



reasons to bet on NYC's future

in our New York's Next Comeback report



in federal funding to support our region's transit agencies



13

Alfresco Award recipients

Alfresco NYC staff members on City & State NY

CITY&STATE NEWYORK

power lists

2.7

gigawatts of offshore wind power approved in New Jersey

1,329,524
new residents in the region since 2010

35 CO WSJ

national news stories featured RPA from November 2020 to November 2021

40,000

potential new accessory dwelling units in Fairfield County, CT

225

thousand views

for Recalibrate Reality, our interview series with 92nd Street Y

92Y



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your strong support of Regional Plan Association and our shared mission to create a brighter future for the tri-state region over this past year. Your commitment was more critical than ever during an unprecedented pandemic and tumultuous time of uncertainty.

As we emerge from the worst of the pandemic, we have a unique opportunity to recalibrate for a new post-COVID world by charting a course that achieves growth and prosperity; addresses the systemic health and economic inequities embedded in our communities; and protects the region from future climate catastrophes while building a clean energy economy.

This moment is critical. The choices we make in the next decade will determine whether our metropolitan region — with its unique assets and unparalleled talent and diversity — will fall behind or flourish as the world's leading "Superstar Region."

No organization is better suited to lead the region's next renaissance than RPA, which is also at a historic junction as we launch our 100-year anniversary celebration — RPA100. Our organization has an unmatched track record of guiding public policy with data-driven research, expert planning, and informed advocacy. After a century, RPA remains the only independent champion of the entire tri-state region, the sole organization that looks decades into the future to develop and advance

the ideas and policies today that will have a defining impact for generations to come.

RPA100 is an opportunity to reflect on RPA's storied history and imprint on the region's evolution over a century. And our goals for the next century are ambitious and attainable:

- Create the best transportation system in the world because we know mobility is key to prosperity, equity, clean air, and improved quality of life.
- Transform our region into the most inclusive, understanding that access to safe, affordable housing and economic opportunity are paramount to an equitable and successful society.
- Become a global model of health and resilience by prioritizing public access to open space, climate adaptation, and transitioning to an economy driven by clean energy.

As you will read in this Annual Report, we are well on our way. There is a tremendous amount of hard work ahead of us. But with your continued support, we will get there, together.



Scott Rechler
Chairman

To our RPA supporters,

2021 began with significant uncertainty and overwhelming hope — for our friends and families, for our region, and for our future. Despite dire circumstances, we continued to collectively rise up and respond to daunting and overlapping challenges together.

As we close out the year and head into 2022, RPA is pleased to report on tangible progress towards more sustainable, equitable, and healthy communities.

Our advocacy, research, and media work helped advance key infrastructure investments including new Hudson transit tunnels, an improved Penn Station, and more offshore wind. New attention was focused on long-term priorities in RPA's Fourth Regional Plan — the Triboro Line in Brooklyn and Queens and new approaches for urban highways like the BQE and Cross Bronx. With the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill signed and Build Back Better advancing, we are excited to continue the hard work necessary for our region to thrive.

RPA helped make history in Connecticut. Our advocacy led to long overdue zoning reforms becoming law — including legalizing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and more. In the year ahead, we will be working diligently to advance similar reforms in New York and New Jersey so the entire region can move forward together.

After years of advocacy, Renewable Rikers legislation finally passed this year, paving the way for reduced pollution, improved community health, and green uses along the waterfront. Looking forward, our team will focus on climate adaptation across our homes, streets, modes of transportation, and infrastructure so our region is better prepared.

With a year of tremendous transition ahead, we continue to rely on your partnership as we work with governors in three states, a new mayor in New York City, and officials across the region to continue to improve quality of life for all of our region's residents.

We are proud to share this update on our work and invite you to join us as we continue to make great strides in the region and beyond.

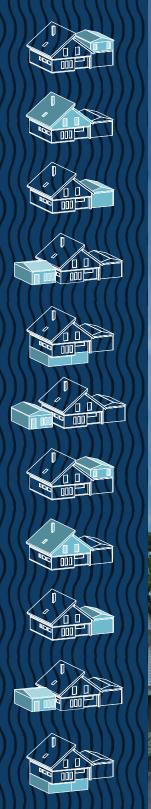
And as we enter RPA's 100th year, your guidance and support are more important than ever. For your endless generosity and commitment to making our region the best it can be — we extend our deepest thanks.

