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September 2, 2020

Board of Representatives
City of Stamford
888 Washington Boulevard
Stamford, Connecticut 06901

RE: HCD30.016: Providing for the Creation of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund in the City of Stamford

Dear Representatives:

I am writing on behalf of Regional Plan Association in support of HCD30.016, creating a long-needed affordable housing trust fund in Stamford. This vehicle enables Stamford to implement innovative, long-term solutions to financing affordable housing, thereby reducing the historic reliance on City capital funding. In addition, the ordinance requires that Stamford prepares a comprehensive affordable housing plan to assess the community’s true needs and establish objective priorities to guide funding and policy decisions.

Regional Plan Association is an independent non-profit civic organization, with Connecticut headquarters in Downtown Stamford. We develop and promote ideas and advise cities, communities and public agencies on improving the economic health, environmental resiliency, and quality of life in the NY metropolitan region. Our work is based on sound research on the environment, land use and good governance. One of our primary areas of focus is making the region more affordable for everyone, recognizing that in places like Fairfield County, there is an acute housing affordability crisis and that safe, affordable, quality housing is inaccessible to many individuals and families.

HCD30.016 will guide expenditures of the trust fund, according to the priorities and criteria established in the Affordable Housing Plan, through an appointed Board consisting of members with housing-related expertise. These decisions will ensure transparency, fairness and equity to benefit residents in the most need as opposed to the current project-by-project methodology.

We applaud members of the Housing and Community Development Committee, with support from the Land Use Bureau and the Community Development and Social Services departments, for advancing this forward-thinking legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact me at melissa@rpa.org or 212.253.6502 with any questions on RPA’s support for this proposal.

Respectfully,

Melissa Kaplan-Macey
Vice President, State Programs & Connecticut Director
Regional Plan Association