



DELORES RUBIN
Chair

Jesse Bodine
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

June 7, 2016

Thomas K. Wright, President
Regional Plan Association (RPA)
4 Irving Place, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10003

Re: RPA Fourth Regional Plan Recommendations

Dear Mr. Wright,

Manhattan Community Board Four (CB4) would like to thank the Regional Plan Association for your presentation to our Transportation Committee on May 15, 2016, and for this opportunity to provide comments and recommendations on RPA's Fourth Regional Plan. We would like to applaud RPA for their dedication to improving the quality of life of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan region. Many of the issues addressed by RPA have a direct impact on Manhattan Community District Four (MCD4) as it is at the center of many current and future infrastructure projects which will impact the larger New York City region, and have an even greater impact on our district.

CB4 is looking forward to the 2017 release of RPA's Fourth Regional Plan, and we would like to offer the following recommendations and comments that should be studied or included in the plan. RPA has identified three key issue areas for the Fourth Plan and we have broken down our comments into these issue areas.

CB4 believes that across all issue areas and important to all development projects is the consideration and preservation of neighborhood character. Large infrastructure projects often invade a neighborhood and destroy the character that makes it unique, and we hope RPA will emphasize the importance of neighborhood preservation in all of their work and make the concept central to their Fourth Plan.

Prosperity and Opportunity

- CB4 recommends that RPA study and recommend planning that decentralizes commercial areas and business districts in order to create a closer proximity between

home and work for commuters. This should include ways to make areas other than Manhattan attractive to organizations which create jobs and industry.

- We recommend the inclusion of pedestrian-friendly focused development, creating improved streetscapes that will benefit pedestrians and businesses. We offer the success of retail pedestrian plazas such as Times Square as examples where this has been successful.
- We encourage RPA to include recommendations that promote retail affordability and inclusion of retailers that meet community needs.
- We recommend that RPA consider ageing and disability access in all of their advocacy and planning.

Sustainability and Resilience

- CB4 recommends RPA include the decentralization of transportation hubs, thus creating a more sustainable transportation system. In and around MCD4 we have two major transportation hubs, Penn station and the Port Authority Bus Terminal. This concentration not only causes congestion, it is also an environmental concern and has a negative impact of the quality of life for residents in the area.
- We recommend an increased focus on preserving and increasing green space, and open air space, in all areas that will have major regional infrastructure projects but particularly in areas with dense development such as MCD4.
- CB4 recommends that RPA increase their study and inclusion of new transportation technologies in their Fourth Plan. Such technologies will soon be the dominant transportation methods, and the awareness of these technologies and inclusion in all regional planning is essential for sustainable infrastructure.

Movement and Connection

- CB4 recommends consideration for and integration of bicycle friendly transportation and improved connection with public transportation systems. RPA should actively advocate for improving bike transit integration on all major New York City connections including bridges, tunnels, and public transportation methods such as buses and trains.
- Along with this, CB4 recommends that RPA advocate for the inclusion of bicycle specific lanes or dedicated tunnels in any cross Hudson River tunnel projects.
- We recommend that RPA advocate for protected crosstown bike lanes in Manhattan.
- We recommend that RPA study and advocate for improving connections between transportation infrastructure hubs and the region's major airports JFK, LaGuardia and Newark.
- We recommend that RPA advocate for and include in their Fourth Plan all regional rail possibilities, which should include converting bus traffic to rail and improving and expanding current rail structures to capture more commuter traffic and reach more destinations.

In addition to the above recommendations, we would also like to applaud RPA for their recent advocacy on limiting street traffic on Fourteenth Street to buses, deliveries, and bikes during the L train construction project. CB4 believes such an idea if implemented could lead to a permanent street function that restricts use of private cars, and thus increases crosstown transportation conditions for public transit and more environmentally friendly transit options. This is a concept CB4 strongly supports and hopes will come to fruition.

CB4 once again thanks RPA for their regional planning and advocacy. We hope you will implement our recommendations into your efforts and make them part of the Fourth Plan. We would also like to invite RPA back to present the completed Fourth Plan to our Transportation Committee in 2017.

Thank you for the consideration of our comments and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Delores Rubin
Chair



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair, Transportation
Planning Committee



Ernest Modarelli
Co-Chair, Transportation
Planning Committee