

InfrastructureUSA

THE INFRA BLOG

Adolfo Carrión, Regional Administrator, U.S. Housing and Urban Development

Joel Ettinger, Executive Director, New York Metropolitan Transportation Council

Steven C.F. Anderson, Managing Director, InfrastructureUSA, spoke with Adolfo Carrión and Joel Ettinger at Regional Plan Association's 21st annual Regional Assembly, "[Innovation and the Global City](#)." The event took place on April 15th in New York City.

At the event, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development announced the "[New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities](#)" initiative:

"An unprecedented bi-state collaboration of cities, counties and regional planning organizations has come together to launch New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities. This initiative, funded with a \$3.5 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant, will integrate housing, economic development, transportation and environmental planning.

The goal of the Consortium is to reposition the New York-Connecticut region to fully harness its innovation capabilities in a competitive global environment, build on its strong foundation of energy efficiency, and become as equitable as it is efficient. Its primary focus is to leverage the most extensive and robust transit system in the nation by developing livable communities with mixed-income housing and employment at key nodes in the MTA Metro-North Railroad and MTA Long Island Rail Road network."

Adolfo Carrión:

The \$3.5 million bi-state initiative

What it does is it builds on the existing infrastructure of these urban places, these pipes and wires have been here for a long time but public policy encouraged sprawl suburbanization, even ex-urbanization which is just beyond the suburban rim. And what this is recognizing is that we can no longer continue a development trajectory that promotes that. In fact with the growth expected in the US population over the next 30 to 40 years we're going to have to build to accommodate that growth in terms of business and residence; let alone the pipes and wires associated with that. We already have an infrastructure rich set of metropolitan areas and that's what this builds on. So the orientation is towards mass transit and getting cars off the roads and creating walk-able communities

that are rich with opportunity. This is the kind of investment that this begins to make.

Private-public partnerships

This is certainly a model and New York has always been in the lead in terms of innovation and strategies for managing growth. We are one of the more dense regions in the United States. But certainly I think the investment at the national level is to create the modeling for the kinds of public private intergovernmental partnerships that makes sense for the way the marketplace works. It's an investment in our future. The only way we're going to be able to grow smart urban centers and metropolitan regions is if all the stakeholders are at the table.

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Joel Ettinger:

The significance of the project

The kick off for the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council is we're an agency that's responsible for regional transportation planning in the New York Metropolitan area. What we recognized a few years ago is that how can you realistically do transportation planning without doing land use planning coordinated in a sustainable fashion. The purpose of this grant is to fill the gaps in land use and transportation planning. Because it's sustainable; you're going to develop communities primarily centered around transit-oriented development, around the Long Island Railroad, around Metro North. But it's also infrastructure projects, which are the necessary transportation components to have sustainable communities.

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