Thomas K. Wright

President and CEO

Kate Slevin

Executive Vice President



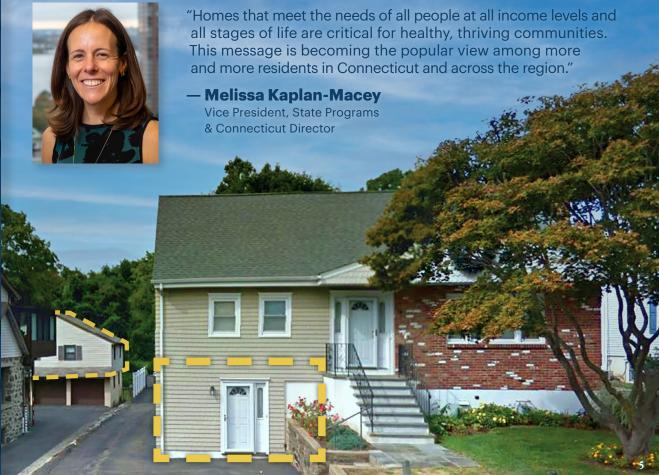
Advancing Accessory Dwelling Units

Our region made national headlines this year when Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont signed land use reforms into law — shaped and supported by RPA and championed by our partners at Desegregate CT — that legalized accessory dwelling units (ADUs) statewide.

An ADU is a secondary home on the same property as a primary home, and they're an important tool we can use to create more affordable housing options across the region. Following passage of this landmark legislation, RPA published *Be My Neighbor in Fairfield County*, which showed how the County can create 40,000 new homes by encouraging ADUs and single-family home conversions. RPA's *Fairfield County*

Housing Needs Assessment and the Housing Connecticut's Future report produced by our partners at Fairfield County's Center for Housing Opportunity both helped lay the foundation for this important legislative victory.

Following this historic win, RPA is pushing to legalize ADUs in New York State through the New York State Accessory Homes Enabling Act. This bill would also create new technical and financial assistance programs to help residents take advantage of these new housing options, as RPA called for in our 2020 Be My Neighbor report. In the wake of several tragic drowning deaths within basement apartments during Hurricane Ida, we are making clear that safe ADUs are a component of climate resilience in frontline communities. In New Jersey, some municipalities are already experiencing benefits from ADUs. RPA is working toward more sweeping legislation that would help the entire Garden State expand its housing supply and create more diverse communities.



Building Gateway & Fixing Penn Station

After years of frustration, inaction, and delay, several related infrastructure projects began falling into place in 2020 and 2021.

Moynihan Train Hall opened and RPA recognized it with the "Project of the Year" award at our annual Celebrate the Tri-State benefit in January. The Hudson River Tunnel received a long-delayed federal approval and construction began on a new Portal North Bridge. New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced plans to renovate and expand Penn Station to support the Gateway Program. RPA has been working across agencies and state lines to move these vital projects forward for years.



In January 2021, RPA's Infrastructure for Recovery and Renewal report called on the federal government to expedite these transformational projects.

Infrastructure for Recovery and Renewal

How a Federal Infrastructure Program Can Lift the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Region

The nation's recovery demands an infrastructure program that creates jobs, reduces inequality, and prepares the U.S. for climate change and public health emergencies.



Penn Station — RPA President Tom Wright joined Governor Hochul this fall as she unveiled updated plans to transform and modernize Penn Station. RPA has advocated for Penn Station renovations for more than 25 years, most recently through the Public for Penn Coalition, our Fourth Regional Plan, and a Penn Station Community Advisory Committee. The Governor's holistic plan — influenced by our advocacy — will improve accessibility and create new pedestrian-friendly spaces through the area and bring more light, better mobility, and improved wayfinding into the station. It also sets the stage for an expansion of the station to the south, which will add sorely needed rail, track, and platform capacity to our regional network.

3 1

years | days

19

hours

25

minutes

21

seconds

The Hudson River Tunnel — the key component of the Gateway Program — finally received a record of decision from the Federal Transit Administration this spring after three years, 10 days, 19 hours, 25 minutes, and 21 seconds of inaction, allowing pre-construction work to begin. This followed tireless advocacy from the Build Gateway Now Coalition, which RPA manages, which tracked that delay and pressed for action.



The Portal Norh Bridge — NJ Transit awarded a contract for construction to begin on the Portal North Bridge over the Hackensack River, another critical component of the Gateway Program. This welcome upgrade for the 110-year old swing bridge will improve travel times and reliability for the over 200,000 riders who travel over it daily.

