

PLAN 2035

Appendix A

Developing Plan 2035: Public Outreach

This document is an appendix to Plan 2035, the Regional Transportation Plan for Northern New Jersey. The full document is available at www.NJTPA.org. Plan 2035 was prepared and published by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Inc. with funding from the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration. The NJTPA is solely responsible for its contents.

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Introduction

A critical component of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) planning process is public outreach and involvement to engage the region's residents, business community, interested organizations and other public agencies to help create a Regional Transportation Plan that is responsive to the needs of the NJTPA region.

Through this public outreach and participation, the NJTPA sought to ensure that the planning process was inclusive, sensitive, and responsive to the diverse issues of stakeholders and the general public. At a minimum, federal legislation, as spelled out in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), requires that such participation include the following:

- Creating early and continuous opportunities to provide timely information to citizens, stakeholders, and other interested parties;
- Allowing reasonable public access to technical and policy information;
- Providing adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points;
- Holding public meetings at convenient times and in accessible locations;
- Using visualization techniques to describe and promote understanding of the RTP;
- Making information available in electronic and accessible formats;
- Taking explicit consideration of, and responding to, public input;
- Developing a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems; and
- Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all interested parties and revising the process as appropriate.

To meet and exceed these requirements, a strategic, flexible, and dynamic participation process was crafted to guide the outreach and engagement activities throughout the RTP development. The process was designed to be nimble to allow for mid-course corrections. Building upon the 2005 RTP update, the NJTPA incorporated several important outreach enhancements in this update to actively engage the public and to explore critical issues that will shape the region in the coming years. Some of those enhancements included:

- *Broad visioning and scenario testing.* With guidance from the NJTPA Board of Trustees, these efforts offered opportunities for input from state, county and municipal officials, planners, engineers, stakeholders, and the general public.
- *Discussion of the impact on transportation needs and investments of factors beyond the control of the state or region,* such as climate change, rising energy prices, changes in the global economy, broad demographic shifts, and sweeping changes in technology.
- *Exploration of opportunities for innovatively funding transportation projects,* particularly those needing large capital investments or presenting long-term operational funding needs.

Specific outreach activities included as part of the RTP update were:

- A symposium of experts on the future challenges facing the NJTPA region
- Another symposium of experts on financing transportation investments
- Visioning workshops held in each of NJTPA's 15 sub-regions (13 counties and two cities)
- Individual roundtable discussions focusing on freight; climate change; and socioeconomic, housing, and transportation issues
- A technical advisory committee
- Interaction and consultation with the NJTPA Board of Trustees
- Interagency coordination and coordination with the NJTPA Strategy Refinement outreach process
- An interactive RTP update website offering information about the plan, an online survey, an online version of the visioning tool, and opportunities to submit comments and feedback.

Each of these elements is described in subsequent sections of this appendix.

Symposium on the Future of Transportation

On June 26, 2008 the NJTPA hosted a symposium on the future of transportation, entitled "Transportation 2035: Where are We Headed." Nearly 100 people attended to hear presentations by a panel of experts and to join in an interactive discussion of the critical issues facing the region. Topics discussed included:

- The impact of the price and availability of oil on the future of the region
- How the region can address climate change and what it will mean for transportation
- Maintaining and investing in transportation infrastructure in an era of limited funding availability
- The impact of changes in the global economy on the NJTPA region

The panel of experts included:

- James W. Hughes, Dean of the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University
- Anne Canby, President of the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership
- Joseph Giglio, Senior Academic Specialist and Executive Professor of General Management at Northeastern University
- Daniel Lerch, Program Manager for the Post Carbon Cities Program at the Post Carbon Institute
- Eileen Swan, Executive Director of the New Jersey Highlands Council
- Robert Ceberio, Executive Director of the NJ Meadowlands Commission

The goal of the symposium was to develop a shared understanding of the external forces that will shape the future of transportation in the region. Several key themes emerged from the symposium that became key aspects of the three scenarios presented in the visioning tool at the sub-regional workshops:

- The era of reliably cheap energy and oil is over, which will have profound impacts on where people live, how and where they travel, and where they produce goods.

Rising transportation costs will mean that distance matters as it has not in many years. Transportation will be a growing portion of the cost of living, especially for those who live far from their jobs. Increased transportation costs may also cause global economic and supply chain shifts. Centers of manufacturing and agriculture may change to locations closer to their final markets. China may be less viable as the world's manufacturer.

- As less funding becomes available from traditional sources for transportation projects, new and innovative funding sources must be considered. Increasing costs for commodities and resources will also mean transportation dollars will buy less than in the past. Free highway usage may quickly end as value pricing and user fees may need to be considered to fund improvements. However, with new fees, customers will demand accountability and better system performance.
- As these issues play out there will be an increasing need for a real linking of transportation to both land-use and resource protection. This will have to go well beyond past practice to address the growing scarcity of resources and increasing concern about climate change.

Symposium on Financing Our Transportation System

On June 25, 2009, the NJTPA hosted a symposium on transportation funding entitled "Financing Our Transportation System: Options and Actions." Nearly 100 people attended to hear several experts speak about the challenges and opportunities for funding needed transportation improvements in the region, state and nation.

The symposium was particularly timely, coming very shortly after the released of draft authorization legislation by the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee. Martin E. Robins, Senior Fellow at the Rutgers University Voorhees Transportation Center, moderated the event.

Topics discussed included:

- The challenge of maintaining the state's vast network of roads and bridges, including the looming funding need of the region's high cost bridges.
- The need to invest more heavily in transit and transportation efficiency projects to reduce dependence on foreign oil and provide economic, social and environmental benefits.
- The need to reform funding mechanisms to ensure that investment is driven by national goals rather than political expedience.
- Educating the public on the level of investment needed and alternative funding approaches such as HOT lanes, congestion pricing and the like.
- The need for a bipartisan approach to establishing a dedicated source of transportation funding, as accomplished in New Jersey in 1984 with the creation of the Transportation Trust Fund.

In addition to Robins, the following experts participating in the symposium:

- Richard T. Hammer, Assistant Commissioner for Capital Program Management, NJDOT.
- Emil Frankel, Director of Transportation Policy, National Transportation Policy Project
- Steven Van Beek, President and CEO, Eno Transportation Foundation

- Ferrol Robinson, Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota
- Philip Beachem, President, New Jersey Alliance for Action

The financing symposium took place just before the initiation of the public comment period for Plan 2035 and provided another opportunity to inform interested parties about the release of the draft document for public review.

Sub-regional Visioning Workshops

Between September 20 and November 5, 2008, the NJTPA conducted visioning workshops in each of its fifteen sub-regions. These workshops were an opportunity for elected officials, stakeholders, planners, and the public to learn more about the challenges facing the region and to discuss a direction and vision for the region. Using an interactive visioning tool, participants at each workshop discussed options for land use and transportation strategies as well as opportunities for funding improvements to the regional transportation system.

The workshops were arranged through close coordination between the RTP project team, the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Board of Trustees. Each sub-region was given the flexibility to determine the list of invitees as well as the optimal format for the workshop. Attendance ranged from 10 to more than 50 people.

The interactive visioning tool used in the workshops presented three land use strategies (mix of uses, clustering development, and transit oriented development (TOD)) and an option to select a desired intensity level for each (high, medium, or low). The tool also presented five transportation strategies (maintenance and preservation of infrastructure, roadway improvements, transit improvements, ridesharing and transit support, and freight movement) and an option for the desired investment level for each (high, medium, or low). Finally, an information component showed the estimated funding gap between the desired transportation investment levels and the region's current funding. Numerous options were presented that could be used to increase funding. As was stressed at each workshop, the actual selection of high, medium, or low was less important than the discussion of each strategy. What follows are the main themes that emerged across all of the workshops. Following this section is a brief summary of the key themes and issues from each of the 15 workshops.

Land Use Strategies

Participants saw numerous benefits from pursuing a greater mix of land uses, clustering development, and promotion of TOD. These benefits generally fell into four major categories: transportation, economic, environmental, and quality of life. The transportation benefits included decreased travel times and costs for many types of trips, provision of more viable choices for travel modes other than cars, reduction in traffic congestion, and increased efficiency of the public transit system. Economic benefits included the creation of economies of scale for other types of infrastructure, such as water and sewer, and supporting main streets and revitalizing distressed downtowns. Benefits for the environment included preservation of open space, reducing the impact of development, conservation of resources, and using the limited land available for

development more efficiently. Finally for quality of life, these land use strategies were seen as providing for better delivery of services, providing a diversity of living options, positively influencing the type and direction of growth and providing and opportunity to undo past errors in planning and development..

While there were many benefits to the land use strategies, participants also cited many challenges that might hamper the region's ability to implement them. State mandates and regulations including those on affordable housing, the Highlands and other developmental and environmental issues, were the most commonly mentioned challenges. Local regulations and conditions including overcoming established land use development patterns, "home rule", the different needs and desires of local communities, and lack of coordination at all levels of government were an additional set of concerns. Participants also noted that these land-use strategies might not be viable due to limited opportunities for future development in much of the region; the need for a significant increase in transit service to make these strategies viable; and the challenge of overcoming prevailing market forces. The final set of major challenges was public perception and preferences. Across the region there is significant public resistance to anything that is perceived as higher density or that might destroy the current character of towns and counties. Finally, the "not in my back yard" (NIMBY) mentality poses a challenge for local municipalities to pursue these strategies.

Transportation Strategies

Maintenance and Preservation of Infrastructure – There was almost universal agreement on the need to invest heavily in infrastructure maintenance and preservation. Some felt that transit maintenance be a higher priority than roadway maintenance. Maintenance was seen as offering a good return on investment and helping to promote economic growth while producing fewer impacts than building new infrastructure. It also was noted that maintenance and preservation improvements could incorporate alternative modes of travel such as walking and biking. However, many worried that bringing the system to a state of good repair would encourage driving. Some also felt that maintenance needed to be balanced with operational improvements, and that a lack of funds would make significant investment impossible.

Roadway Improvements – Few thought investing in capacity expansion made sense for the region. Most said the region should focus on fixing existing infrastructure and making it work better. Operational improvements to enhance traffic flow and targeted investments in new capacity were seen as the best choices. Major concerns over roadway improvements included right-of-way constraints, induced demand, and that the region's focus should be on reducing the amount of automobile traffic.

Transit Improvements – In counties both well served and underserved by public transportation, there was a strong desire for greater investment in transit improvements in all parts of the region, including areas already well-served by public transportation and those with little such service. A viable transit system was seen as critical to maintaining the region's economic strength. Some felt rail or light rail were the best options, while others felt focusing on bus service was more practical. In various subregions, participants stated there was a need for better intra- and inter-county connections, increased capacity, and more parking at transit stations. The primary concerns were inadequate funding and existing development patterns that make transit impractical.

Ridesharing and Transit Support – The three main needs that emerged from discussions of this strategy were for well-planned park-and-ride facilities to support transit use and intercept drivers at key locations; bicycle and pedestrian improvements; and promoting work-at-home incentives. Opportunities to be explored here included looking for shopping centers with excess parking to host park-and-rides and opening up special transit services such as those for seniors and the disabled for public use. The primary concern here was being able to attract people to use services such as shuttle buses and van pools.

Freight Movement – Workshop participants understood the importance of freight to the region's economy. Most of the discussion for this strategy focused on shifting the mode by which freight moves – using rail and barges to move more freight. Many also wanted to see more development of freight-related activity (particularly warehousing and distribution centers) around the port to reduce the freight traffic destined for eastern Pennsylvania which to a large extent returns to the NJTPA region after repackaging or other value-added processing.

Funding

Participants generally understood that the region faces a significant funding shortfall to adequately address its transportation problems. Many agreed that the funding level needs to be increased but there was disagreement on the best ways to achieve that. Others felt that New Jersey could not afford to impose more costs on its residents and recommended that the state revise spending priorities and streamline the planning and construction of projects.

In addition to the funding options presented in the tool, workshop attendees proposed several other possibilities for increased transportation funding. These included establishing local (county) transportation trust funds paid for by a county sales tax; creating more public-private partnerships; implementing a cordon tax similar to London; increasing fees for billboard advertising on agency properties; increasing fees for moving violations and dedicating that revenue to transportation; assessing higher registration fees on larger and less fuel-efficient vehicles; and tolling currently non-tolled facilities.

Somerset County

Thirty-nine people attended the Somerset County visioning workshop, held at the Somerset Vocational Technical School in Bridgewater at 9 a.m. on Saturday, September 20, 2008. This workshop was a joint meeting with the Somerset County Planning Department. For this workshop, the participants were broken into small groups and worked through the interactive tool guided by a facilitator. Note takers from the NJTPA were stationed at each table.

Land Use Strategies

The combined strategies of mixing land uses, clustering development and promoting TOD had general support among the participants. For some, these strategies presented a more efficient form of development and an opportunity to positively impact the type and direction of growth in Somerset County by directing it toward new and established centers. Key goals of the participants were reducing travel times and distances, encouraging alternative modes of travel, preserving open space and natural resources, and maintaining local character. Concerns included possible unintended consequences of TOD and center development, such as additional traffic; speculation over whether employers would actually choose to locate in downtowns; and whether those who work in local businesses would actually live nearby.

Transportation Strategies

For the transportation strategies, the workshop participants felt maintenance and preservation of infrastructure was very important – particularly as it related to improved safety. For roadway improvements there was a general desire for minimal capacity increases and emphasis instead on operational improvements such as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and better signal timing. There was strong support for transit improvements that could create better connectivity within the county and around the I-287 corridor. The “last mile” connection for transit was noted by many as a critical missing piece in transit strategies. Park-and-rides and shuttles were seen as ways to provide low-cost connections. Finally, for freight strategies, many wanted to see more freight move by rail to reduce the number of trucks on highways. Some saw rail as the only viable option for increasing freight capacity.

As with the land use strategies, participants noted several concerns. First was the need to balance maintenance with necessary operational improvements for roadways. However, many felt that any improvement in the road system’s ability to handle cars would induce more traffic. While many were supportive of transit, some questioned whether Somerset County had the density to support it; if it was affordable; and if people would use shuttle and feeder services.

Funding

Many saw no single answer to the funding problem. Ideas for increasing funding for transportation included having agencies collect more advertising revenue from billboards on their property, instituting a “gas guzzler” tax, requiring developer contributions for transportation improvements, and streamlining the project development process.

Hudson County

Eighteen people attended the Hudson County visioning workshop, held at The Gallo Center in Jersey City at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, September 23, 2008. For this workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool as a single group guided by a facilitator. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

There was general consensus that Hudson County had no choice except the “high,” or most intense, option for each of the land use strategies. Some noted that the higher densities and compact, walkable development of the county was what has attracted new residents. In addition, this was seen as a more environmentally sustainable form of development. Access to mass transit was universally seen as a critical element of supporting these strategies including both light rail and bus services. The major concern regarding these strategies was the need to recognize that even though Hudson County is geographically small, it is a diverse county. Some areas will be receptive to higher densities, while others will not and it is important to provide different living options to the county’s residents.

Transportation Strategies

Due to the age and condition of existing infrastructure - and already high and increasing traffic volumes, participants strongly supported heavy investment in maintenance and preservation. Participants felt the state needs to view expenditures in infrastructure as

investments and that Hudson County offered a good return on that investment. For roadway improvements, capacity expansion should be limited to strategic targeted investments such as a new Newark Bay crossing. There is little room in the county for expansion and would only induce more traffic. Participants also expressed a desire for transit to be incorporated into any new infrastructure to create multimodal corridors. For transit improvements there was a desire for a high investment level to provide better service to the western portion of the county. To support the existing system and relieve traffic congestion within the county, interceptor park-and-ride lots outside the county are needed. A major issue in terms of freight system investment was the need to raise the Bayonne Bridge to accommodate the largest “post-Panamax” ships.

