



Regional Plan Association

Regional Plan Association is a research and planning organization supported by voluntary membership to coordinate conservation and development in the Tri-State Urban Region.

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ESTABLISH PERMANENT FUNDING SOURCES FOR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

The New York State Transportation Bond Issue (Proposition One on the ballot in November) is intended to continue the rehabilitation of roads and bridges throughout the State of New York. There is no question that such work needs to be done; the question is how to pay for it.

Most of the projects to be funded by this bond issue are not new; rather, they are ongoing replacement and repair of transportation facilities. That kind of work is perpetual. Unless a permanent, predictable funding mechanism is established--like an increase in the gasoline tax or other transportation licenses, fees and tolls--another bond issue will have to follow someday soon, just as this proposition follows on the heels of the Rebuild New York Bond Issue of five years ago.

So, whether Proposition One passes or not, the people of New York will have to find a continuing way to pay for replacement and repair of transportation improvements,

including roads, bridges and mass transit. The choice is not between a bond issue and a tax hike--it is when to impose a new transportation tax and how to make it equitable.

"Regional Plan believes that the State of New York should face up to this challenge sooner rather than later," said RPA President John P. Keith, "just as our sister State of Connecticut did in 1984. Each year since then, a penny has been added to the gasoline tax in Connecticut, and this will continue until 1991--for a total increase of 9 cents a gallon. Such an approach would guarantee the long-term viability of New York's transportation system. Furthermore, it is cost-effective. To borrow \$3 billion this time will cost another \$2 billion in interest."

Regional Plan Association is a nonprofit research and planning agency for the Tri-State Region, established in 1929.

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