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## VISION FOR REGIONAL GROWTH PRESENTED AT NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL (NYMTC) ANNUAL MEETING

### *Planning Council's First Regional Development Vision, Identifying Ten Desired Growth Areas*

NEW YORK, March 13, 2008 – “Sustainability” and “managing congestion” have become more than just buzzwords as the New York metropolitan area prepares for dramatic population, economic and travel growth over the next two to three decades. In fact, they are critical components of regional planning for livable communities.

A million more people are expected to live in New York City by 2030, two million more when Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley are included, and four million more in the twenty-eight county, tri-state metropolitan region as a whole. This growth will undoubtedly lead to more congested roadways, buses, trains, and even sidewalks. The substantial growth could severely strain the transportation system, threatening to add significant costs in time and money to moving people and goods, and could diminish both environmental quality and quality of life throughout the region.

To help the region thrive in the face of this expected growth and manage anticipated congestion, the Council Members of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) have for the first time in NYMTC's 25 year history come together to describe a vision for guiding regional growth, with a focus on 10 desired growth areas. While clearly not a development plan for the whole region, and recognizing that much of the anticipated growth will occur outside of these areas, the Council Members focused on these 10 areas because optimizing growth there through strategic transportation investments will accommodate significant growth in a sustainable fashion and help manage anticipated congestion. There are five desired growth areas in New York City and one each in the five adjacent counties.

"Our vision builds on the separate trail blazing and substantive efforts of our individual Council Members," said Andrew J. Spano, Westchester County Executive and outgoing NYMTC co-chair. "We each recognize that in order to plan for the future, we must work together to set goals for the region as a whole. Our vision seeks to improve the regional economy, enhance the environment and improve quality of life by providing flexible transportation access within the region. By identifying our 10 desired growth areas, we can build the case for obtaining the resources to implement regional transportation investments."

The five areas in New York City are:

- Hudson Yards and Lower Manhattan in Manhattan; Downtown Brooklyn; and Long Island City and Jamaica in Queens.

The areas in the five suburban counties are:

- Nassau Centre in Nassau County; Hauppauge/Brentwood (which includes the Sagtikos Regional Development Zone) in Suffolk County; the cities and centers of development along a transit-

enhanced Interstate 287 corridor in Westchester County and in Rockland County; and Route 311 at Interstate 84 in Putnam County.

The growth forecasted for NYMTC's region through 2030 is significant and challenging: a nearly 20 percent increase in population and jobs over current levels. The Council Members recognized that accommodating this growth sustainably will be difficult without considering both the existing transportation system and future strategic transportation improvements. When taken together, the 10 desired growth areas could contain at least 70 million – and up to 90 million – square feet of commercial development, and at least 40,000 – and up to 70,000 – residential units. They could accommodate nearly a quarter of anticipated growth in employment, and close to 10 percent of the total forecasted population growth.

"The vision of the Council Members is a very significant step for regional planning," said Astrid Glynn, NYMTC co-chair and commissioner of the New York State Department of Transportation. "We are faced with a very real challenge: find a way to provide new mobility to serve what can be and should be a vibrant, growing region while limiting the costs of the growth in terms of congestion and environmental impact. The vision that the Council Members are laying out today can ultimately guide the pursuit of transportation improvements, and build on recent sustainability and smart growth planning initiatives, such as New York City's PlaNYC."

In developing their vision for a growing region, the Council Members recognized the need to better coordinate land use planning and transportation planning. They also recognized the need to maintain the existing transportation system in a state of good repair and have re-emphasized the need to see through the four foundation projects to which they have already committed. Those projects are: the Second Avenue Subway; the No. 7 line extension; East Side Access, joining the Long Island Railroad to Grand Central Terminal; and Access to the Region's Core, which will build a new rail tunnel under the Hudson River to accommodate more New Jersey Transit trains.

"The vision set forward by the Council Members of NYMTC is really a starting point for us and our transportation leaders as we plan for our region's future," said Joel Ettinger, executive director of NYMTC. "If we did nothing, we would be looking back on the congestion problems we're having now as the good old days. Through the Council Members' vision, we have a real opportunity to improve congestion and mobility, have a substantive effect on environmental quality and overall quality of life, and secure a great future for our region."

The 16 Council Member organizations include: Nassau, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk and Westchester counties; New York State Department of Transportation; New York City Department of Transportation; New York City Department of City Planning; Metropolitan Transportation Authority; Federal Highway Administration; Federal Transit Administration; New Jersey Transit; North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority; the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

The NYMTC region encompasses an area of 2,440 square miles and a population of 12.4 million, approximately 64 percent of New York State's population (according to the 2005 census).

*The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is an association of governments, transportation providers and environmental agencies that is a collaborative forum for regional transportation planning. The NYMTC region includes New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley. [www.nymtc.org](http://www.nymtc.org).*

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