Funding

Ideas for increasing funding for transportation included developing public-private partnerships where those who would benefit directly from a transportation improvement, such as those seeing an increase in property values from a light rail stop, help pay for the cost of facility maintenance. Other ideas included a container tax for the port and looking to other agencies as funding partners.

Middlesex County

Thirty-five people attended the Middlesex County visioning workshop, held at the Middlesex County Planning Department in the New Brunswick Elks Building at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 23, 2008. This visioning workshop was held as part of Middlesex County’s Transportation Coordinating Committee meeting. The participants worked through the interactive tool as a single group, guided by two facilitators. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

Participants saw a general trend in Middlesex County toward a greater mix of land uses, clustering, and transit-oriented development. Benefits noted from these strategies included the ability to walk to work, accommodation of residents of various income levels, a focus on redevelopment, preservation of open space, reduced per capita infrastructure development costs, and an opportunity to undo “bad” planning of the past. Participants placed a particular emphasis on the need for transit-oriented development, noting that the county and its residents were generally receptive of the concept. Some of the challenges included some people’s preference for having a geographic separation between work and home, limited capacity for future development, overcoming public resistance to the idea of “density”, and working within state mandates such as COAH.

Transportation Strategies

There was consensus that the transportation system is important to sustaining economic growth and vitality and that funding issues will take strong political leadership to resolve. The overall goals of the transportation strategies for the participants were to shift travel from automobiles to other modes and to use transportation improvements to drive local land use. There was strong support for maintaining and improving the condition of the current system, but focusing on near-term improvements such as intersections and signal timing. There was little support for increasing highway capacity, but strong support for transit improvements. Concerns focused primarily on right of way cost and constraints. The major issues for ridesharing and transit support were the need to address the parking shortage at transit stations and the issue of connectivity to and from

transit. The major issues for freight were moving more freight by rail and grade separation for major freight lines.

Funding

To increase funding, participants felt the region needed a menu of options that included parts of nearly all of the funding strategies presented. Other new or increased revenue sources included public-private partnerships, an increase in the federal gas tax, and a new integrated fare structure for NJ Transit.

Sussex County

Thirty-four people attended the Sussex County visioning workshop, held at the Sussex County Vocational Technical School in Sparta at 5 p.m. on Thursday, October 2, 2008. At this workshop the participants worked through the interactive tool as a single group, guided by a facilitator. Laptops were available both before and after the meeting for participants to use the interactive tool individually. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

Participants explained that many of the county's residents travel to Morris County for employment but that rising fuel cost might push jobs to Sussex County. Land use strategies need to guide growth to increase the availability of jobs closer to residences and create mixed-use centers to serve outlying areas. There was also a desire to focus development efforts on redeveloping existing areas and town centers. The concerns over land use were mostly related to state-imposed constraints, such as COAH, Highlands and the State Plan, as well as environmental regulations and conditions. Participants felt these constraints do not allow for significant future growth. Other concerns were that municipalities do not have the infrastructure to accommodate dense growth and that different land use approaches would be needed for different parts of the county.

Transportation Strategies

The workshop attendees saw the transportation strategies as an opportunity to link rural areas to local centers. Operational and safety improvements were seen as more important than roadway capacity increases. For transit there was a desire for high investment – particularly in bus service and to provide last mile connections. In the ridesharing and transit support strategy, there was support for park and rides, vanpool services, and better incentives for telecommuting. A major problem noted was the lack of park-and-ride areas with good access to transit. A possible solution included opening up senior transit services to all riders to provide a circulator-type system. While most felt that freight issues in Sussex County were not significant enough to warrant a high investment, participants did want to remove trucks from the county's highways, particularly during peak hours, and shift freight to rail. Options for achieving this included stipulating certain hours for truck movements, financial incentives for off-peak shipping, dedicated lanes on highway, and truck route restrictions.

Funding

In the discussion about funding there was significant opposition to anything that would be seen as a new tax. Some saw new taxes as forcing more people and businesses to leave the state. Specifically in reference to a VMT tax, the participants felt this would disproportionately hurt Sussex County residents because the county has few travel options and it would not apply to the traffic from Pennsylvania. With the resistance to

burdening travelers with more fees and taxes, there was a general agreement that the solution was more efficient use of current funds.

Essex County

Nine people attended the Essex County visioning workshop, held at the Essex County Environmental Center in Roseland at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, October 14, 2008. For this visioning workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool with laptops set up for each participant. A facilitator guided the group and several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

Workshop participants noted possible benefits from the three land use strategies, particularly in their abilities to attract investment and create diversity in living options. There was a sense that future development would have to be clustered in Essex County because there is little land left on which to develop. There needs to be flexibility in applying these strategies to account for different place types and needs within the county. Some of the concerns over the land use strategies were revising zoning regulations, home rule, and integrating mixed land uses into existing suburban office parks.

Transportation Strategies

There was universal agreement on a high investment level in maintenance and preservation of infrastructure. For roadway improvements there was a desire to make the current system more efficient through operational improvements and ITS. Any new capacity added to roads should be dedicated for transit use (bus lanes). Most expressed a desire for high investment in transit improvements and cited the success of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) at attracting investment as a model for redevelopment in Newark. Given the high cost of right of way acquisition it was stressed that these investments have to be made in appropriate areas. Expansion of park and rides was seen as a good idea but would require thinking strategically about where to locate them. One possibility mentioned was to do a shared lot with shopping centers that have excess parking capacity. For freight movement, participants thought deepening the port channels to accommodate modern shipping vessels was important, but questioned if, given the economic downturn, the freight investments were something that should be put off for now and revisited in several years.

Funding

The two major points arising from the discussion on transportation funding were a desire to see the federal funding formulae revised to a needs-based approach and the development of more public-private partnerships to pay for infrastructure improvements.

Morris County

Forty-nine people attended the Morris County visioning workshop, held at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morristown at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 16, 2008. For this visioning workshop, participants sat around tables, each set up with a shared laptop. Two facilitators guided the entire group through the interactive tool. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

Key land use issues for the participants were maintaining the character of the county's small towns, creating a better balance of land uses, preserving open space, and finding a way to best accommodate anticipated growth. Participants were supportive of the land use strategies but desired to find a way to implement them in a way that would not lead to high density, high intensity development. Challenges included altering established trends in land use at the local level, focusing on redeveloping existing areas, and development restrictions imposed by the Highlands regulations and the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Transportation Strategies

The major goals expressed for the transportation strategies presented were to decrease road use by promoting alternative means of travel, creating a balance between preventing further deterioration of infrastructure and spending levels, using the current system at maximum efficiency, creating more transit options, and moving more freight by rail. To achieve this, ITS and other technological improvements, minor operation improvements for roadways, investments in transit services and parking at stations, and encouraging more development around the Port received strong support.

Funding

The workshop attendees thought increasing the gas tax would be a viable way to increase revenue as well as to discourage driving and promote alternative modes of travel. Congestion pricing and time-based tolls were also well-received. Other options included an "SUV tax" and a container tax at the port. There was little support for increasing transit fares as that was seen as working against the goal of promoting transit use.

Passaic County

Seven people attended the Passaic County visioning workshop, held at The Brownstone in Paterson at 8 a.m. on Saturday, October 18, 2008. For this visioning workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool with laptops set up for each participant. A facilitator guided the group and several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

The workshop attendees stressed that when looking at land use issues in Passaic County, it is important to understand the differences between the upper and lower parts of the county. Highlands and DEP regulations are fairly restrictive in the former, while the latter is already fairly densely developed. For the specific strategies, the participants felt the county had no option but to pursue a greater mix of land uses, clustering development, and TOD. All are needed to preserve open space, accommodate growth with limited available land, address traffic congestion, and achieve economies of scale in infrastructure development. As with other counties in the Highlands district, development restrictions were seen as one of the major challenges to pursuing the land use strategies. Maintaining the local character, particularly in the upper part of the county was also a significant concern.

Transportation Strategies

There was general consensus for high investment in infrastructure maintenance, but the attendees felt that in order to achieve that there had to be both a new mindset and political will to deal with the funding issues. Capacity expansion was not seen as a

viable option for roadway improvements. However operational improvements to better manage traffic flow, such as widening substandard lanes and improving intersections, were favorably received. For transit improvements, participants focused on the Bergen-Passaic line and stressed the need for both phase 1 and 2 of the project. Additionally, they cited a need for more park and rides to relieve capacity constraints at existing locations. One suggestion was to look at underutilized parking lots at shopping centers. Freight issues were not a significant concern for participants. However, they did feel that rail needed to be more efficient for both passengers and freight. Additionally, while the county freight needs may be low, there was a feeling that the regional investment should be high.

Funding

The funding strategies discussed included having the Port Authority invest more money back into New Jersey's infrastructure and increasing tolls at the Delaware River crossings. The primary goal of both of these funding strategies should be to move more people to transit, according to the participants.

Hunterdon County

Twenty-four people attended the Hunterdon County visioning workshop held at the County Complex in Flemington at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 22, 2008. For this visioning workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool with multiple laptops set up for groups of three. Two facilitators guided the group and several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

There was general consensus that Hunterdon County would benefit from each of the land use strategies. The group felt these strategies would help decrease travel time to and from work and could connect housing with jobs. While there was a general desire to be aggressive, many realized that they also had to be realistic when thinking about the future. The major concern regarding the land use strategies was the need to preserve the rural character and keep housing prices affordable. It was also noted that transportation efficiency is key and that the extension of the Raritan Valley Line (RVL) could provide many TOD opportunities. Some participants noted that the county has a limited number of towns that would support these strategies.

Transportation Strategies

High investment in maintenance and preservation received significant support from the workshop attendees. Participants agreed that the county's main corridors need increased capacity but there was significant concern about induced demand from any expansion. Some felt investing in schools and not in roads would be a better way to preserve the county's character. The participants felt that Hunterdon County is only a "small piece of the freight pie," but the group did agree that they would like to make freight movement more efficient.

Funding

Two ideas for increasing funding for transportation included taxing people who enter the state and increasing tolls to promote transit use.

City of Newark

Thirty-one people attended the Newark visioning workshop, held at the NJTPA offices in Newark at 9 a.m. on Thursday, October 23, 2008. This visioning workshop followed a presentation by the City of Newark's Planning Department. The participants worked through the interactive tool as a single group, guided by a facilitator. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

There was agreement among the participants that the land use patterns in Newark already incorporate the strategies presented. Many felt Newark already had good downtown infrastructure and the priority should be on making it a regional destination for both employment and residential development. Attendees also felt that transit provision was a critical element of supporting higher density development and a better mix of land uses. Additionally, some felt these strategies offered the region a chance to repair the past several decades of sprawling development.

Transportation Strategies

Maintenance and preservation of infrastructure and transit improvements generated very little debate. There was almost universal agreement that the city needs a high level of investment for both. Some felt roadway improvements would not be as important if there were more and better transit options. With limited funding there was a desire to see roadway improvements prioritized by need and some felt that road improvements aimed at enhancing freight movement were more needed than those targeted at moving people. Among the group there was strong support for ITS and intersection improvements. Most participants wanted to see a high investment in ridesharing and transit support, particularly in bicycle and pedestrian facilities. However, some felt incentives would be needed to change people's behavior and convince them to use alternative modes of travel. Finally, for freight, there was a call for a high investment level with emphasis on developing intermodal facilities, reinvesting in freight rail yards, and raising the Bayonne Bridge.

Funding

Many felt raising the gas tax was the best option for increasing funding as this would have the additional benefit of shifting people to transit (which would increase fare box revenue). There was also discussion of increasing the existing tolls on the Garden State Parkway to reduce the congestion associated with suburban-to-suburban commutes.

Bergen County

Twenty-one people attended the Bergen County visioning workshop held at Bergen Community College in Paramus at noon on Monday, October 27, 2008. For this visioning workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool guided by a facilitator with multiple laptops set up at tables through out the room. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

The participants stressed that Bergen County is small geographically, but has over 70 local municipalities. As such, universally applying the land use strategies would be difficult in Bergen County. However, there were several benefits seen from the land use strategies, including offering a way to take advantage of the many redevelopment opportunities in the county, linking existing population and employment clusters, reducing environmental impacts, and creating viable neighborhoods around employment

centers. Concerns centered on possible local opposition, overcoming existing land use patterns, and externally imposed constraints such as COAH.

Transportation Strategies

There was strong support for maintaining and improving the condition of the current system, and a sense that a high investment was needed just to preserve the current system. For roadway improvements there was a need for some interchange improvements on the Garden State Parkway to help promote desired development in the County as well as ITS improvements. For transit improvements the group agreed that high would be the most beneficial to Bergen County, but expressed a concern about the availability of funds to make those improvements. Participants felt that a high investment in freight movement was appropriate for the region though the needs for Bergen County were low or medium. Major concerns were grade separation of rail for safety and the compatibility of Bus Rapid Transit and truck lanes.

Funding

Ideas for increasing funding for transportation included the creation of local (county) trust funds and local leveraging of funds. Participants also felt that anything that would increase revenue by assessing additional fees or taxes should be equitable and shared among all residents.

Monmouth County

Thirty-one people attended the Monmouth County visioning workshop, held at Brookdale Community College in Lincroft at 7 p.m. on Monday, October 27, 2008. For this visioning workshop, participants sat around seven tables set up with one shared laptop. The entire group was guided by a facilitator and each table worked through the interactive tool. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

There was general support among participants for the three land use strategies presented, though it was noted that the needs in the county vary. While “high” may be appropriate for the more urban areas it would not be for the rural areas. Major land use goals included developing more residential space near employment locations, preserving open space, and attracting greater investment and development around rail station and other transit hubs. The concerns over pursuing these strategies included lack of adequate infrastructure, loss of employment opportunities in the county (e.g., Bell Labs, Fort Monmouth), and the possible loss of open space.

Transportation Strategies

The general consensus of the group was to concentrate on fixing and improving the current infrastructure and not investing in new roadway capacity. There was a concern that people would be less likely to carpool or use transit if more lanes are added to highways and that roadway widening would attract more sprawling developments with negative impacts on traffic, housing costs, schools and other infrastructure. For transit improvements the group felt a high investment was necessary for the County. Ferry service was also discussed and the need for increased service and improved facilities in Long Branch. Some felt a key problem with transit was public education about the different options available to county residents. Participants opted for a medium investment level in freight. Suggested freight options included the possible future redevelopment of freight transfer and port facilities at what is currently US Naval

Weapons Station Earle in Colts Neck and Leonardo, making use of Normandy Road and the existing rail line that parallels it.

Funding

In the discussion of funding, many thought that the state needs a constitutional amendment to dedicate the gas tax to transportation funding and to reallocate spending priorities. Some felt that the gas tax may not generate as much revenue in the future as automobile shift to alternative fuels.

City of Jersey City

Fifteen people attended the Jersey City visioning workshop, held at City Hall on Tuesday, October 28, 2008. For this visioning workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool as a single group, guided by a facilitator. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

At the Jersey City workshop, the participants were shown the various land use strategies in the tool. Given that Jersey City already has a high mix of land uses, is clustered, and developed around transit stations, the conversation focused on the types of land use strategies the city is currently pursuing and what it sees for the future. Most development in the city will be focused on creating mixed used employment and residential centers through redevelopment. While this will work in former industrial areas of the city, it may not work in older more established neighborhoods that have developed along the city's commercial corridors. Challenges the city faces include the current economic downturn, environmental contamination of redevelopment sites, and infrastructure provision.

