us;

- And making the region affordable for everyone by providing a million new housing units above what we're already producing, including redevelopment around transit hubs and changing planning and zoning codes to create healthier, more diverse and walkable communities.

We all have an enormous stake in these efforts, and we thank you all for being here today and for your support in the weeks, months, and years to come.

To talk more about what needs to happen, and what we are going to do to get there, I am pleased to introduce -- for the second time today -- RPA's Chairman, Scott Rechler. Since taking the reins at RPA, Scott has overseen the completion of the Fourth Regional Plan, and also put us in the middle of some of the most important challenges of our times: How are we going to fix the New York City subway system? Where are people going to live? And how do we reform the public agencies that need to deliver these services?

Scott brings his deep experience from both the public and private sectors to these efforts. As the CEO of a major real estate company, he understands what it takes to build a business and to create balanced communities. As a public servant, he understands the constraints that elected and appointed officials work under. And as a civic leader, he knows that the only way to get things done is by collaborating.

Please join me in welcoming RPA's Chairman, Scott Rechler.

Conclusion of Lunch (~5 minutes)

Thank you, Secretary Clinton, for being here with us today - and for your lifetime of leadership and service to our country.

And thank you Howard Milstein and Scott Rechler, and again, congratulations Tony Coscia, our 2018 Zuccotti Award recipient, and our deep gratitude for all that you have done and continue to do for our region. And thank you to Susan Zuccotti for joining us today. We all hold John's memory strongly in our hearts.

That concludes our lunch program. Up next we will have four more breakout sessions on:

- **integrating and expanding our commuter rail network;**
- **investing in our region's flagship places;**
- **instituting and funding a regional coastal commission;** and
- **giving our communities the tools they need to plan their future.**

We hope you'll stick around for the entire day, so as a special enticement we'll be joined for our closing reception in the foyer by Congressman Hakeem Jeffries who will give some brief remarks before a final opportunity to mingle with the other incredible attendees here today.

And again, finally, thank you to all the speakers, sponsors, and board members who made today possible!