Adapting to Flooding

Tragedy struck our region when the remnants of Hurricane Ida flooded several parts of New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut, taking 45 lives just two months after another extreme rain event had flooded several New York City subway stations.

Both storms forced us to face the reality that the impact of water remains one of the most widespread and dangerous threats in the region.

Following these events, RPA research revealed that more than 400 subway station entrances and more than 180,000 small residential buildings (with 123,000 below grade basements) remain vulnerable to stormwater flooding. We called on transit, water, public space, and sanitation agencies to collaborate to address this because runoff water does not care about political boundaries or agency jurisdictions. More than two dozen regional, national, and international media outlets cited our research and expertise and we helped to focus media attention on the best policy responses to extreme weather.

CSO Catchment Areas Combined Sewer Overflow discharge in 2016 (millions of gallons)

"Stormwater management is an often overlooked part of planning. The events of 2021 made clear that we must do more to protect ourselves from stormwater flooding, starting with the region's most vulnerable residents."

> — Marcel Negret Senior Planner



In New Jersey, we drew public attention to the need for managed retreat from flood zones. Our public opinion polling with Global Strategy Group, the Metro Area Issues Survey, found that 54% of residents in the region support governments buying out homeowners in flood zones and 46% support governments prohibiting new construction in flood zones.



RPA's Re-envisioning the Right-of-Way report

pointed out how we can redesign streets to mitigate flooding. The report called on policymakers to use New York City's 32,000 acres of roadway to their full potential, implementing more green infrastructure, permeable surfaces, and new designs to trap water before it reaches the sewer system, subway stations, and homes.



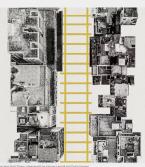
Where we are now, and where we could be: Satellite image of Northern Blvd in Queens by Google Earth, rendering by Local Office Landscape and Urban Design 🕏

The New York Times

OPINION
THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Is This Railroad for the Rich?

June 26, 202



The editorial board is a group of opinion journalists whose views are informed by expertise research, debate and certain longstanding values. It is separate from the newsroom.

Garden City, a leafy chunk of suburban Long Island, is served by four train stations on the Hempstead Branch of the Long Island Rail Road. Residents can reach New York's Penn Station in less than 45 minutes. Next year, thanks to billions of dollars in public spending, LLRR. trains will start running to Grand Central Terminal too.

That's great news for people who can afford single-family homes in Garden City, where the average price is approaching \$1 million.

But the state is squandering its investment in the expansion of the commuter railroad by allowing Garden City and other Long Island communities to maintain strict limits on multifamily housing construction.

Local resistance to development has become the norm across the United States, especially in the wealthy metropolitian areas along the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts where housing is needed most. Other coastal states, recognizing the urgent need, are imposing limits on local cornort. Experts say New York stands increasingly alone in doing nearly nothing to compel local governments to make room for housing.

Building around Long Island train stations would let more people reside in communities with high-quality public services, and in proximity to good jobs. It would also help to redress the long history of racist housing policies that have made Long Island one of the most racially segregated suburban areas in America.

It would additionally be good for the environment, which could use the help

But Nassau County, which includes Garden City, is one of the most difficult places to build housing in the entire United States. Over the past half century, as the population of the New York area expanded by roughly 30 percent, Nassau's population shrank by 5 percent.

Some local governments in the state, including New York City, hav chosen to encourage affordable housing development through permissive zoning, financial incentives or policies that require big projects to include affordable units. Nassau County's neighbor Suffolk County is taking some steps to encourage development, including around its railroad stations.

Such measures are less common in the wealthy Nassau County areas closest to New York City. A 2017 report by the Regional Plan Association found that multifamily construction was not allowed in the vicinity of 16 of the Lond plant Risul Road's 58 stations in Nassau County - Association was not adversed in the vicinity of 16 of the Londing two of the Garden City stations. Around other stations, development is strictly limited, and it can take decades for a project to move forward.

Bellerone, another Nassau County community on the Hempstead Brench, this drop permit any mer broading between 2010 and collecly permit any mer broading between 2010 and collecsecreting to a regard on Long Island's seversion to construction by Nosh Kaxis of the Pirmana Center at New York University his an official policy: Bellerone allows the replacement of existing boosting only on a con-to-one basis. The Village code explains that allowing additional boossing "would be detrimental to the integrity of the Village and on the health, safety and wedfare of its residents."