Transportation Strategies

Participants saw a need for high investment in maintenance and preservation, transit improvements, ridesharing and transit support, and freight movement. Participants called for a lower level of investment in roadway improvements, based on concerns that more roads would create more congestion and that there is no room for road expansion within the city. Key issues included extending the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) to the west side of the city, coordinating light rail, buses and jitney operations, and developing park and ride locations both inside and outside the city.

Funding

Funding options discussed included a new WPA-like program with massive federal infrastructure support for major cities, congestion prices, and raising the gas tax.

Warren County

Eleven people attended the Warren County visioning workshop held at the Warren Community Vocational Technical School in Washington at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, October 29, 2008. For this visioning workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool guided by a facilitator with multiple laptops set up at tables throughout the room. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

Warren County participants saw the land use strategies as an opportunity to help the county develop in a more concentrated way. Each offered a chance to shape the future,

preserve open space, and promote downtowns like Hackettstown and Phillipsburg. Many felt that TOD in particular could boost tourism and promote the local economy. However, there were numerous challenges attendees noted, including the cost of doing business in New Jersey. It was felt that this, combined with the restrictions imposed by Highlands and COAH, has pushed a lot of development to eastern Pennsylvania and left Warren County as a pass through area for both commuters and freight.

Transportation Strategies

Key issues that emerged from the discussion included the need to provide local municipalities with more funding for infrastructure maintenance. Local municipalities are more affected by an economic downturn and yet are responsible for maintaining the vast majority of the roads in the county. There was disagreement over whether or not Warren County needs additional highway capacity. Some felt more lanes would lead to more traffic, while others felt new lanes were needed to deal with congestion because there are limited transit options for the county. Participants thought a high level of investment in transit improvements was warranted and focused primarily on expanded bus service along the I-287 and I-78 corridors to serve employment locations. Providing “last mile” services was seen as a key challenge to making transit work. There was support for new park and rides along I-78 as well as encouraging 4-day work weeks and flexible work hours. The major freight issue for the county is truck traffic along I-78 between the port and eastern Pennsylvania. Participants wanted to see more cross-state rail freight and more development of port-related activities closer to the port.

Funding

Ideas for increasing transportation funding included tolling I-78 and I-80 and instituting a value added tax dedicated to transportation improvements in the area.

Ocean County

Thirty-two people attended the Ocean County visioning workshop that was held at the Ocean County Library in Toms River at 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 30, 2008. For this visioning workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool as a group with laptops set up around the room. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

There was general consensus that the “medium” option would be best for the mix of land uses and clustered development and high support for TOD. In addition to greater mix of residential and employment, the participants also desired to see more school-related activities closer to schools to help reduce local traffic. Major concerns of the participants included preserving open space and addressing COAH requirements.

Transportation Strategies

The general consensus was for high investment in maintenance and preservation, but with transit maintenance taking precedence over roadway maintenance. For roadway improvements, participants felt efficiency improvements to the current system were a better option than system expansion. Concerns here included safety and the possible promotion of sprawl with improved interchanges and roadways. There was significant support for a high transit investment, particularly in rail, but also in connecting bus services. Key issues for ridesharing and transit support included developing new park and rides and making accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians. Some felt that the ridesharing options would only be a last resort for most residents and the convenience of

transportation options would be a key to their usage. The group felt the region and the county should invest heavily in freight movement, particularly rail to avoid future problems in the county with truck traffic.

Funding

Ideas for increasing funding for transportation included higher fines for speeding, charging higher registration fees for SUVs, and reducing municipal costs. Many participants wanted to prevent state officials from using the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) for non-transportation purposes. The group did not want any new taxes and felt that raising transit fares would work against the county's efforts to promote TOD.

Union County

Thirty people attended the Union County visioning workshop held at the County Administration Building in Elizabeth at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, November 5, 2008. For this visioning workshop, the participants worked through the interactive tool as a single group, guided by a facilitator with the option to sit by a laptop or not. Several note takers from the NJTPA and the consultant team captured comments from the participants.

Land Use Strategies

There was general consensus that Union County had no choice except the medium to high option for each of the land use strategies, as this was already the reality of the county. Some of the opportunities participants noted were energy conservation, reduced emphasis on the automobile, economies of scale in infrastructure development, preservation of open space, and efficient use of available land. The concerns included providing transit service to support the land use strategies, adapting to the needs of the different parts of the county, inter-municipal coordination, and public resistance to denser development.

Transportation Strategies

Participants thought the preservation and maintenance of the transit system (especially rail) deserved a higher priority than that of roadways. Nevertheless, the county was seen as needing some operational improvements for roadways. However, the attendees did not want improvements that would encourage more driving. High investment in transit improvements received strong support. There was a desire to see restoration of passenger rail service along unused lines, a cross-county light rail, and better north-south connections. For ridesharing and transit support there was a desire for expansion of existing park and rides, and services and facilities to support transit access including shuttle services and bike paths. The need to improve freight and make others more informed and educated about freight was voted very high by all participants. Participants felt there needed to be better use of land at the port for intermodal facilities, move more freight by rail, and have private freight carriers reinvest money in infrastructure improvements.

Funding

Ideas for increasing funding for transportation included private freight carriers to invest in infrastructure improvements and tolls on currently non-tolled facilities.

Roundtable Discussions

As part of the update to the RTP, the NJTPA conducted a series of Roundtable discussions throughout the fall of 2008, each concentrating on a critical forces and issues that will affect the future of transportation in the region. The three roundtables, focusing on freight; climate change; and socioeconomic, housing and transportation issues provided a forum to address and explore key issues and trends and how to incorporate them into the development of Plan 2035.

Freight Roundtable

The first roundtable, held on October 7, 2008, focused on freight movement and related issues. There were two related sessions – a morning roundtable with a panel of experts and a joint afternoon meeting with the NJTPA’s Freight Initiatives Committee. The purpose of the roundtable was to learn more about the needs, challenges, and opportunities connected to freight movement in the region. Jack Lettiere, former New Jersey Transportation Commissioner, was the keynote speaker for the morning session. Sixteen other regionally recognized freight experts joined Mr. Lettiere on the roundtable panel.

The focus of the morning session’s presentation was the need to rebuild the nation’s infrastructure. Several major issues were identified:

- The region’s major infrastructure investments are thirty or more years old;
- Financial deficits are enormous;
- Traditional funding mechanisms are obsolete;
- There is a need for a new transportation system designed to create wealth; and
- The region, state and nation have lacked the determination and will to build the system needed and, as a result, now have a system that does not function well. .

The importance of efficient goods movement was stressed. It was emphasized that transportation and infrastructure lead to wealth creation, spur economic development and create jobs. In the afternoon, the morning roundtable’s findings were presented to a larger audience that included members of the public, agency representatives and stakeholders at a meeting of the NJTPA’s Freight Initiatives Committee. At both sessions, participants discussed the strengths of, and challenges to, the goods movement system in the NJTPA region, as well as policies and investments needed to improve it.



The NJTPA region's strengths include:

- its geographic location in a densely populated, wealthy consumer market;
- an extensive road and rail system;
- a strong urban labor market;
- good port facilities; and
- availability of intermodal choices.

Challenges include:

- extensive infrastructure maintenance needs;
- insufficient clearance below the Bayonne Bridge;
- the lack of truck rest areas;
- limited roadway access to the port;
- railcar weight limitations; and
- conflicts between passenger and freight needs on rail lines.

Participants identified a range of policies that could improve freight movement in the region. These included:

- increasing hours of operation for the port, warehouse and distribution facilities to better spread out the impacts on the transportation system;
- streamlining regulations that make development of properties in and around the port difficult;
- ensuring that funds derived from the movement of freight go directly towards transportation improvements that benefit the goods movement sector;
- educating the public about the vital importance of goods movement to the region's economy and quality of life.

Participants made numerous suggestions for improvements to the existing freight system. The primary concern for shippers using the port was the need for increased clearance under the Bayonne Bridge to facilitate shipment by the new generation of container vessels. Other needs cited were:

- additional double-stack clearance on freight rail lines;
- a freight-only interchange between the New Jersey Turnpike and the port;
- additional roadway access points to the port;
- improved public transit for the industry’s workforce;
- better use of ITS to manage road and rail traffic;
- development of modern multi-level warehouse facilities near the port and in urban areas; and
- more truck rest stops, especially near the port.

Climate Change

On November 17, 2008 NJTPA hosted the second of the three roundtables. The purpose of the roundtable was to learn more about how the NJTPA can incorporate climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies into its long-range plan and how the MPO can shape its investment strategies to support those efforts. George Eads, Vice President at CRA International was the keynote speaker for the roundtable. Thirteen others joined Mr. Eads on the roundtable panel:

- Clint Andrews, Professor at Rutgers University
- John Ciaffone, President of the New Jersey TMA Council
- Andrea Denny, Municipal Clean Energy Program Manager for the USEPA
- Paul Eng-Wong, International Vice President of the Institute of Transportation Engineers
- Dave Gillespie, Director of Energy and Sustainability at NJ TRANSIT
- Rob Graff, Director of DVRPC
- Matt Holt, Freeholder for Hunterdon County
- Jan Khan, NYMTC
- Frank Mongioi, Jr., Senior Associate at ICF International
- Joe Siegel, Legal Counsel for the USEPA, Region 2
- Melissa Stults, Senior Program Officer at ICLEI
- Chris Zeppie, Director, Office of Environmental Policy, Programs and Compliance for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
- Philip LaRocco, Founder & CEO of E+Co

Mr. Eads presentation focused on the vulnerability of the region’s transportation system to climate change. He noted that the time scales involved with climate change are different than those involved with the typical planning process. Emissions will not change for decades, and the impact we experience now and over the next fifty years will be a result of what has happened in the past. He drew a distinction between mitigation and adaptation strategies. While mitigation is needed to reduce future impacts, the focus must also be on adaptation to cope with effects of climate change that will be experienced in near future. All parts of the region will feel impact from climate change – from rising sea levels, to prolonged heat waves, to more frequent intense precipitation events. These impacts will have significant ramifications for the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of the region’s transportation infrastructure. Today’s investment decisions affect how well the infrastructure will respond to climate change.

Following Mr. Eads presentation, the panel of experts discussed several climate change topics including:

- How the NJTPA should incorporate climate change into its long-range planning, prioritization, and investment decision-making strategies
- How the NJTPA can increase awareness of climate change among local governments and facilitate the adoption of mitigation and adaptation strategies
- Membership and critical topics and issues for a possible Climate Change Working Group

Among the common themes during the exchange: many communities and businesses have begun adopting policies to address climate change and more are poised to do so; better estimates are needed of potential climate change impacts, including on coastal communities; promoting transit use and smart growth are important strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions; the NJTPA and state agencies must begin to identify and create plans to address transportation infrastructure that is vulnerable to climate change impacts.

Socioeconomic, Housing, and Transportation Issues

On December 8, 2008 NJTPA hosted the last of the three roundtables. The connections between housing, jobs, and transportation are some of the most challenging issues facing the region. The purpose of the roundtable was to learn more about how the NJTPA can address Environmental Justice (EJ) issues, affordable housing, and access to jobs and how the MPO can help shape its investments to support those efforts. University of Minnesota Professor Myron Orfield, Executive Director of the Institute on Race and Poverty, was the keynote speaker for the roundtable. Ten others joined Professor Orfield on the roundtable panel:

- Marty Bierbaum, Executive Director of the Municipal Land Use Center at the College of New Jersey
- Dianne Brake, President of PlanSmart NJ
- Tom Dallessio, Executive Director of Leadership New Jersey
- Steve Fittante, Director of the Middlesex County DOT
- Terri Hirschhorn, NJ Department of Human Services
- Rich Roberts, Chief Planner for NJ TRANSIT
- Carlos Rodrigues, Vice President and New Jersey Director of the Regional Plan Association
- Paul Scully, New Jersey Regional Coalition
- Ben Spinelli, Executive Director of the NJ Office of Smart Growth
- Susan Zellman, Freeholder for Sussex County and NJTPA Chairman

Professor Orfield's presentation focused on the broad social changes that have occurred in the region. Population decline has led to a reduction in the overall tax base for many urban and older suburban municipalities. This has forced many into a position of imposing high taxes and/or providing a low level of services. On the urban periphery a strong tax base has allowed municipalities to keep tax rates low and spend proportionately more on services. The result has been disinvestment in older urban and suburban communities and rapid investment in outlying suburban and exurban ones. Job growth has become both decentralized and de-clustered, occurring mostly on the edge of the region, while affordable housing has been concentrated in the urban core and older suburban communities. This has disconnected workers and jobs.

Professor Orfield said the key for the region is to figure out a mechanism for municipalities and other government units to work together in the areas of land use planning, affordable housing, and transportation. He called for “a more perfect union” among municipalities. This would include tax-sharing arrangements, reduced dependence on property taxes to fund education and, therefore, a less intense “ratables chase.” This could help develop a more sensible distribution of housing and jobs in the region, easing the intensity of demand on the transportation system.

The panel of experts confirmed many of the trends that professor Orfield noted and discussed several topics including:

- The role of transportation as a strategy to address equity issues
- What Plan 2035 should say about promoting social and economic equity
- Ways to attract investment to centers and downtowns
- Ways to promote workforce housing development in outlying areas
- How to overcome public resistance to density and transit oriented development.

Challenges and next steps for the region include:

- Recognizing the opportunity the recession brings to us. We have an economic catastrophe and a lot of small municipalities are going to be hit hard. Now is the time to begin working together to address these issues.
- Places that give people a choice about where they can live do better and their people do better. They function and compete better. They prosper more and become less segregated.
- The NJTPA has the opportunity to drive the discussion
- Strengthening the region to compete globally will provide opportunities for all residents.

Technical Advisory Committee

To provide direction to the project team as they updated the RTP, the NJTPA convened a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of federal, state, regional, and local agencies as well numerous stakeholder organizations. The role of the TAC was to review and comment on project findings and deliverables and to provide feedback and recommendations to the project team. Input from the committee was used to further enhance the team’s understanding of external factors impacting the region, clarify the critical elements and issues to be addressed in the Plan, and refine the interactive visioning tool used at the sub-regional workshops. TAC membership included representatives from:

- AAA-NJ Automobile Club
- Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center
- American Planning Association
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
- HART Commuter Information Services
- Jersey City Department of Planning
- Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
- Morris County
- National Motorists Association

- Nation's Port
- New Jersey Alliance For Action
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- New Jersey Department of Transportation
- New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety
- New Jersey Future
- New Jersey Highlands Council
- New Jersey Institute of Technology
- New Jersey Meadowlands Commission
- New Jersey Turnpike Authority
- NJ Chamber of Commerce
- NJ Office of Smart Growth
- NJ Transit Corporation
- New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
- Jersey City Department of Housing, Economic Development and Commerce
- Rutgers University
- Somerset County
- South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization
- The Port Authority of NY & NJ
- TransOptions TMA
- Tri-State Transportation Campaign
- Union County

The initial meeting of the TAC took place on June 26, 2008, at the NJTPA offices in Newark with 19 attendees. The meeting included a presentation on the RTP update process, some of the new elements that would be incorporated into the plan, defining scenario planning, highlighting key issues, and explaining the role of the TAC. The committee also provided their thoughts and reactions to the symposium on the future of transportation that the NJTPA had hosted earlier that morning.

The TAC met again at NJTPA's offices on September 25, 2008. Twenty people attended this meeting, where the project team provided an update on the outreach elements for the Plan including the proposed roundtables and interagency coordination. The project team also presented the visioning tool to the TAC and provided a summary of the input the team had heard from visioning workshops up to that date.

