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**Regional Plan Association Releases Draft Vision for Newark**  
*Plan Envisions Newark as Equitable, Accessible, Green, Smart and Prosperous; Public Input to be Collected*

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**NEWARK** – Regional Plan Association (RPA) today released a Draft Vision for the City of Newark that plans for rapid growth and improved quality of life for all city residents. The report, which was completed in conjunction with Mayor Booker’s 100 Day initiative, builds on the many existing plans for the city and lays the groundwork for a revised Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The Draft Vision, which is available online at [www.rpa.org](http://www.rpa.org), has been presented to Mayor Booker and will be available for public input.

“Newark’s infrastructure, location and human resources put the city in a position to enjoy tremendous economic growth with the right vision and Mayor Booker’s leadership,” said Thomas K. Wright, Executive Vice President of RPA. “This Draft Vision shows that with smart and inclusive planning 21<sup>st</sup> century Newark can stand as a national model for urban growth and prosperity.”

The Newark envisioned in the report is Equitable, Accessible, Green, Smart and Prosperous. The report’s recommendations are broken down into these five categories, serving as a precursor for a new Master Plan by proposing both physical improvements and policies that would shape future development, anticipating between 50,000 and 100,000 new residents by 2030. Ideas included in the document include many from previous plans for Newark along with new initiatives, several of which are illustrated with renderings. The basis for all of the recommendations is a neighborhood-based planning process supported by a professional planning staff.

Highlights include developing a Bus Rapid Transit system on key Newark corridors; building a new International Business Center with conference facilities in the current Airport Support Zone; re-imaging Downtown as a 24/7 mixed-use Central Business District; dramatically increasing the amount of open space, especially on the waterfront and in neighborhoods; improving neighborhoods with better urban design by limiting negative influences like the “Bayonne Box” housing type, strip malls and sky bridges; and integrating Newark’s educational facilities into the fabric of the city.

The Draft Vision was a product of several months of work by RPA's team of planners in cooperation with the Booker administration, funded exclusively by private foundations and corporations. The research culminated in a three-day planning workshop at NJIT, September 13-15. The workshop convened local partners and planning, design and architecture professionals, organized into teams to discuss economic development, open space and environment, transportation and community development. The results of the workshop form the core of the Draft Vision, including these key recommendations:

#### Equitable Newark

- Provide Newark's neighborhoods with a formal advisory role in the planning process.
- Ensure affordable housing is available to all Newark residents.
- Raise the bar for neighborhood design and amenity.

#### Accessible Newark

- Develop a Bus Rapid Transit system for key Newark corridors.
- Make the road network work for Newark residents.
- Encourage dense new development around transit nodes and along transit corridors.

#### Green Newark

- Expand the open space network in Newark, with a focus on waterfront and neighborhood parks.
- Provide incentives to developers to use sustainable practices and require all City agencies to do the same.
- Promote public and environmental health through physical planning.
- Implement beautification projects to restore Newark's historic streets to their former glory and improve the city's image.

#### Smart Newark

- Integrate learning with neighborhood and Downtown development.
- Enhance Newark's status as a City of Learning and transform University Heights into a vibrant mixed-use district that is connected to surrounding communities.
- Fully integrate workforce development and economic development programs.

#### Prosperous Newark

- Re-imagine Downtown as a 24/7 mixed-use Central Business District.
- Leverage the city's transportation and logistics industry by converting the Airport Support Zone into an International Business Center, featuring conference facilities.
- Position Newark as the premier cultural and entertainment center in New Jersey.
- Transform Newark's image from an aging industrial city by making immediate high-tech investments in partnership with the private sector, including creating a city-wide wireless network.

The release of the Draft Vision is only the first step toward a new Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance for Newark. A public process will follow to ensure that residents and community groups shape the city's future. The report also recommends a series of immediate actions that can be implemented while this process is ongoing, and RPA will work with the City of Newark to determine their feasibility.

“Since its founding in the 1920s, RPA has viewed Newark as a place of remarkable resources and potential,” Wright said. “With Mayor Booker’s leadership we’re confident that this potential can be tapped for the good of Newark residents and the regional economy. We hope that this draft vision will be the first step in that process.”

*Regional Plan Association (RPA) is an independent regional planning organization that improves the quality of life and the economic competitiveness of the 31-county New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region through research, planning, and advocacy. For more information about RPA, please visit our website, [www.rpa.org](http://www.rpa.org).*

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