Debates about affordable housing often focus on New York City, and understandably so. The city contains a larger share of its region's population than other major American cities, it has the capacity to support dense development and it does need to build more housing. For the Regional Plant Association, the city prohibits multifamily development in more than six square miles of land within a 10-minute walk of a train or subway station.

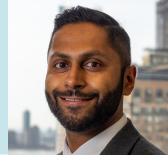
But the city's suburbs, especially in underdeveloped Nassau County, need to build more, too. There is plenty of room. Nassau's population density is 41 percent lower than Staten Island's, and it is 24 percent lower than State (San Line).

Article excerpt from The New York Times

"Decades of disinvestment and planning policies designed to create winners and losers have resulted in a segregated region.

Now, we must be intentional and use all the tools at our disposal to reverse this to create more equitable and inclusive communities."

- Maulin Mehta, New York Director





The murder of George Floyd and the racial uprising of 2020 increased mass awareness about racial segregation in housing and land use, spurring action at the federal, state, and local levels.

This past year, RPA has made notable progress in our ongoing efforts to address residential segregation with land use and planning reforms in partnership with concerned organizations and activists including Desegregate CT, the Racial Impact Study Coalition, and others.

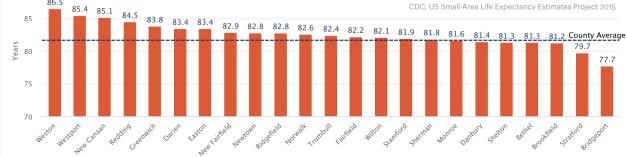
This summer, as a result of advocacy by RPA and our partners in the Racial Impact Study Coalition, and collaboration with Public Advocate Jumanee Williams, Council Speaker Corey Johnson, Council Member Rafeal Salamanca Jr., and the Black, Latino and Asian Caucus, the New York City Council passed a bill that ensures data about race and displacement are available early in the land use decision-making process for all major rezonings that either increase or decrease development capacity. The City has also increased its efforts to rezone affluent communities for more affordable and mixed-income housing, which RPA has long

championed, with both the Gowanus and SoHo/NoHo rezonings gaining approval from the City Planning Commission and headed to the Council for full approval.

Citing RPA's 2017 report *Untapped Potential*, the New York Times editorial board called on New York to end local restrictions on multifamily housing near train stations. "The state is squandering its investment in the expansion of the commuter railroad by allowing Garden City and other Long Island communities to maintain strict limits on multifamily housing construction," they wrote. The statewide land use reforms that legalized ADUs in Connecticut — informed by RPA and our partner Desegregate CT — also make local zoning more friendly to transit-oriented development.

In addition, RPA published a suite of land use resources for planners and citizens in late 2020 and 2021, like our Long Island Housing Data Profiles, Planning for Affordability in Connecticut, Be My Neighbor in Fairfield County, and Up to the TASC. Each emphasizes the need to reduce segregation by expanding access to housing and promoting inclusive community planning.

Life Expectancy in Fairfield County



Ensuring Health Equity

RPA continued to facilitate the Healthy Regions Planning Exchange — a nationwide network of planners, practitioners, advocates, and community-based representatives elevating best practices for addressing racial and health equity. The Planning Exchange has examined barriers to health equity in 10 regions of the United States and developed strategies to overcome them. RPA summarized many of these strategies in our recent paper *Pathways to Health Equity*. The paper is dedicated to Arlene Rodriguez, a mentor, consultant, and friend who steered the initiative alongside our staff until her passing in October 2021.





"If planners are not careful and intentional, equity could become a buzzword instead of an outcome people experience as a result of our work. That's why Healthy Regions is focusing on how legislation, base building, communications, and culture change can actually bring about racial and health equity here and now."

Vanessa BarriosManager, Advocacy Programs



Saving Public Transit

Thanks to support from our region's congressional delegation, led by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, the federal government has made its largest-ever investment in public transit through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework following advocacy from RPA and friends of transit and infrastructure nationwide.

This bill will provide more than \$15.5 billion to fund transformational projects at our region's transportation agencies. Before this bill was on the horizon and after the pandemic had decimated revenues at our region's transit agencies, the federal government also delivered multiple infusions of emergency funding to help transit agencies maintain service in the face of dramatically declining revenues. When the transit services that essential workers relied on faced an imminent crisis, RPA and a nationwide coalition of advocates stepped up to preserve it.