The third TAC meeting took place on November 13, 2008 with 10 attendees. The project team presented baseline scenario for the RTP, possible elements to include in the "consensus" future scenario, as well as a summary of the feedback from the 15 sub-regional visioning workshops.

The fourth and final TAC meeting took place on January 20, 2009 where the project team presented the draft Plan.

Interaction with NJTPA Board of Trustees

The RTP update project team met with Board of Trustees on three occasions.

On May 31, 2008 at the annual Board retreat, the Trustees heard a general overview of the content, timing, purpose and possible alternative structures for the sub-regional visioning workshops. The Board members then engaged in a brief discussion of how they envisioned structuring the workshops.

On Monday, July 14, the RTP update team held a Joint Committee RTP Visioning Workshop with members of the NJTPA's Planning and Economic Development and Project Prioritization committees. At this meeting, the RTP Team gave a brief explanation of the RTP process, presented some of the new elements to be incorporated into the RTP, and discussed the importance of scenario planning in the update process. The Board members also engaged in a discussion of the key points from the June 26 symposium adding to the list of emerging issues likely to impact the region, identifying what these issues might mean for the NJTPA region as well as their particular sub-region, and discussing what strategies NJTPA could investigate to address these issues.

The project team met again with the Board of Trustees on September 8, 2008. At this meeting the project team presented to interactive visioning tool to be used at the sub-regional workshops. The team sought the Board's overall thoughts on the tools including its usefulness and how they saw the tool working in their sub-regions. Comments were taken and incorporated into the final version of the tool.

Key points from the meeting were that the tool offered a great opportunity to increase public understanding of the key issues facing the region and generating discussion about them. The Board encouraged the project team to provide sufficient context for participants at the workshops in order for them to fully participate. Additionally, the Board saw this tool as a chance to understand the goals and desire of local elected officials.

Internet-based Outreach

Website

The NJTPA developed an interactive project website to provide a vehicle for constant communication. The website had two main components. The first component provided the public with information about the project, project documents, frequently asked questions, and opportunities for participation. The second component included numerous interactive features including a survey and online version of the visioning tool used in the sub-regional workshops.

Public Survey

To increase the amount of qualitative and quantitative input from the public in the development of the Plan, the website included an online survey form. The primary goals of this effort were to receive input from the public that could serve as a starting point for

developing future scenarios for the NJTPA region and inform the NJTPA Board of Directors' discussions and decisions related to the RTP.

Specifically, the survey sought to elicit public opinions about:

- The direction in which northern New Jersey is headed in the next 25 years and whether those surveyed felt it is a positive direction.
- The driving forces that are shaping and will shape the region in the coming decades
- The public's priorities for the region's transportation system

The survey had 10 primary questions covering the topics above and six optional classification questions to understand the demographics and geographic spread of those responding to the survey. A Spanish version of the survey was also available for public use as well as a toll-free number for those who wished to provide their input but did not wish to complete the online survey.

To boost participation, the survey was promoted on the RTP Web site's home page and on a widely distributed RTP post card. In addition, the project team offered an incentive of two \$50 gift cards to be randomly selected from participants of the survey.

To understand current travel behavior, respondents were asked to indicate how they travel for several types of trips (work, school, shopping/errands, recreation). In each case single occupancy vehicle was the most common response. Walking took the next highest share for all but work trips, where train was the second most common response. However, 30 percent of respondents desired to do more travel (overall) by train. When asked about changes to personal travel habits in response to higher gas prices, trip chaining, driving less, and doing more shopping online were most common response for actions already taken. Buying a more fuel efficient vehicle, cutting back on long distance travel, and carpooling were the most common responses for the scenario in which gas prices rose to \$6 per gallon. The least viable options included moving, finding a new job, and commuting at non-peak hours.

The three most significant transportation challenges people see facing the NJTPA region are lack of choices in public transportation and destinations served (23 percent), increasing traffic/congestion delays (17 percent), and aging and deteriorating infrastructure (16 percent). Challenges outside of transportation included rising energy costs, the rising cost of living, and suburban sprawl. In terms of strategies for the NJTPA to pursue, there was support for expanding the public transit system, encouraging development around transit stations, and encouraging flex time and telecommuting. There was little support for capacity expansion (either new lane or new roads) or for tolling currently non-tolled roads. When asked about how to distribute funding, expanding and improving the transportation system as well as maintenance and preservation of infrastructure received the highest allocations. Finally, for options to increase transportation funding, receiving more from the federal government, public-private partnerships, increasing existing tolls, and increasing the gas tax were the most common responses, while new tolls, HOT lanes, and increasing transit fares received the most opposition.

Public Comment Period on Plan 2035

Following development of the final draft of Plan 2035, a 30-day public comment period was held from June 29 to July 28, 2009. The draft document was distributed to regional libraries and made available online at the NJTPA website. Comments were accepted via mail, fax and e-mail.

In addition, three public open houses were held during the comment period to provide the public with an opportunity to learn about and comment on Plan 2035. The meetings were held on July 9 in New Brunswick, Middlesex County; July 13 in Newark; and July 16 in Morristown.

Summary of Comments Received on the 2009 Update of the Regional Transportation Plan, the FY 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program, and Air Quality Conformity Determination and Responses

As the final step in the extensive public outreach and involvement conducted for Plan 2035, the draft document was the subject of a 30-day public comment period as required by federal law. The comment period also provided an opportunity for public review of the accompanying Air Quality Conformity Determination and the FY 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

During that time, the NJTPA held three public open house meetings in New Brunswick, Newark and Morristown. In addition, the NJTPA was invited to present the draft Plan 2035 at regular meetings of the Union County Transportation Advisory Board, the Monmouth County Planning Board and the Somerset County Planning Board.

This document contains summaries of comments received during the 30-day period, which ran from June 29 to July 28, 2009. The full text of comments submitted by e-mail and mail follows this summary.

In the final version of the plan, this information will be incorporated into Appendix A: Developing Plan 2035 – Public Outreach. They also will be provided as documentation for the TIP and Air Quality Conformity Determination.

The NJTPA thanks all commenters for their ongoing interest and participation in the regional planning process.

Commenter: Zoe Baldwin, New Jersey Coordinator, Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Summary: Ms. Baldwin submitted comments regarding the FY 2010-2013 TIP. Specific comments and responses follow.

1. Regarding highway capacity expansion, Ms. Baldwin writes that analysis of the TIP shows a “worrying trend” of increased investment in highway expansion in coming years. She notes that over the four years of the TIP, the agency will not meet its stated goal of keeping road expansion below 3 percent as outlined in the Regional Transportation Plan. She states the widening of Route 1 in Middlesex County “will likely exacerbate current congestion issues by further enabling and promoting the corridor’s current sprawling development patterns.”

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA appreciates the concerns of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign regarding limiting roadway expansion projects. As noted by the commenter, the NJTPA’s Regional Transportation Plan sets a goal of 2.5 percent of all funding going toward road expansion. While the draft TIP exceeds this goal, it should be noted that the goal is a long-range target and actual investments will fluctuate year to year.

Nevertheless, the NJTPA will continue to strive to limit road widening in keeping with its overall goal as outlined in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Regarding the widening of Route 1, the planning process overseen by the NJTPA must weigh a variety of competing factors in its funding decisions. It should be noted that in the case of Route 1, the segment being widened is a 2-lane segment with 3-lane segments to the north and south. Transit investments, including a possible BRT, are also being considered for the corridor.

2. The commenter notes that the NJTPA dedicates a majority of its capital spending to repair, rehabilitation, resurfacing, and replacement projects and stresses the critical nature of “sustained prioritization” of fix-it-first projects.

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA will continue to place a high priority on funding repair and maintenance projects in the region, as outlined in the TIP and Regional Transportation Plan.

3. The commenter notes that funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects has slipped in the new program. She states that the NJTPA “needs to prioritize the safety of our most vulnerable road users by adopting a Complete Streets policy, increasing funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects and targeting those funds to places with the highest number of pedestrian and bicyclist injuries and deaths.”

NJTPA Response: In addition to funding bicycle and pedestrian projects, the NJTPA seeks to improve safety for all travelers through other ongoing efforts, notably the Local Safety and High Risk Rural Road programs. The Local Safety program in particular has generated many relatively low-cost and easily implementable safety improvements. It should thus be noted that many projects or programs categorized as “safety” rather than “bicycle/pedestrian” have real, tangible benefits for nonmotorized travel.

4. Regarding transit issues, the commenter notes the inclusion of funding for Access to Region’s Core (ARC) and the Portal Bridge as laudable. However, Ms. Baldwin also states that funding of the Lackawanna Cutoff should be reconsidered as it is too expensive. The commenter states that development of a station at the proposed site in Andover “would have major impacts on the Highlands Preservation Area adjacent to Andover and would inject sprawl into one of the most beautifully rural parts of Highlands.”

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA appreciates the ongoing support of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign regarding the Access to the Region’s Core and Portal Bridge projects. Regarding the siting of the Andover station on the initial operating segment of the Lackawanna, this decision also involved considering competing considerations. In the end, the NJTPA Board found the station justified by the benefits of extending transit service to an underserved area, including the possible future restoration of service on the remaining segments of the Lackawanna cutoff. Potential negative land use impacts can be minimized through careful planning of the station and surrounding areas.

Commenter: Jennifer M. Coffey, Policy Director, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association

Summary: Ms. Coffey’s letter addresses several concerns about Chapter 7 (Land Use, Transportation & The Environment) and Appendix F (Mitigating Adverse Environmental Impacts of Transportation Improvements) of the draft Regional Transportation Plan. Specific comments and responses follow.

Comments on Chapter 7

1. The commenter states “a critical part of reversing sprawl is to provide for open spaces around compact development areas” and encourages the NJTPA to play a more direct role in farmland and open space preservation.

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA agrees that the preservation of open space is a critically important issue. At the bottom of p. 101, the plan states that “Compact development and redevelopment reduces development pressure on rural and exurban land, and helps preserve open space and protect the environment.” However, it is not within the NJTPA’s direct authority to preserve farmland, create recreational areas, or award funding for the preservation of natural land.

2. The commenter urges the NJTPA to “articulate the well-documented importance of wetlands” further in Plan 2035.

NJTPA Response: Wetlands provide irreplaceable environmental functions directly related to transportation investment, including the management of non-point source pollution as well as storm water management. The following sentence will be added to the final draft of the plan, on p. 103, where wetlands are discussed. **“Wetlands provide irreplaceable environmental functions directly related to transportation investment, including the management of non-point source pollution and storm water. Riparian buffers also play a key role in performing these and similar functions.”**

3. Regarding the link between smart growth and investment discussed on p. 106, it is stated that the NJTPA’s goals “should be expanded to identify the clearly-stated objectives for agriculture, open space, and conservation.”

NJTPA Response: While these areas fall outside the NJTPA’s immediate authority, the NJTPA does recognize their importance. To reflect this, the final draft will add the following language on p. 106, in the second paragraph, discussing NJTPA criteria for projects (new language in bold): “The NJTPA will work to improve current criteria as well as develop new criteria to respond to new technologies and development patterns. **Future re-examination of the NJTPA’s criteria would include consideration of various issues related to smart growth, including agriculture, open space preservation and conservation.**”

4. The commenter urges the NJTPA to include the Sourland Mountains region in the plan as a candidate for designation as a Special Resource Area, to be include in the plan’s discussion of Special Planning Areas (pp. 108-110).

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA will discuss the status of the Sourland Mountains region with relevant agencies and subregions. This will be done in connection with future updates of the plan.

5. The commenter states that the plan “references ‘riparian buffers’ but gives no details about the extremely important extent and nature of these 300 foot buffer zones for protecting clean water.”

NJTPA Response: As natural features that deal with non-point source pollution and storm water management, riparian buffers and their importance will be mentioned alongside wetlands on p. 103 as follows: **“Wetlands provide irreplaceable environmental functions directly related to transportation investment, including the management of non-point source pollution and storm water. Riparian buffers also play a key role in performing these and similar functions.”**

6. The commenter urges the plan to include discussion of the importance of trees in combating climate change.

NJTPA Response: This will be addressed by the inclusion of the following sentence in the “Complete Streets” sidebar on p. 107: **“Complete Streets can have a wide range of effects in a variety of ways. For instance, walkable communities lend themselves to extensive use of shade trees, which also play an important role in reducing the effects of climate change.”**

7. The commenter encourages NJTPA to take a more pro-active role in avoiding negative environmental effects “before any plans are brought to its attention by outside forces.”

NJTPA Response: As a Metropolitan Planning Organization, the NJTPA conducts broad scale regional transportation planning. As part of its ongoing planning work, the NJTPA conducts general screenings of regional project concepts for potential environmental issues, such as effects on wetlands, open space, etc. However, the detailed work done at the project level generally falls within the purview of other agencies and is highly regulated by both the state and federal governments.

Comments on Appendix F

8. The commenter states that the introductory paragraph “ignores the rural central New Jersey area.”

NJTPA Response: To address this, the first sentence of the paragraph will be changed in the final version of Appendix F. The bold type indicates new language:

The thirteen county NJTPA region is made up of diverse ecological resources from the lush environment of the Highlands to fragile wetlands **to the farmlands of rural Central New Jersey** to the unique Pinelands to the New Jersey Meadowlands to historic parks to the miles of exceptional coast line and barrier islands found on the Jersey shore.

9. The commenter urges the NJTPA to consider “delivering an environmentally-laudable construction project which goes above the minimal requirements” outlined in the appendix. In addition, the commenter asks that the focus not be on mitigating effects but avoiding them in the first place.

NJTPA Response: Appendix F is not meant to be an exhaustive listing of all possible environmental mitigation efforts. Examples are cited in what is intended to be a general discussion of environmental mitigation in the region. The NJTPA certainly supports appropriate use of other measures that go beyond what is required. However, often a needed transportation project will have environmental impacts that cannot readily be avoided completely and must be mitigated instead.

10. The commenter points to the discussion of environmental mitigation for potential impacts on Green Acres areas and states that disturbing such areas “should not be contemplated under any circumstances.”

NJTPA Response: While it is desirable to leave Green Acres areas undisturbed, it may – in certain cases – be unavoidable to do so when developing a needed transportation project. The mitigation approach outlined in Appendix F ensures that in the relatively few cases where a Green Acres property is disturbed or taken, it will be replaced with open space.

Commenter: Sue Dziamara, Planning Director, Hunterdon County

Summary: Ms. Dziamara expressed concerns about the employment projections for Hunterdon County through 2035. She stated that the projection of 52 percent growth in employment in the county by 2035 is “unreasonable and unsustainable.” She stated that the fact that 15 municipalities in the county are located within the Highlands region will affect growth potential. She also noted that the county’s other 11 municipalities have limited available sewer and water capacity and little opportunities to expand existing facilities. She asked that these numbers be revisited.

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA acknowledges Ms. Dziamara’s concerns about the total Hunterdon County employment numbers for 2035. The NJTPA based these numbers on an extrapolation of demographic forecasts for 2030 approved by the NJTPA Board of Trustees in 2005, with adjustments made for the latest available build-out numbers from the Highlands Council. The Board-approved 2030 employment total for Hunterdon County was 86,900. Earlier this year, following further analysis, the 2035 employment control total was set at 82,091. Therefore, the starting 2035 Hunterdon employment

number was more than 4,800 below the previously Board-endorsed number for 2030. Additional analysis and discussion with Hunterdon County led to a further reduction to 80,449. The NJTPA feels to reduce this number further would cause our projections to stray too far from those of neighboring metropolitan planning organization (MPO) the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC). The Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations look for reasonable consistency between the two MPOs for project analyses that cross MPO boundaries.

