



Joel P. Ettinger
Executive Director

Contact: Lisa Daglian
Public Information Officer, NYMTC
212-383-7241/917-612-2292 (cell)

A SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL FUTURE AT HEART OF NYMTC COUNCIL MEETING

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood Discusses Administration's Sustainability Initiative; NYMTC Council Members Act on 2010-2035 Regional Transportation Plan

New York (9/24/09) – The critical importance of planning for long-term regional sustainability was the key message at the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council's Principals meeting, held today at NYU's Kimmel Center. U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood provided the keynote address, speaking about the Obama Administration's Sustainable Communities Initiative, an interagency partnership to help improve access to affordable housing, more transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment in communities nationwide.

"The stakes for transportation's future here in New York, and throughout urban America, could not be higher. The economic health of our nation and the quality of life we secure for our children will depend on our ability to achieve greater energy independence, reduce energy costs, and grow our communities in ways that are truly sustainable," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. "The Obama Administration is committed to building livable communities and ensuring that Americans have more transportation options; affordable housing choices near transit; and greater access to jobs, education, health care, and other vital services."

In June, Secretary LaHood, along with EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan, announced an interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The partnership, working closely with the White House Domestic Policy Council, is focused on bringing a new level of interagency collaboration and ensuring that housing and transportation goals that help attain sustainable growth are met while simultaneously protecting the environment, promoting equitable development, and addressing the challenges of climate change in urban, suburban and rural communities nationwide.

Following Secretary LaHood's remarks, NYMTC's Council members took action to adopt the 2010-2035 Regional Transportation Plan, which establishes a sustainable regional framework for future transportation improvements and investments for the next 25 years. The crucial need to maintain and upgrade the regional transportation system in the face of forecasted growth is the key component of the Plan developed by the Council members, who include the region's county executives, New York City and New York State Departments of Transportation, New York City Department of City Planning, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the Port Authority of NY&NJ, and other transportation and environmental agencies. Updated every four years, the Plan is the product of a cooperative public involvement and intergovernmental planning process, and its approval by NYMTC's members is required for Federal transportation funding.

Entitled *A Shared Vision for A Shared Future*, the Regional Transportation Plan is rooted in the Council members' mutual desire and need for sustainable development of the region. It establishes a

shared, long-term vision for the transportation system serving the New York metropolitan region – its roads, bridges, freight and mass transit facilities, and its bicycle and pedestrian networks. In addition to identifying funds to maintain operations and a state of good repair for the transportation system, the Plan includes transportation concepts and studies for the region and a set of strategic regional transportation investments to enhance mobility and support sustainable development. Taken together, the strategic transportation investments that are called for in *A Shared Vision for A Shared Future* may cost as much as \$50 billion and \$60 billion over the next 25 years, but only about \$13 billion in anticipated future funding has been identified to-date.

New York State Department of Transportation Acting Commissioner and NYMTC co-chair Stan Gee said, “The Regional Transportation Plan captures the investments we need to maintain the existing transportation system in a state of good repair, while envisioning sustainable growth through strategic investments over the next several decades. Over the next 25 years, the strategic transportation investments the Council members have identified will address anticipated population growth, reduce energy consumption and provide a sustainable environment, while building a foundation for economic growth.”

The strategic transportation investments proposed in the 2010-2035 Regional Transportation Plan are tied to a Shared Vision for sustainable growth in the NYMTC region. NYMTC’s Shared Vision consists of several components: five regional shared goals that lay the foundation for the region’s decision-making framework; 10 regional desired growth areas that represent the region’s consensus vision for guiding future growth and development; a list of strategic regional transportation investments, including four foundation improvement projects that are a first step toward improving long-term mobility in the region; and a set of 10 strategic regional policy guidelines.

New York City Department of City Planning Director and NYMTC co-chair Amanda Burden said, “Our future growth and prosperity depend on our ability to use our resources and infrastructure wisely. The Secretary’s remarks are particularly timely. The primary focus of NYMTC’s Shared Vision is to devote our planning to long-term sustainability through solutions that integrate transportation and land use, provide the amenities that make communities desirable places to live and work – and decrease carbon emissions. We are extremely excited about actively beginning this dialogue with Washington to work towards holistic solutions and become a model for smart growth for the country.”

Forecasts continue to show anticipated growth for the region through 2035, with one million more people expected in New York City and two million more in the 10 county NYMTC region. On a typical weekday the region’s multimodal transportation network handles millions of passenger trips and thousands of tons of freight shipments. The volumes of passengers and freight handled by the system are expected to increase dramatically over the next 25 years.

NYMTC Executive Director Joel Ettinger said, “The Regional Transportation Plan is built on a strong foundation of supporting critical goals for sustainable development in this thriving metropolitan area. By coming together to develop this Plan, based on shared regional goals, identification of 10 desired growth areas, and development of strategic transportation investments, the Council members are demonstrating their strong commitment to the region’s future development. This unprecedented level of cooperation and collaboration will allow us to grow more sustainably as a region, while emphasizing the critical importance of maintaining and improving our transportation system.”

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council is a council of governments that is a collaborative forum for regional transportation planning for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley. www.nymtc.org.