Improving Mobility

This year we saw progress on multiple RPA recommendations to improve mobility and to better preserve and utilize the road network.

Following more than a year of delay by the US Department of Transportation under the Trump Administration, New York's congestion pricing program finally began to move forward again. RPA continued to voice support for the program and draw attention to the recommendations in our 2019 report, Congestion Pricing in NYC: Getting it Right. After officials in New Jersey expressed discontent with the program, we partnered with allies like former NJ Governor Jim Florio and Riders Alliance to explain through op-eds and public testimony why congestion pricing is a win for both sides of the Hudson River. It's a victory for workers, residents, and businesses alike!





The Brooklyn-Queens Expressway

The New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) adopted a recommendation from our 2019 *Reimagining the BQE* report to reduce portions of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway (BQE) by removing one lane in each direction between Atlantic Avenue and Sands Street. This will prolong the highway's useful life while a comprehensive rethinking occurs. NYC DOT will also immediately repair damaged portions of the roadway and step up enforcement on overweight trucks.

"New Jersey can continue to lead on climate change mitigation by successfully implementing and scaling up the renewable energy and clean transit investments we've committed to."

Zoe Baldwin

New Jersey Director



Better Service in Newark

Recognizing that their buses are stuck in too much traffic, NJ Transit is redesigning the bus network in Newark through an initiative called NewBus Newark. RPA called for this redesign in our 2020 report *Better Service*. NJ Transit will use this as an opportunity to rethink the bus routes that serve the Newark region based on current transit markets, existing service performance, and community input. We continue to advocate for a permanent source of funding for NJ Transit that ensures initiatives like this are carried out successfully and to their fullest potential.

Decarbonizing the Region

New Jersey continued to position itself as a leader in the ascending offshore wind industry this year by approving 2.7 gigawatts of offshore wind generation, the country's largest combined award. RPA has long championed these investments, which reverberate up and down the supply chain and send a signal to companies that New Jersey is truly in the business of offshore wind.



— Robert Freudenberg

Vice President, Energy & Environment



This year the New York City Council passed a package of bills known as the Renewable Rikers legislation, enabling the city to build new energy and waste facilities on Rikers Island after the prison complex closes. This proposal, which RPA supported as part of a coalition with environmental justice and criminal justice advocates, will reduce the amount of plants and pollution along the East River, improve health in those communities, and set the stage for green uses along the waterfront. RPA's Kaplan Chairs for Urban Design will focus on this work in the year ahead.

Reducing Emissions from Buildings

RPA also collaborated closely with partners in the energy, development, and housing sectors to advance practical solutions to challenges around implementing New York City's landmark buildings greenhouse gas emissions reduction policy, Local Law 97.





RPA Regional Plan Association

MITTIM MITTIM SAINT JOSEPHIS CARPLENTER SOCIETY

November 2021

Facilitating Local Planning

In New Jersey, more than 900 East Camden residents, workers, and stakeholders participated in the creation of *My East Camden*, a draft 10-year neighborhood plan produced by RPA and Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society that outlines the goals of the community and how residents and stakeholders would like to see it develop.

At the heart of the plan is the idea of "Cultivating Community" – building upon existing neighborhood assets and the creativity and values of residents to ensure an equitable and sustainable future. RPA presented the neighborhood plan to the City of Camden's Planning Board and it was approved as an amendment to the City's Master Plan.

Economic Development in Suffolk County

RPA has continued its partnership with James Lima Planning + Development (JLP+D) to provide planning and economic development advisory services to Suffolk County. We're collaborating to deliver a high-level strategic plan for The Hub at Brentwood, a training and community center that will promote educational advancement and career development while also offering services. The pandemic has underscored the need for this kind of community asset in the town of Brentwood that can promote recovery and resilience.



New City Parks (NCP), an initiative incubated at RPA that strives to bring thriving urban parks to neighborhoods that need and want them, has made substantial progress despite the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on local and regional budgets. NCP partnered with mayors and communities in Poughkeepsie and Buffalo in New York and Passaic and Jersey City in New Jersey to build or rehabilitate several community parks. In these cities, NCP has been working closely with neighborhood groups to prioritize sites for rehabilitation and translate the community's vision into buildable designs and budgets. The initiative has provided expertise, staff, and funding to secure action from mayors and local agencies so that parks in underserved communities become a priority.