For these reasons, the county-wide total for employment will not be changed at this time. Please note that it is the NJTPA's understanding that other forecasts are being developed by the Highlands Council and other state agencies that can and will be used for future planning analyses.

Commenter: Gary Kazin, citizen

Summary of Comments: Mr. Kazin's comments about the Regional Transportation Plan addressed a series of questions and concerns regarding various transportation projects and services in the NJTPA region. These comments are quoted in detail below.

NJTPA Response: As a long-range planning document, Plan 2035 provides guidance for future transportation policies and projects over a 25-year period. As such, development of solutions in the near-term typically must be accomplished through the ongoing NJTPA planning process that includes corridor studies, project assessments, environmental reviews, annual project prioritization, among other elements. Some of the issues raised by Mr. Kazin in his comments will be considered as part of these on-going planning efforts. Specific comments were shared with NJ Transit and the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey as appropriate.

Responses to specific issues/questions:

1. Mr. Kazin inquired about the status of plans to add access ramps to and from Interstate 80 east and NJ 23 in either direction and from NJ 23 to I-80 West. He also stressed the need to deal with other partial interchanges, such as I-80 exits 48 and 52.

NJTPA Response: The links mentioned between Interstate 80 and NJ 23 are currently being developed. The work, which is in the Preliminary Design phase, is included in the Plan 2035 Project Index as a mid-term project. The Federal Highway Administration has encouraged Metropolitan Planning Organizations around the nation to examine and prioritize work on partial interchanges. Plan 2035 states the following: "Plan 2035 will seek to address partial interchanges on the region's interstate highway system." The plan goes on to discuss this issue in further detail (pp. 67-68). The NJTPA will work with the state to develop a comprehensive examination of issues surrounding these partial interchanges and to prioritize projects as appropriate.

2. Mr. Kazin stated "Reverse commuting by bus is a disaster." He discussed the long wait

period for buses to get into the Lincoln Tunnel from New Jersey during the afternoon rush hour and issues surrounding accessing the Port Authority Bus Terminal at that time. He suggested alternatives such as routing buses to the Secaucus rail station and cross-honoring tickets there or to the Weehawken ferry with a reduced fare.

NJTPA Response: Plan 2035’s discussion of expanding/improving the use of the Exclusive Bus Lane at the Lincoln Tunnel (p. 75-76) contains the following language: “Also, the issues of bus flows, staging and storage during the evening rush must be adequately addressed.” This could include issues of parking and arrival for inbound afternoon buses. Any expansion of the network of ramps to and from the tunnel faces severe physical constraints and high costs. The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey is working with NJ TRANSIT to examine potential improvements to the Exclusive Bus Lane.

3. Mr Kazin stated “Bus rapid transit is a bad joke unless the bus is removed from the highway stream of traffic.” He says that buses on the highway – even with preferential traffic light controls, running on the shoulder, etc. – would still not be able to match the speed of rail transit.

NJTPA Response: Plan 2035 calls for consideration of Bus Rapid Transit where feasible. Preferential treatments and use of shoulders, where appropriate, can improve bus travel. In general, improving bus transportation options can be done more quickly and affordably than creation of new rail service. The critical goal is insure that buses can travel at the posted speed limit on area highways and roads 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There are a number of ways to achieve this, which will benefit not only travelers to New York City, but also intrastate travelers as well.

4. Mr. Kazin expressed concerns about connectivity of various bus lines serving Denville, Bloomfield, Parsippany and other areas. He noted that there is no direct bus service from Newark to Denville, Rockaway, Dover and other points west, only “iffy connections” to private buses.

NJTPA Response: The Northwest New Jersey Bus Study, which is identified in the plan, is examining how to improve bus transportation in a large part of northwestern New Jersey, including a section of Morris County. This study, together with the Greater Newark Bus Study, which is examining improvements in Essex County and is included in the plan as well, will both provide recommendations for improvements based upon travel markets and opportunities for improved bus service in this part of the region. These studies should be concluding around the end of 2009.

5. Mr. Kazin stated his desire to see a cycling route between Newark and Jersey City. He noted that the existing roads lack shoulders and sidewalks and do not accommodate bicycles.

NJTPA Response: Plan 2035 calls for completion of the New Jersey portion of the East Coast Greenway, a 3,000-mile planned bicycle route connecting various on-road and off-

road facilities to link 25 major cities from Maine to Florida. Connecting Newark and Jersey City with a designated bicycle route is part of this effort.

6. Mr. Kazin expressed his opposition to the public having to provide highway rest areas for truckers. He stated the existing ones are “abused” by being turned into “free motels” for truckers.

NJTPA Response: Adequate parking and rest areas for truckers are important to the region’s transportation safety, as well as its economy. Under federal regulations, truck drivers must rest for a certain number of hours each day. Well-rested drivers parking in off-road facilities are far safer than drivers parking on the shoulders of highways, as often occurs, largely due to a lack of truck parking spaces and rest areas in the region. Plan 2035 encourages the development of appropriate facilities of this sort to improve safety, address goods movement issues and help the region compete economically.

7. Mr. Kazin called for stricter enforcement of traffic laws, especially with regard to truckers and motorists blocking crosswalks with their cars.

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA fully supports rigorous enforcement of traffic laws. However, these issues fall outside the purview of Plan 2035 and the NJTPA.

8. Mr. Kazin said the state has stalled for too long in increasing the motor fuel tax. He called for a “gradual phase-in” of a fuel tax increase (a one or two cent increase per month).

NJTPA Response: Plan 2035 details the additional funding needed to meet the transportation needs of the region. It outlines various revenue options that could be used to generate that funding. Ultimately, as the plan states, it will be up to the people of the region and state, as well as their elected officials, to determine how this revenue will be collected. The gas tax is one of several options discussed in Plan 2035.

9. Mr. Kazin stated that the Mass Transit Tunnel/ARC project will not provide redundancy for the existing tunnels because there will not be a connection to the existing Penn Station. He said the new lines cannot be used for Amtrak, whose trains go to Sunnyside Yard or Boston.

NJTPA Response: It is important to note that the Mass Transit Tunnel or ARC project will effectively double NJ Transit’s rail capacity into midtown Manhattan, allowing for more effective use of existing facilities as well. The project’s current configuration has been deemed a realistic and achievable option for expanding NJ Transit service between the NJTPA region and midtown Manhattan. It also should be noted that Amtrak does operate a number of trains that do not go through to New England, such as the Keystone Service from Harrisburg, which can use the rail capacity improvements being built through the ARC initiative.

Commenter: Stephen Kelmer, resident of Newton

Summary: Mr. Kelmer feels that proposed road improvements on Newton-Sparta Road in Newton will not reduce traffic and will worsen safety for pedestrians, including school children. He states that an alternate route is needed and that a “viable project is possible with an absolute minimum of disturbance to the residents of Newton.” This project is included in the TIP and Plan 2035.

NJTPA Response: This comment was forwarded to Sussex County for its review, as the county is the project sponsor. Newton-Sparta Road improvements are intended to address Route 15 corridor traffic mobility issues, which will help improve safety by better addressing traffic flow. Sussex County transportation planning staff has reviewed this comment and has engaged in discussions with Mr. Kelmer about his concerns regarding this project and Route 206 traffic concerns. The county will continue to examine these issues in future transportation planning efforts.

Commenter: Michael Lynch, citizen

Summary: In his comments on the Regional Transportation Plan, Mr. Lynch expressed concern that the extension of the Raritan Valley Line to Phillipsburg has been deferred. He strongly favors the project and wants to know why it is not moving forward more quickly.

NJTPA Response: Regarding the extension of the Raritan Valley Line to Phillipsburg, this concept is being studied by NJ Transit. It is included in Plan 2035. Currently, NJ Transit is finalizing a report that will include a preliminary cost-benefit analysis and project cost estimate. The final report resulting from this concept development effort is expected to be released later this year. A study on continuing the line into Pennsylvania is beginning this summer.

It is important to note that this project is not being deferred. Rather, it is being advanced through the transit planning and environmental review process. In order for any project to be eligible for Federal funding from USDOT, and especially for public transit projects to receive funds from the Federal Transit Administration, it must be progressed through a specific set of steps. At this time, since funding is limited, the region and state must follow these procedures in order to pursue federal funding for this project should it become available.

Commenter: Jonathan Peters, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Finance, The College of Staten Island

Summary: Professor Peters states that the Regional Transportation Plan fails to include mass transit options on the Goethals or Outerbridge Crossing corridors. He notes that this is a particular hardship on communities of concern from an Environmental Justice

perspective, as communities surrounding both ends of the bridge have significant numbers of low-income citizens, minority populations, disabled citizens and seniors. He states that the NJTPA and “their transit system members” are thus in violation of Presidential Executive Order 12898 of 1994 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

NJTPA Response: Plan 2035 seeks to address a range of transportation needs in the region, including those of the communities of concern mentioned in this comment. While no specific transit service has yet been proposed for the corridors in question, Plan 2035 does recognize that there may be a need for such service.

In its discussion of the planned Goethals Bridge replacement (p. 65), Plan 2035 notes the following:

"The new bridge would have additional lanes and shoulders to bring this bridge up to current safety standards, as well as a bicycle and pedestrian walkway and a central area wide enough to accommodate potential future transit service."

The draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Goethals Bridge replacement discusses the need to include a facility for potential transit use in further detail.

Further research into the travel markets for transit in these corridors would need to be conducted before any recommendations could be made for transit service.

Commenter: Tim Sevenser, Morris County resident

Summary of Comments: Mr. Sevenser attended the July 16 public meeting in Morris County. He discussed his concerns about Plan 2035 and the level of transit service in the region, as well as climate change and peak oil. He later submitted written comments reiterating these ideas. In addition, he specifically addressed several concerns.

Responses to specific issues/questions:

1. There should be an extensive increase in passenger rail service, especially during off-peak hours. He also calls for the elimination of all projects classified as “road enhancements.”

NJTPA Response: Regarding increased passenger rail service, it is important to keep in mind that federal funding generally cannot be used to fund transit operations. Combined with limited financial resources at the state level, this makes significant increases in service problematic. For instance, in the current fiscal year, NJ Transit’s operating budget has been reduced by 16 percent.

Regarding road projects, the NJTPA is aware that there is a strong desire for new and improved transit throughout the region, as outlined in Plan 2035. Indeed, Plan 2035 does call for expansion of rail transit, as well as other modes. Nevertheless, as the entity

responsible for planning and programming all federal transportation investments in the region, the NJTPA seeks to maintain the region's roadways and enhance the service they provide to the traveling public.

2. Mr. Sevenser calls for more frequent shuttle service, noting that "every train station should have regular shuttle services to help people get to downtowns or offices."

NJTPA Response: Plan 2035 calls for expanded use of such shuttles wherever viable. In the final draft, this language has been amplified as follows, with the bold text being added to the existing discussion on p. 77.

Support Local Shuttles - Community shuttles play an important role in providing access to the transit system. They can be an important component of Transit Oriented Development and improved transit in the suburbs. Transportation Management Associations (discussed below) have been critical in providing such shuttles. The NJTPA in cooperation with NJ Transit provides TMAs with federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to support shuttles. In 2007, federal CMAQ funding was provided through the NJTPA to seven new and five on-going shuttle routes. **Shuttles are playing an increasingly important role in providing a variety of services including a "last mile" transit connection. However, funding for these shuttles needs to be established on a more permanent basis so that vital services are not disrupted or abandoned when operating funds are exhausted from existing sources such as CMAQ (currently the CMAQ program allows for funding operating expenses for a maximum of three years). Funding allocations to these local shuttles should be expanded if the region is to continue its support for these connecting services. Funding for these shuttles should be based on performance, and performance measures should be identified to gauge their success.**

3. Mr. Sevenser says there needs to be expanded parking at the region's rail stations to encourage transit use.

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA agrees with this approach. A stated goal of Plan 2035 is to "Selectively expand rail station parking and explore shared car options." This is further detailed on page 77, which discusses the need for parking at "regional hub stations" and "expanded parking facilities serving multiple towns with significant transit commuters." NJ TRANSIT has had and will continue to look at parking needs programmatically, along with the issue of additional shuttle buses and improved pedestrian and bicycle access to stations, in order to find sites for and increase parking throughout its bus and rail network. Siting parking in northern New Jersey is difficult and costly, but NJ TRANSIT is always seeking opportunities to improve access to the network. It should be noted that in recent years NJ TRANSIT has added a substantial number of additional parking spaces where it was feasible and funding existed. Examples of such sites include Montclair State University, Wayne, Hamilton and Route 17 in Ramsey.

4. Mr. Sevener would like to see “local-express service.” He states that commuters would be willing to transfer to another train to speed their commute rather than take a longer “one-seat ride.”

NJTPA Response: NJ Transit is working constantly to improve its service and operations through a feasible combination of local and express service. The main challenge NJ TRANSIT faces is how to address increasing rail service in a time when operating funding support is declining. The second challenge is related to rail network capacity. Following World War II, New Jersey saw a 50 percent reduction in the capacity of its rail network. This reduction continued into the early 1980s. NJ TRANSIT is now faced with a major challenge regarding how much of that lost capacity can be restored.

In cases where there is a two-track railroad with trains using both tracks to operate a bi-directional rail service, operating express trains is not possible given the headways between trains in the peak direction on many of NJ Transit’s lines. Where a third track does exist, such as on the Morris and Essex Line’s inner section, it is possible to offer some express service. Analysis is progressing to determine the answer to this rail capacity question on NJ Transit’s primary services. Progress has been made. For example, passing tracks were added recently to the Pascack Valley Line to allow for some reverse service, which in turn led to an improvement in the total scheduled service. Once such potential improvements are identified, funding will still have to be found to make them a reality.

5. Mr. Sevener calls for restoration of existing rail lines “wherever possible.” He states that funding that is being used to expand the New Jersey Turnpike and Garden State Parkway should be redirected to transit projects.

NJTPA Response: As Mr. Sevener notes in his full comments, the NJTPA has called for preservation of all existing transportation rights-of-way in the region. Restorations must be considered on a case-by-case basis, with careful evaluations based on federal standards.

Regarding the use of the revenue of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, it should be noted that these funds do not fall under the control of the NJTPA. It also should be noted that the Turnpike Authority is contributing a significant amount of funding to the Mass Transit Tunnel or ARC project. The challenges of restoring pre-existing rail lines is discussed in the response to comment 4 above.

Commenter: Eileen Swan, Executive Director, Highlands Council

Summary: Ms. Swan noted that Plan 2035 “is consistent with the Regional Master Plan (RMP) Goals, Policies, Objectives and the Future Land Use, Transportation and Air Quality Programs.”

In addition, the Highlands Council reviewed the draft FY 2010 Transportation Improvement Program and stated the following: “The Council recognizes that these projects have been in development for some time, some or all of the funding may be assigned, and they are locally and regionally important and advancing to the next steps in the project development process. The letter also notes that the Highlands Council will continue to work with the NJTPA and other agencies on specific project details where needed.

Finally, the Highlands Council acknowledged that the results of the Air Quality Conformity Determination are consistent with the RMP.

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA thanks the Highlands Council for its comments and looks forward to working with the Council moving forward.

Commenter: Art White, Ridgewood resident

Summary: In his comments on Plan 2035, Mr. White recommended creation or improvement of several rail and bus routes in the NJTPA region. He also made several detailed suggestions regarding particular projects and services.

NJTPA Response: The NJTPA thanks Mr. White for his thorough review of transit in the region and his suggestions on how it might be improved. Mr. White’s detailed comments will be considered in the ongoing planning activities of the NJTPA and its planning partners, such as the Northwest New Jersey Bus Study, the Northeast New Jersey Metro Mobility Study and others. Copies of his suggestions regarding rail and bus services have been forwarded to NJ Transit for their consideration.



July 24, 2009

David Behrend
 North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
 1 Newark Center
 17th Floor
 Newark, NJ 07102

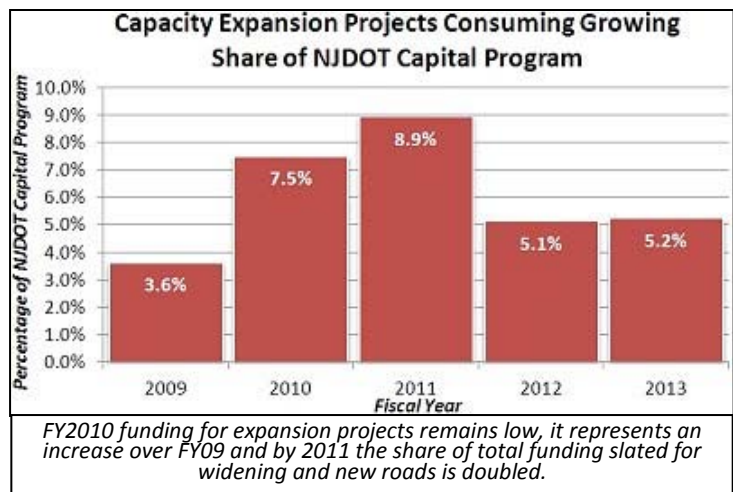
RE: NJTPA Fiscal Year 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program

Dear Mr. Behrend,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NJTPA Fiscal Year 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program. Below please find the Tri-State Transportation Campaign’s analysis of the proposed program.

Highway Capacity Expansion

Analysis of the NJTPA’s Fiscal Year 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) shows a continued commitment to maintenance and repair, but continues a worrying trend of increased investment in highway expansion in coming years. All but one of the major widenings statewide fall within NJTPA’s jurisdiction, and the agency will not meet its stated goal of keeping road expansion below 3%¹ of the overall capital program. While the agency’s Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) sets smart spending goals and heavily emphasizes fix-it-first, highway capacity expansions in the TIP almost double by fiscal year 2011.



New Jersey remains a national model for progressive transportation policy and investments, but upcoming increases in spending on capacity expansions threaten this reputation and work against state greenhouse gas goals and spending priorities set in the RTP. For example, the nine-mile widening of Route 1 between Forrestral

¹ Plan 2035. North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority. p68

Road and Aaron Road will likely exacerbate current congestion issues by further enabling and promoting the corridor's current sprawling development patterns. Although the over-arching Regional Growth Strategy for the corridor is innovative, the only portion to materialize formally has been the widening. Much of the project area currently supports three lanes of traffic in each direction, and runs parallel to a section of the NJ Turnpike slated for its own major widening.

Fix-it-first

Although NJTPA dedicates a majority of its capital spending to repair, rehabilitation, resurfacing, and replacement projects, sustained prioritization of “fix-it-first” projects is critical, given the state's pressing infrastructure needs and financial constraints. The average bridge in the Garden State is 50 years old, 44% are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete², and its roads are in the worst state of repair in the nation.³ Paying for existing infrastructure is difficult enough; rendering expansion of the network impractical and unsustainable.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects has slipped in the new program, while fatalities for both modes have increased. Although the state has made bicycle and pedestrian safety a greater priority, more work remains. According to analysis of federal data by the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, New Jersey ranks second worst in the nation in terms of the share of total traffic deaths comprised of bicyclists and pedestrians. The agency needs to prioritize the safety of our most vulnerable road users by adopting a Complete Streets policy, increasing funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects and targeting those funds to places with the highest number of pedestrian and bicyclist injuries and deaths.

Transit Projects

The inclusion of funding for Access to Region's Core (ARC) and the Portal Bridge is a boon not only for our rail network, but for our roadways as well. The ARC tunnel will remove thousands of cars from our roadways, easing congestion for those who remain in their cars. Similarly, the Portal Bridge improvements will remove a major bottleneck from the North East Corridor, easing train commutes and improving on-time performance.

Given the severe, statewide structural deficit, NJTPA should reconsider funding projects such as the Lackawanna Cutoff. \$37million is a high price to pay for a small segment of rail and a station that will not provide weekend service, costing the state \$457,000 annually that could be spent on projects that enhance rail service in denser areas. The site of the proposed Andover station is on a narrow, winding rural road, immediately across the road from 2008's highest ranked federal Forest Legacy Project Area. Development at the proposed site would have major impacts on the Highlands Preservation Area adjacent to Andover and would inject sprawl into one of the most beautifully rural parts of Highlands.

The Tri-State Transportation Campaign is pleased to see a significant investment in new buses in the TIP and believes the state should continue to expand its investment in the bus system in

² *Plan 2035*. North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority. P32


³ *Rough Roads Ahead, Fix Them Now or Pay for It Later*, The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. June 2009

coming years. In particular, bus rapid transit (BRT) and elements of BRT can provide substantial improvements in bus service with more flexibility and at a fraction of the cost of rail expansion.

Conclusion

The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority has set admirable goals through its Regional Transportation Plan that will put NJ on track to a balanced, equitable and sustainable transportation network, however, projects funded in the out-years of the TIP threaten to set the agency back to old fashioned, highway focused priorities. Tri-State urges NJTPA to go beyond the rhetoric of policy documents and take proactive steps to reaffirm its commitment to fix-it-first policies by funding smart and sustainable projects.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zoe Baldwin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Zoe Baldwin
NJ Advocate



JUL 24 2009

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Your water. Your environment. Your voice.

July 13, 2009

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
1 Newark Center, 17th Floor
Newark, New Jersey 07102

Attn: David Behrend

Dear Mr. Behrend:

Please consider the following comments regarding the NJTPA Draft Plan 2035. We are addressing Chapter 7 – Transportation, Land Use and The Environment—and Appendix F, “Mitigating Adverse Environmental Impacts of Transportation Improvements.”

Since 1949, the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association has been working to protect and preserve clean water and the natural environment in central New Jersey. Our watershed includes parts of Somerset, Middlesex, Monmouth, Hunterdon and Mercer Counties, and twenty-six (26) municipalities within these counties, totaling 265-square miles. We are dedicated to protecting and restoring the integrity of the natural ecosystems drained by the Stony Brook and the Millstone River.

Our focus in providing these comments is to request that your 2035 Plan stress the importance of protecting the natural environment, working in concert with your objectives for improving transportation and the quality of life for residents of this region. We understand your focus on the urbanized transportation network, and the improvements sought for safety reasons. However, we feel that more attention should be directed to land use issues that affect the environment.

The counties within our watershed which are located within your jurisdiction are primarily rural and agricultural with much preserved open space. We hope that you will strengthen the sections of your Plan 2035 that deal with protecting the environment, ensuring a high quality of clean water, providing funding and support for open space, and recognizing more of the critical environmental features under your Authority, such as the Delaware and Raritan Canal and the Sourland Mountains.

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Chapter 7: Transportation, Land Use & The Environment -- Pages 101-114

We applaud your initiatives in Chapter 7 to reverse sprawl by funneling money for “compact development in areas already served by transportation infrastructure” (page 101). Your goals of redeveloping urbanized areas, redeveloping brownfields, providing transit-oriented development and developing a complete streets program are on target. *However, a critical part of reversing sprawl is to provide for open spaces around compact development areas.* This open space objective can be achieved through farmland preservation, recreational areas, money for preserving natural lands, transfer of development rights and other creative solutions. The objectives of the Smart Growth principles you refer to, will also provide energy efficiency, healthier living, improved social capital and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is also preparing its Plan 2035 and has recognized the importance of increased environmental protection and land preservation, with financial support, as necessary tools to achieve Smart Growth principles.

On page 103, you recognize an “increased realization of the importance of wetlands and open space.” Wetlands and open space are vital to the health of the environment. These lands filter pollutants to provide clean water, and maintain habitat for a diversity of species of plants and animals. We urge you to articulate the well-documented importance of wetlands in Chapter 7.

Similarly, additional language strengthening environmental protections and the goals of the State Plan, could be added on page 106 of the Plan. The section on “Linking Investment with Smart Growth,” first paragraph, should contain a goal consistent with Smart Growth principles to “identify(ies) areas for growth, limited growth, agriculture, open space, conservation and other appropriate designations as required by the State Planning Act.” Your vision contains the goals for growth and limited growth, but should be expanded to identify the clearly-stated objectives for agriculture, open space, and conservation.

Page 108 of Chapter 7 rightly addresses the three (3) existing Special Planning Areas in the State. However, the State has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars studying the Sourland Mountains region in Central New Jersey for possible designation as a Special Resource Area. This effort should be favorably noted as a possible Special Planning Area.

In addition, the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission recently adopted regulations that will require 300- foot buffers for the length of the Canal because it is a drinking water source for hundreds of thousands of residents. There are many other waterways within your Authority that have 300-foot buffers. The 2035 Plan references “riparian buffers” but gives no details about the extremely important extent and nature of these 300-foot buffer zones for protecting clean water. The New Jersey Administrative Code, Section 7:9B list

the Categories for New Jersey waterways. NJAC 7:45 provides the updates to the buffer zone for the Delaware and Raritan Canal.

The sections in the Plan dealing with climate change could also provide information about the importance of having street shade trees and undisturbed forests to lessen the effects of global warming. The Plan details some negative effects on climate of increasing automobile traffic, but a necessary part of reducing global warming is to increase and maintain trees in urban, suburban and rural communities.

Page 112 suggests that the process used by NJTPA for its traffic projects will control the negative effects of construction through the use of a variety of mitigation and adaptation strategies. The examples of these mitigation processes seem to all be imposed/ initiated by groups outside the NJTPA. We suggest that NJTPA take a pro-active approach and use its own planning process to avoid negative environmental effects before any plans are brought to its attention by outside forces. By following this process, the cost of planning and construction will be greatly reduced. In addition, this is compatible with NJTPA's overarching objective to redevelop and reconstruct, instead of constructing new roads.

Page 113 lists several other environmental considerations that must be taken into account in the planning process.

Appendix F: "Mitigating Adverse Environmental Impacts of Transportation Improvements –pages 1-5

The first paragraph of this Appendix (page 2) ignores the rural central New Jersey area in our watershed, including parts of four (4) counties. As stated above, there are many important areas that deserve recognition and protection in order to provide a healthy environmental and high quality of life to residents. The focus of this explanation is on mitigating adverse effects to the environment instead of avoiding them.

Although there is a list of agencies and rules which must be complied with for legal purposes, the NJTPA and its residents would be better served by delivering an environmentally-laudable construction project which goes above the minimal requirements. Using model requirements, such as a 300-foot stream buffer, even if not required, would greatly improve support for your projects. Reducing tree-cutting to the absolute minimum, and requiring tree replanting in urban and rural areas are other examples of pro-active measures that can be taken to protect the environment. These measures will reduce public opposition, and thus reduce time and costs for a project. "Payment into a fund dedicated (to) the purchase of upland forest may be allowed," as stated on page 4 is insufficient when addressing the myriad environmental problems that will be created by the destruction of forested areas. This approach is also

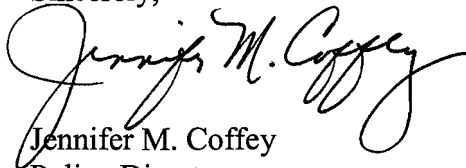
inconsistent with the Plan's statement to concentrate on redevelopment and reconstruction and not build new roads.

The measures to be addressed for "Water Quality Management Panning Areas" and "Freshwater Wetlands, Lakes, Rivers and Streams" (page 3) focus on wetlands, open water features and mitigation techniques . Environmental improvement, clean water and clean air require more than mitigation of adverse effects. We expect that you will consider avoidance of environmentally-sensitive areas, tree planting, recognizing expanded buffer zones, and other measures that are not now mandated, and will have a lasting impact on the quality of life for our residents.

The discussion of Designated "Green Acres" Areas on page 4 as possible locations for roadways flies in the face of the public commitment and investment in land by Green Acres and the citizens of New Jersey. As vacant land disappears in New Jersey, it is too easy to use already-preserved lands for new roadways. This should not be contemplated under any circumstances. Mitigation through replacing different lands has traditionally resulted in more valuable land being mitigated with less valuable land that is constrained. The citizens of New Jersey will be short-changed if this approach is used.

We urge you to consider these changes to the Plan 2035 to protect the natural resources in our watershed and in our beautiful State. We hope to retain the wonderful qualities that make the counties in our watershed rural, agriculturally-friendly, and environmentally healthy. Thank you very much for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Jennifer M. Coffey
Policy Director



HUNTERDON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Hunterdon County Administration Building #1
Route 12 County Complex, PO Box 2900
Flemington, New Jersey 08822-2900
Telephone: 908-788-1490 Fax: 908-788-1662
planning@co.hunterdon.nj.us
<http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/planning.htm>
Sue Dziamara, AICP/PP, Director

Date: July 28, 2009

To: Mary K. Murphy, Executive Director
North Jersey Transportation Authority

From: Sue Dziamara, Planning Director
Hunterdon County

Subject: Population and Employment projections contained in Plan 2035

On behalf of Hunterdon County, I have examined the Draft Plan 2035 and want to congratulate the staff at NJTPA on completing this very comprehensive transportation vision for the sub-region. With the changing economic and demographic conditions within the State, I can appreciate the time and work that went into producing this document.

As Plan 2035 will be used as a source of information in the coming years, I feel I must formally comment on one specific area of the Plan, *Chapter 3 Context & Trends, Employment Projections*. While we were able to work with NJTPA staff to modify some of the employment numbers, we continue to believe the overall projections do not reflect future development potential within Hunterdon County.

Population and Household projections reflect about a 15% growth between 2005 and 2035, while Employment projections reflect an increase of 52% between 2005 and 2035. We anticipate most employment growth within the County will be people working from home. Hunterdon County has 15 municipalities located within the Highlands Region, which will certainly affect the employment growth potential. The remaining 11 municipalities have limited available sewer and water capacity and little opportunities to expand existing facilities. I understand the overall NYMTC employment projections were reduced and overall NJTPA County projections are lower than earlier forecasts, however, I continue to believe that a 52% growth in employment within Hunterdon County is unreasonable and unsustainable.

These projections will be used to guide future decisions regarding Hunterdon County and will have far-reaching repercussions. As such, I would request that the employment projections for Hunterdon County be revisited. I am available to meet with NJTPA staff and discuss this important issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Plan 2035.

cc: Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Cynthia J. Yard, County Administrator
Lois Goldman, director, Regional Planning
David Behrend, Manager Public Relations
Robert Diego, Principal Planner

Behrend, David

From: Gary R. Kazin [gkazin@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2009 10:52 PM
To: Behrend, David
Subject: Comments on Plan 2035

I have a few questions about things that were supposed to happen but I have seen no signs of them being done.

- During design of the I 80/US 46/NJ 23 'spaghetti bowl' reconstruction project, I attended a public meeting. One thing that was promised was addition of access ramps to and from I 80 so that it would be possible to go from I 80 east to NJ 23 (in either direction) and from NJ 23 south to I 80 west. Is anything being done on this?
- Addition of other missing ramps to partial interchanges, such as I 80 exits 48 and 52.