"Streets can be a revolutionary resource for our region if we begin to see them as spaces for goods movement, sustainable transportation, commerce, community, and play, instead of routes for cars alone."

— **Tiffany-Ann Taylor**Vice President, Transportation





Advancing Economic Development

Throughout the year, RPA built momentum for large-scale permanent changes to the streetscape to support transportation alternatives, economic development, and climate change adaptation through everyday advocacy as well as our *Re-envisioning the Right-of-Way* report. We partnered with Design Trust for Public Space and Tri-State Transportation Campaign to form the Alfresco NYC coalition to ensure the programs are accessible to all New Yorkers, beneficial for the local communities, and sustainable in the long term. The Alfresco NYC Coalition will work with NYC officials as they develop guidelines to make the Open Streets and Restaurants programs permanent.

The Alfresco Awards

Our inaugural Alfresco Awards — featured in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg CityLab and more than a dozen other outlets — recognized the city's best outdoor dining spaces and open streets while celebrating street life across the five boroughs. After receiving hundreds of nominations from New Yorkers, the coalition recognized seven restaurants, four open streets, and two collaborative efforts with prizes for their excellence and ingenuity. Now, the coalition is partnering with the NYC Departments of City Planning and Transportation to host stakeholder roundtables to develop best practices to inform the program and design guidelines for outdoor dining and open streets.



E-Commerce

As the growth of e-commerce exploded across the region in 2020 and 2021, RPA focused on strategies to improve goods movement locally and regionally. Leading thinkers and practitioners in supply chain management, land use, workforce, and sustainable waste streams participated in a two-day RPA symposium to explore how we can incorporate e-commerce into our existing systems in sustainable and healthy ways. The transportation panel at the 2021 RPA Assembly as well as the recommendations in our *Re-envisioning the Right-of-Way* report also focused on identifying best practices for goods movement.



Inclusive Growth

As a response to persistent and widespread social and economic inequality in the region, RPA partnered with the New York City Employment and Training Coalition and the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development on the New York City Inclusive Growth Initiative. This initiative convened an 18-person steering committee representative of the diversity of New York City who developed the Inclusive Growth Blueprint, a new framework for future economic development, workforce development, and affordable housing. The Blueprint outlined how economic prosperity can be shared by all and how communities often left behind can have a greater say in development and planning processes.

Thank You!

Thank you to all of RPA's members and funders for supporting our work. Your partnership makes the progress highlighted in this annual report and other initiatives possible.

To become an RPA member or to make a donation, please visit rpa.org/support



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\$250,000 and above

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Government

Amtrak
City of Bridgeport
City of Hartford
City of New Haven
City of Stamford
City of Waterbury
Connecticut Department of Housing
NYSERDA
Suffolk County IDA

Financials



Operating Revenue	FY2021
Foundations	\$2,006,477
Corporations	\$2,296,226
Individuals	\$674,021
Government	\$559,060
Other	\$29,677
Total Operating Revenue	\$5,565,461
Endowment Revenue	
Peter Herman Chair	\$20,000
Dividends and Capital Gains	\$526,240
Total Endowment Revenue	\$546,240
Total Revenue	\$6,111,701
	φομιιμοι
Operating Expenses Research	
Operating Expenses	\$3,642,587
Operating Expenses Research Public Affairs	\$3,642,587 \$507,631
Operating Expenses Research Public Affairs Management and General	\$3,642,587
Operating Expenses Research Public Affairs Management and General Fundraising	\$3,642,587 \$507,631 \$482,937
Operating Expenses Research	\$3,642,587 \$507,631 \$482,937 \$712,447
Operating Expenses Research Public Affairs Management and General Fundraising Total Operating Expenses	\$3,642,587 \$507,631 \$482,937 \$712,447 \$5,345,602
Operating Expenses Research Public Affairs Management and General Fundraising Total Operating Expenses Net Surplus	\$3,642,587 \$507,631 \$482,937 \$712,447 \$5,345,602



Regional Plan Association

rpa.org | info@rpa.org | 212.253.2727

For nearly 100 years, Regional Plan Association has conducted independent research, planning and advocacy to improve prosperity, equity, sustainability, and quality of life within the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut metropolitan area. We focus on issues that are critical to every individual in the region: energy and the environment, housing and neighborhood planning, transportation, and governance. In 2022, RPA will launch our Centennial celebration as we look forward to guiding the region's communities and its public, civic, and corporate sectors for another 100 years. For more information, visit rpa.org.

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