Reverse commuting by bus is a disaster. It's common, even now, to spend a half hour or more getting into the Lincoln Tunnel from the west at 5 pm. It's also common to be sent onto the '5 o'clock runaround' after leaving the tunnel - the bus is sent down to 34th Street and then returns to the PABT via Eighth or Tenth Avenue - eventually. I have experienced this several times when riding Lakeland Bus from Denville; once I got off the bus at 34th St and Ninth Avenue, the other at 38th St and Dyer Ave. There HAS to be a better way to handle this - perhaps routing the bus to the NJT Rail Secaucus station, with cross-honoring of tickets? Or to the Weehawken ferry, with a reduced fare? I expect that getting out of the PABT in the morning can be just as bad.

Bus rapid transit is a bad joke unless the bus is removed from the highway stream of traffic. If it is on the highway, even with preferential traffic light controls, running on the shoulder, etc, it will still be unable to make the speed that rail transit can achieve - and it will still have to deal with the Lincoln Tunnel if it's going to New York.

Connectivity can be a problem. I make a monthly trip from Denville to Bloomfield in the evening. The 29 bus barely makes it into Parsippany, and not when I'd go, and the westbound bus doesn't come up far enough when I'd return (after 9 pm). The 79 bus operates only in the peak direction and doesn't stop in Bloomfield. There's no direct bus service from Newark to Denville, Rockaway, or Dover (or points west), only iffy connections between NJT and Lakeland at extra cost. I sometimes make this trip by bicycle. US 46 in Denville, Parsippany and Montville is ok, but Bloomfield Ave in the Caldwelles, Verona, and Montclair can be dangerous - and the worst danger comes from the 29 bus drivers! It would also be nice if it were possible to cycle between Newark and Jersey City; the existing roads lack shoulders and sidewalks and have no space for bikes. It is really annoying to see the state erect traffic lights with 'WALK - DON'T WALK' signals where there are no sidewalks or shoulders for the pedestrians!

Why does the public have to provide highway rest areas for truckers? The existing ones are often abused, turned into free motels, with the truck being parked for many hours while the driver attempts to sleep (often unsuccessfully) in the cab. Some have been used for sexual activities. Further, some of the existing ones have had their facilities reduced due to state funding problems - there's one south of Morristown on I 287. Of course, it's worse when the driver simply goes to the legal limit and then parks on the side of a highway.

We need more enforcement of existing traffic laws, such as keeping right - it's rare to see a trucker driving in the right lane - and maintaining proper following distance, as well as observing speed limits. Truckers can be among the rudest drivers on the highway, particularly the trash transfer trucks. Many motorists stop IN crosswalks, blocking them

and forcing pedestrians to walk around their cars. Enforcement of existing laws would reduce the number of accidents involving trucks and also their severity.

Our state legislature has stalled far too long on increasing the motor fuel tax. The transportation trust fund is 'running on empty' and needs a boost; the best place is by raising the fuel tax. Many people have more economical cars and use less fuel to travel greater distances than in the past. This and the erosion of the value of the tax due to inflation indicate the need to raise this tax by 10 or 15 cents per gallon. With the high volatility of fuel prices in recent years, a gradual phase-in (raise the tax one or two cents every month) would never be noticed.

The ARC tunnels (now called the MASS TRANSIT TUNNELS in NJ Transit's latest press releases do NOT provide redundancy for the existing 100 year old tunnels because there is no connection to the existing Penn Station. They cannot be used for Amtrak, whose trains go to Sunnyside Yard or Boston.

Gary R. Kazin
Rockaway, New Jersey

The following copy of a comment submitted to NJDOT was provided via e-mail by Stephen Kelmer of Newton, Sussex County.

Thank You For Filling Out This Form

Below is what you submitted to correspondence.unit@dot.state.nj.us on Wednesday, July 15, 2009 at 13:25:15

affiliation_code: WEBMAIL.DOT

prefix: Mr.

first: Stephen

mi: J

last: Kelmer

address1: 21 Diller Avenue

city: Newton

county: 19

state: NJ

zip: 07860

country: US

comment: Regarding Sparta Avenue in the Town of Newton: The proposed road improvements will not provide any significant reduction in traffic and will only reduce safety for pedestrians, especially school children, and residents. A look at the broader picture shows a serious need for an alternate route in this area. A viable project is possible with an absolute minimum of disturbance to residents of Newton.
Sincerely, Steve Kelmer

image.x: 33

image.y: 16

Behrend, David

From: Michael Lynch [mjlynch64@hotmail.com]

Sent: Friday, July 03, 2009 6:32 PM

To: Behrend, David

Subject: Comment on transportation plan

As a driver on route 78 from exit 3 to exit 29 (if I can stand the traffic) each day, I became interested in monitoring the progress on the Raritan Valley rail extension to Phillipsburg a few years ago. I was very happy to see the study awarded to Systra and have been eagerly awaiting the results. Any attempts I have made to obtain updated info on this study have gone unanswered. While I see "other" projects go thru the evaluation, scoring and ultimately development phases, it continues to baffle me that the extension of rail service, on an existing right of way that for the most part is in excellent condition, continues to be deferred. Extending service to Hampton, if a park and ride were included, would be one step in the right direction. But, would NOT solve the major problem on route 78. Out of state commuters. Extending to Bloomsbury, with a park and ride, would provide a viable option for the out of state commuters. Phillipsburg would be ideal, but I am aware of the issues with the Conrail realignment of the existing track, the bridge over 78, and the station location in Phillipsburg. Why does this project continue being deferred!?

Thanks,

Michael Lynch

Behrend, David

From: Jonathan Peters [jonathan.peters@csi.cuny.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2009 11:57 PM
To: Behrend, David
Subject: North Jersey Transportation Draft Plan 2035

Comment: NJTPA Plan 2035

From: Jonathan Peters, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Finance
The College of Staten Island

Date: July 28, 2009

Re: Southern Corridor of NY - Central New Jersey Environmental Justice Issues

The proposed Regional Transportation plan fails to include mass transit options on the Goethals or Outerbridge Crossing Corridors. The corridors are currently served only by private automobile or truck transportation and this deprives citizens who lack vehicles the option of using these corridors. In particular, this is a particular hardship on communities of concern from a Environmental Justice perspective. In fact, the bulk of the communities surround the Goethals Bridge and Outerbridge Crossing on both sides of the waterway are communities of concern with respect to:

- 1) Low Income Citizens
- 2) Minority Population
- 3) Disabled Citizens
- 4) Senior Citizens

The current proposed Regional Transportation Plan proposes no mass transit improvements for these groups in these corridors. The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority and their transit system members are not providing mobility options in these corridors in direct violation of Executive Order of the President 12898 of 1994 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Think green before you print this email.

Behrend, David

From: orb@optonline.net
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2009 9:24 AM
To: Behrend, David
Cc: orbit7er+train@gmail.com; orbit7er@gmail.com; mathwals@gmail.com; lresto@att.net; lresto@optonline.net
Subject: Plan 2035 comments

To the esteemed members of the NJTPA,

I recently attended the public meeting on Plan 2035 in Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morristown in which

I made extensive comments on Plan 2035 for North Jersey Transportation.

Although Plan 2035 and the presentation voices laudable aims for North Jersey transit 25 years from now

when one reads the bottom line it is totally and woefully inadequate to resolving the intertwined problems of

climate change, peak oil and economic sustainability.

In 25 years from 1945 to 1970 our existing rail system and mass transit systems were essentially gutted in favor of hugely expensive landscape wasting highways and suburban sprawl. 1970 was the last year in which you could actually take a long distance train from Dover in Morris County to Buffalo.

In the next 25 years we need to turn this back around and restore rail and mass transit - not just talk about it but pay the money and do it. Since cars and trucks account for 70% of oil usage and 30% of greenhouse emissions this is critical for avoiding climate change and coping with our dwindling oil supplies.

And yet Plan 2035 calls for an actual INCREASE in cars and mileage in which auto trips increase from 17.2 million to 19.8 million and VMT per capita only decreases from 21.5 to 21.4.

Transit trips are still planned to be only 1.5 million.

This is after 25 years of supposedly investing in mass transit??

Yet recent history shows another story.

Since the \$4 gas prices of 2008 followed by the economic crash mileage and gas demand have already dropped by 5.8% in one year! Transit ridership has been soaring despite service cuts across NJ Transit, in particular 30% cuts in Morris/Essex Hoboken weekday service in May, 2008 and 50% cuts in Hoboken weekend service in 2006.

The number one priority of any transit plan which intends to seriously deal with climate change and peak oil is to INCREASE rail service not decrease it.

We are already investing huge amounts of capital to do positive things like build the Mt Arlington train station but then turn around and cut service to Dover which provides an additional option for the new riders from Mt Arlington to travel off-peak.

Imagine what could be done if NJ Transit service was increased and not cut.

In 25 years there is no reason not to reconstitute the transit options which were destroyed in the 25 years after WW II so that auto trips are cut in half, transit and non-motorized trips account for well over half of travel in North Jersey.

We already have trains and existing tracks which criss-cross our region.

Here is how to achieve this goal:

1) Run the trains we have - it is ludicrous that we are spending many millions to maintain rail lines which are barely used off-peak and often not used at all on the weekends.

Out of NJ Transit's budget of \$1.8 Billion only \$300 million goes to actually operate the trains and

buses for the whole state! Just redoing the Interchange of GSP and Route 78 is costing \$70 million! Buried in the phrase "road enhancements" in Plan 2035 is actually huge amounts of money to expand lanes and roads. These need to go on the chopping block...

We cannot change if we do not actually stop "enhancing" roads...

In fact instead of continually expanding lanes why not put rails right down the same right of way? Can you imagine how our transit system could be interconnected if there was a North-South "beltway" rail line along Route 287? All those drivers facing horrible Route 287 traffic would be glad to trade it for a fast and reliable train ride.

On top of that such a rail line would interconnect all the major lines avoiding the 2 hour plus trips to go from Morristown to New Brunswick for example with complicated unwieldy transfers.

- 2) Provide shuttle services - IF there were frequent (at least hourly or more) service to Dover for example, surely many people might take the train to Dover and ride a shuttle to the Rockaway Mall. Every train station should have regular shuttle services to help people get to downtowns or offices.
- 3) Expand parking - even when people want to use trains they find that there are 3-5 years waits for parking permits or parking lots are full. If at all possible to reduce land usage Parking garages should be used to reduce land wasted for parking
- 4) Institute local-express service - despite NJ Transit's "one-seat ride" slogan in fact most people want to get to their destinations in a time competitive with driving. Every morning I watch as almost 100 people get off one train in Summit to transfer to an Express which gets them to their destinations 15 or 20 minutes sooner. Just as New Yorkers learn to negotiate the local-express subways so people will learn to negotiate local express service which can provide frequent local service but also allows them to reach further destinations a lot faster.
- 5) Restore existing rail lines wherever possible - it would only cost \$551 Million to restore the Lackawanna cutoff all the way to Scranton. After that trains could be restored to Buffalo which used to run from Dover as recently as 1970. The \$7 Billion NJ Turnpike. GSP expansion is a total waste and should be redirected to transit projects
We have rail lines all over this region which to its credit NJTPA has inventoried.
Let's restore those to service...

tim sevenser
orb@optonline.net
973-586-3043



JON S. CORZINE
Governor

State of New Jersey

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council
100 North Road (Route 513)
Chester, New Jersey 07930-2322
(908) 879-6737
(908) 879-4205 (fax)
www.highlands.state.nj.us



JOHN R. WEINGART
Chairman

ELLEN SWAN
Executive Director

July 28, 2009

Mr. David Behrend
Public Relations Manager
NJTPA
1 Newark Center, 17th Floor
Newark, New Jersey
07102

Re: Highlands Council comments on the NJTPA Plan 2035, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Fiscal Years 2010-2013, and Air Quality Conformity Determination

Dear Mr. Behrend:

On behalf of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (Highlands Council), we appreciate the opportunity to serve on the Technical Advisory Committee for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). We have reviewed Plan 2035, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Fiscal Years 2010-2013, and the Air Quality Conformity Determination. The Highlands Council would like to acknowledge the significant amount of work and public involvement incorporated into the information and process, as well as the NJTPA's support regarding the efforts of the Council to protect the area's natural resources and future land use goals.

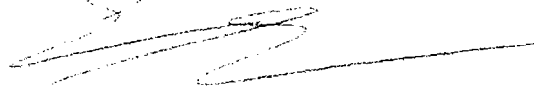
In a broad sense, Plan 2035 is consistent with the Regional Master Plan (RMP) Goals, Policies Objectives, and the Future Land Use, Transportation and Air Quality Programs. The eight critical investment principles of Plan 2035 call for giving greater priority to investments that support smart growth, providing continued strong support for mass transit, promoting walking and biking, and the funding of smart growth studies.

The FY 2010-2013 TIP highway and bridge project information for the seven Highlands Region counties in the NJTPA Region was reviewed. The project purpose and type, funding, scheduling, final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction details were examined in relation to the RMP. The Council recognizes that these projects have been in development for some time, some or all of the funding may be assigned, and they are locally and regionally important and advancing to next steps in the project development process.

In accordance with Section 16 of the Highlands Act, certain TIP projects may be subject to the Highlands Council's binding review for Preservation Area projects and non-binding review and comment for Planning Area projects. To date, the Highlands Council has not developed Transportation Project Review Standards and as stated in the RMP will work with the NJTPA and agency partners in support of that process. Highlands Council Transportation Project reviews at this time are associated with requests to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for Preservation Area exemption determinations and Highlands Preservation Area Approvals. The Highlands Council looks forward to working with the NJTPA, agency partners and the project sponsors regarding specific project details. Page 302 of the RMP Transportation Safety and Mobility Program provides an overview of the Highlands Council's Transportation Project Review evaluation. Lastly, the Air Conformity Determination evaluation of the air quality impacts of the TIP is consistent with the RMP Goals, Policies, Objectives and the Transportation and Air Quality Programs.

Please let me know if you have any questions and I wish you all the best in finalizing these important documents for the NJTPA Region.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eileen Swan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eileen Swan
Executive Director

c: John Weingart, Chairman, Highlands Council

18 S. Broad St.
Ridgewood, NJ 07450
July 3, 2009

JUL 07 2009
2689

Mr David Behrand
17th Floor
One Newark Center
Newark, NJ 07102

Dear Mr Behrand,

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the NJTPA 2035 Plan. I certainly support all of the projects listed in the Tables. Undoubtedly, the Mass Transit Tunnel under the Hudson River is the most important of these along with the improvements in Secaucus and at the Portal Bridge. I still question the need for a loop providing direct service for Bergen and Passaic riders into Penn Station. There already exists a convenient transfer that achieves the same result. I think that money would be better spent extending Raritan Valley service directly into NYC, or increasing the frequency of service into Penn Station.

I urge NJ Transit to begin express bus service between Newark Airport and Toms River Park and Ride due to the recent cancellation of service by Olympic Airporth. I hope that the new Bergen-Passaic Rail, the Northern Branch, and the Hudson Light Rail eventually connect with each other in Fairview.

As regards local bus service in NE New Jersey, I think that shuttle bus service in Ridgewood should serve the Ridgewood Bus Terminal, the Valley Hospital, and the Rte. 17 Park and Ride as well as the train station and the Ridgecrest Senior Center. In Bergen County, Coach USA should provide intrastate service on their routes to and from northwest Bergen County. Also, they should provide enhanced local service along Rte. 17 and on the Franklin Turnpike and Ramapo Brae. Express buses from western Passaic should pick up and drop off in Arcola in Paramus. Lakeland Bus should pick up and drop off at Willowbrook on their Rte. 80 service. Greyhound and Martz should provide service at the Mt. Arlington and Secaucus rail stations. NJ Transit needs to begin a bus route along Rte. 46 between Clifton and the GWB.

Sincerely,



Art White

with transportation access to jobs. These programs are locally managed by county governments or TMAs. In addition, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, NJ Transit’s Access Link program provides paratransit service comparable to the local bus service for people whose disability prevents them from using the local fixed route bus service. Many counties in the region also provide paratransit systems for senior citizens and others.

Table 1 Recently Completed Projects/Projects Under Design or Construction

<u>Projects Recently Completed/Underway</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>
Meadowlands Sports Complex Rail Spur and Station	A rail spur connecting Secaucus Junction with the Meadowlands is currently under construction will replace the bus link, providing rail customers from New Jersey and New York with a convenient rail transfer at Secaucus Junction. This will include a new station	To be completed in summer 2009. <i>Research must be done on extending this spur south & making this station a part of regular PVL service</i>	\$200 million ✓
Hudson-Bergen Light Rail 8 th Street Bayonne Extension	This project will extend the system south to 8th Street in Bayonne. <i>Research must be done about connecting HBLR to Station V. RR via new Bayonne Bridge/Tunnel</i>	Currently under construction with completion expected in 2010. Completes HBLRT MOS2. A third phase of the HBLRT is planned (See Table 3).	\$100 million ✓
Mt Arlington Station	The Mount Arlington Station project created a new intermodal facility by constructing a new Rail Station on the Boonton and M&E line adjacent to the existing Bus Park-and-Ride lot along the Route 80 corridor. The project includes two new side High Level Platforms and an enlarged Park-and-Ride lot.	Completed in spring 2008. <i>Encourage Baybound or Morristown to stop here on their Rte 80 services.</i>	\$16.2 million ✓
GoBus 25 (Springfield Avenue)	The enhanced service paves the way for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the state. This express service overlay on the 25 route between Irvington and Downtown Newark incorporates interim improvements such as fewer stops to reduce travel time, customized bus “station” facilities and unique color scheme to improve safety, visibility and customer information, and on board improvements to reduce station dwell time.	Springfield Avenue GoBus enhanced bus service began April 7 2008 along Springfield Avenue corridor <i>Can this be expanded further west?</i>	\$1.2 million ✓
Newark Light Rail Extension to Newark Broad Street Station	Construction of a one-mile extension of the Newark Light Rail from Newark Penn Station to Broad Street Station, including five new light rail stations.	Complete: Full service began in summer 2006	\$ 207 million

DRAFT – FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

Port Imperial Ferry Terminal	Construction of a new three-story facility to replace the existing undersized and aging terminal.	Complete: Facility opened in May 2006	\$53 million
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What about Hoboken Ferry Terminal renovation?

Table 2 - Funded Projects that are Part of the Fiscally Constrained Regional Transportation Plan

VIP - Very important Project

Candidate Projects	Summary	Status	Cost Estimate.
Access to the Region's Core (ARC) Tunnel	<p>The construction of two new single track tunnels under the Hudson River; new rail station adjacent to Penn Station New York under 34th Street; the addition of a fifth track at Secaucus Junction and Northeast Corridor infrastructure improvements between Newark and the new tunnel portal; the construction of a direct connection between the Bergen, Main, Port Jervis and Pascack Valley lines to the Northeast Corridor via a loop track.</p>	Construction commenced June 2009	\$8.7 billion (An additional \$400 million for new train equipment to be purchased in 2030 will bring the total to \$9.1 billion).
<p>Union County Light Rail This is the LRT Project from Elizabeth NEC station east to Jersey Gardens Mall and then to Newark Liberty Int. Airport. This is a public/private venture.</p>	<p>The Union County light rail transit system (also known as NERL MOS-3) is being advanced under the New Jersey Public Partnership Act of 1997. Union County, Washington Group International, and NJDOT (with NJ TRANSIT acting as NJDOT's agent) have partnered in proposing a system connecting downtown Elizabeth with Newark Liberty International Airport. The alignment would utilize an existing CSX and Norfolk Southern freight railroad right-of-way, serving the Jersey Gardens Mall and the proposed Elizabeth ferry terminal and then proceeding along Kapkowski Road and North Avenue and terminating at airport parking lot P1. Until alignment concerns are resolved, the project is on hold and not being advanced at this time.</p>	<p>The Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Study for MOS-3 has been prepared for the modified alignment. Until alignment concerns are resolved, the project is on hold and not being advanced at this time.</p>	<p>Up to \$500 million. This project, which has been designated under the state's Public Private Partnership Demonstration Act, will not affect fiscal constraint of the RTP as it will not require federal or state funding for capital costs or for retiring debt Resulting there from.</p>
Lackawanna Cutoff MOS	<p>The Minimal Operable Segment (MOS) of the Lackawanna Cutoff involves restoration of passenger service from Port Morris, NJ to Andover, NJ, a distance of 7.3 miles. The MOS is a rail spur off the outer end of the NJ Transit's existing Montclair/Boonton line. A single track will be constructed along the existing railroad right-of-way. Trains using the rail yard at Port Morris would travel back and forth to Andover to provide the scheduled train service. One grade crossing would be constructed; the balance of MOS right-of-way is grade separated. A single high-level platform, shelter and parking lot would be constructed at the Andover Township terminus. This is a segment of the proposed restoration of passenger service</p>	<p>Locally Preferred Alternative adopted by the NJTPA July 2008 and the FTA Finding of No Significant Impact was approved in September 2008 following review of the Environmental Assessment. Construction is expected to begin 2010.</p>	\$36.6 million

Is this a necessary expense? A transfer exists already.

Express bus service between Newark Airport + Tom's River P+R!

to like this but it should go further west

	extending to Scranton, PA which a candidate transit strategy being studied (see Table 3 below).		
Liberty Corridor Bus Rapid Transit	This BRT system will run from Bloomfield, through downtown Newark to Newark Liberty International Airport and the Port of Newark. BRT will provide a faster, more direct, and user friendly transit route to connect these important destinations (via downtown Newark and University Heights Branches). It will be based upon the existing GOBUS project currently in service along Springfield Avenue. Elements of the new service will include: service branding, service delivery, enhanced shelters (along the northern portion of the route only) and Traffic Signal Pre-emption (TSP) technology along Bloomfield Avenue within Newark. The low floor buses will come at a later time.	The Liberty Corridor BRT project is in final design. Scheduled implementation is mid-Fall 2009. <i>Could this start in Montclair or even Caldwell?</i>	\$14 million
Passaic/Bergen NYS&W Project	NJ Transit completed an environmental assessment for a new rail along the New York Susquehanna & Western track alignment between Hackensack and Hawthorne. This proposed service will employ self-propelled passenger railcars (DMU) to provide an initial service. The project is designed not to preclude the extension of rail service along this railroad in the future. <i>↗</i>	Agreement with NYS&W approved by NJT Board May 2009, Construction to begin in 2009.	\$163.5 million

✓ Hope this is expanded further east to Fairview to connect with the proposed Northern Branch & even ~~to~~ into Edgewater via the old Conrail freight tunnel. Hopefully, commuter service from Sparta can be established connecting to the main line in Hawthorne. Also, efforts should be made to establish a train stop in ^{Saddle Brook} ~~Edgewater~~ at Midland Ave, perhaps connecting with the Bergen line

Table 3 - Transit Strategies that are Candidates for the Fiscally Constrained Regional Transportation Plan

<u>Candidate Projects</u>	<u>Summary</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Cost Estimate.</u>
Northern Branch Phase 1	As a component of the West Shore Region MIS / EIS transportation improvement plan, NJ Transit is overseeing production of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for implementation of FRA-compliant DMU-type rail service along the Northern Branch between Tenafly and North Bergen. Transfer capability to the HBLR Line and thence to the Weehawken ferry would be provided at North Bergen. Extending the HBLR from North Bergen to Tenafly is the other alternative being examined.	DEIS is underway	Less than \$500 million
		<i>I'd like to see this go far farther north. Peak service on West Shore.</i>	
Monmouth-Ocean-Middlesex	New rail line to serve Monmouth, Ocean and Middlesex counties and enhancement of Route 9 bus service. To implement passenger service, the project would rebuild the railroad infrastructure along the existing freight lines. The DEIS is examining three alignments: Lakehurst to Monmouth Junction, Lakehurst to Red Bank and Lakehurst to Matawan.	DEIS is underway.	Range of between \$1.0 and \$1.8 billion, depending on option.
		<i>Could this go to Tom's River P+R?</i>	
West Trenton Line	Restoring commuter rail service for 21 miles on the West Trenton Line between Ewing, in Mercer County, and Bridgewater in Somerset County, where the line would connect with the existing Raritan Valley Line providing service into Newark.	Completion of Environmental Assessment Fall 2005 (released by NJT).	\$195 million
		<i>There should be a stop at Trenton Airport</i>	
Lackawanna Cutoff	Reinstitute passenger rail service on the abandoned rail right of way of the Lackawanna Cutoff and over existing freight line in Pennsylvania. The service would extend from Scranton to Hoboken and Midtown Manhattan via transfer to the existing Morris & Essex and Montclair-Boonton trains serving Penn Station, NY. The project includes putting back 20 miles of track between Andover and the Delaware River and complete reconstruction of the line from the Delaware River to Scranton, PA including track and signal improvements to approximately 60 miles of right of way, new stations, parking facilities, a train storage yard and additional rail rolling stock. This initiative will require financial participation by the state of Pennsylvania for service in Pennsylvania.	Work progressing on obtaining a Finding of No Significant Impact from the FTA responding to the Environmental Assessment for this project from Andover, NJ to Scranton, Pa.	\$551 million ✓
Central NJ/ Raritan Valley Transit Study	A study will investigate extending commuter rail service west to Phillipsburg,	A preliminary assessment is being	TBD

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	as well as bus, shuttle and park & ride options. A technical assessment of rail service beyond Phillipsburg into Pennsylvania as a multi-jurisdictional effort with the Lehigh Valley MPO is being advanced.	conducted of transit strategies along this corridor that will produce the data necessary for evaluating the rail extension.	✓
Extension of Hudson Bergen Light Rail west across Rt. 440 in Jersey City	Investigate an extension of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail system (HBLR) from the current West Side Avenue terminal to redevelopment and existing residential areas along Route 440 in Jersey City.	Alternatives Analysis to commence this year, 2009	TBD ✓

Table 4 - Studies of Transit Needs and Project Concepts

<u>Selected Strategy</u>	<u>Summary</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Cost Estimate.</u>
Bus Preferential Treatments on the Route 9 & 18 Corridors	Investigate bus preferential treatments along the Route 9 and 18 corridors including opportunities for new or expanded park and rides.	This work is partially covered by Greater New Brunswick Bus Study which will be expanded to include Route 18. NJT is working with NJDOT in pursuing changes to the shoulders on Route 9 to permit bus usage from Old Bridge to Lakewood.	TBD
Intermodal Transit Hub in Elizabeth	Develop an intermodal transit hub in Elizabeth to efficiently deal with the growing bus and rail service in the area to compliment local economic development plans.	NJT has begun working on a concept design of a project to compliment work to be undertaken by NJTPA.	TBD
Anchor Glass/Old Bridge Intermodal Improvements	This project involves screening analysis of multiple sites for their suitability for creation of multi-modal regional park-rides, bus facilities, rail stations, shuttle services, and/or innovation parking solutions in the Old Bridge/ Aberdeen/ South Amboy study area, and concept planning/design for those sites and facilities deemed appropriate.	Meetings with municipalities commenced. Review of potential large sites for intermodal park & ride is underway.	TBD
Central New Jersey Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit	The proposed BRT system in northern Mercer and southern Middlesex Counties would make use of both existing roads with improvements and new alignments. A 2006 study examined alignments, BRT technologies, station locations, ridership, and potential for coordination with private sector development, municipal plans and cost effectiveness.	NJ Transit is examining near term ridership potential for segments of the system to identify the initial services and improvements to advance toward implementation. A phased implementation of the system has been proposed.	TBD
Shuttle services to rail stations	This is recognition of the ongoing planning coordination that occurs between NJT, Counties, communities and the various TMAs to improve station access. If a specific work effort of sufficient size is identified it may become a separate study.	Ongoing <i>shuttle service in Ridgewood should serve rail station, bus terminal, Valley Hosp, + Rte 17 P+R.</i>	TBD
Comprehensive Area Bus Study of the	Detailed assessment of NJ TRANSIT and private bus services, routes, facilities and	Work continues on final phase of study	TBD

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Cities of Elizabeth and Newark	operations in the greater Newark and Elizabeth, Essex and Union county areas to evaluate potential enhancements including modifications to routes, frequencies of service, and development of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) express service along heavily-used transit corridors.	with anticipated completion in December 2009.	
Northeast New Jersey Metro Mobility Study	This study will evaluate current and projected transit accessibility and mobility needs and patterns in the northeastern portion of the NJTPA region, including Passaic and Bergen counties, and will assess bus access and mobility issues in the George Washington Bridge toll plaza area. The study will identify short term transit mobility improvements and develop a network of buses to access planned future rail services such as the Passaic-Bergen Rail Link and the Northern Branch Rail service.	2 year study initiated in early 2009. Rider and route survey activities underway.	TBD provide greater access to the 4 mini-buses, especially at Spring Valley Rd in Paramus. Also local service along Rte 17 + Franklin Tpk.
Comprehensive Hudson County Bus Study	Assessment of select NJ Transit and private bus routes in Jersey City to develop enhancements that will support continued services and operations. The initial study is evaluating potential route operations, equipment requirements, and operating funding requirements to address potential service problems and analyze options for responding to Jersey City's needs following this initial phase, other analysis of Hudson County's needs will be progressed.	Work continues on this phase of study with anticipated completion in late 2009.	TBD 6 WB to NYC PABT bus service
Northwest New Jersey Bus Study	Study to evaluate new and existing bus and shuttle routes, services and transit facilities in Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren Counties in light of emerging transit markets, changing demographics and growing traffic congestion. The study will evaluate new and enhanced park & ride lots, and transit hubs, and locations suitable for bus priority treatments.	Work continues on final phases of study with anticipated completion in late 2009.	TBD Have Teahland stop at Willewhook + Rte 23.
Pedestrian Safety At and Near Bus Stops	This NJTPA study will evaluate high rates of pedestrian - vehicle crashes along major bus routes in the region and seek to identify common engineering, behavioral and/or enforcement strategies to help reduce crashes near bus stops.	Study scheduled to begin during 2009.	TBD

Coach USA should provide intrastate service on their routes to NYC from NW Bergen.

Some express buses from western Passaic should pick up/drop off at Arcola in Paramus.

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Follow up to New Brunswick BRT Study's	Study of BRT and bus service improvement potential in two corridors along Route 18 and Route 27, crossing at the New Brunswick rail station. These corridors would connect residential areas with downtown New Brunswick, the Northeast Corridor rail line, the five Rutgers University, New Brunswick area campuses and other destinations. It would also connect to the proposed Route 1 BRT system to the south.	A Phase I report has been completed and work on Phase II of the study is underway.	TBD <i>Monorail between downtown New Brunswick & football/basketball stadiums.</i>
Routes 46/3 Corridor bus improvements	Bus priority treatments, intermodal facilities and other improvements to complement bus transit access to the Meadowlands, NJ Hudson River Waterfront and Midtown Manhattan.	Ongoing <i>NJ 46 bus service (BRT?) to GWB. from Clifton.</i>	TBD
Extending rail service to Flemington	Investigate use of the Lehigh Valley line and/or abandoned rail lines for passenger service to Flemington	Proposed Study	TBD
Light rail extensions	Potential extensions of the NLR and HBLR will be examined, including to the Sports Complex in East Rutherford, NJ.	Proposed Study	TBD

Is this necessary with new rail spur? Connect NLR to HLR in Hoboken via Kearny & existing tunnel.