



PROJECT PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE

Commissioner John P. Kelly – Chair
Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski – Vice Chair

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Commissioner Charles Kenny – Chair
Commissioner Susan Soloway – Vice Chair

Joint Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2023

I. Roll Call of Members

Commissioner Susan Soloway, Hunterdon County, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Beverly Morris, Central Staff, called the roll. Thirteen members of the Project Prioritization Committee (PPC) and 13 members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee (PEDC) were present. The Commissioner turned the meeting over to PPC Chair Commissioner John Kelly, Ocean County.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2023, meeting was made by Passaic County, seconded by Sussex County and carried with 11 affirmative votes. Ocean and Somerset counties abstained.

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2023 special PPC meeting was made by Union County, seconded by Passaic County and carried unanimously.

III. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Update

RTAC Chair David Antonio, reported on the activities at the June 12, 2023 RTAC meeting. First, Bob Diogo, Central Staff, presented on the North Jersey Region Travel Model-Enhanced, which underpins NJTPA's long-range transportation planning work. Next, Cheryl Kastrenakes of the Greater Mercer TMA briefed the Committee on Road Safety Audits conducted by the TMAs. Also at the meeting, Central Staff presented several information items, which included demographic and employment forecasting; the trail development survey being done in cooperation with the NJ Bike & Walk Coalition; the upcoming Local Safety Action Plans; the Federal Highway Administration's Resource Center Training; the new Transportation

Improvement Program (TIP) and the Study & Development Program. Mr. Antonio said the committee was also briefed on the action items on this day's agenda.

IV. Action Items

PPC Committee

1. Approval of the Initial Financial Plan for the Portway, Fish House Road/Pennsylvania Avenue, CR 659 Project in Hunterdon County

Elizabeth Johnson, Central Staff, said projects costing between \$100 million and \$500 million must prepare a financial plan that outlines project risks, schedule, and funding to qualify for federal funding. She said the project will address congestion, safety issues and flooding from the Hackensack River. The estimated cost is \$103 million, with \$6 million already expended. Construction is planned to begin this fall and be completed within five years.

A motion to approve the financial plan was made by NJDOT, seconded by Hudson County and carried unanimously.

2. Minor Amendment to the FY 2022 – 2025 TIP to Add Federal Funds to the Portway, Fish House Road/Pennsylvania Avenue, CR 659 Project in Hudson County as Requested by the New Jersey Department of Transportation

John Witsch, Central Staff, said the revision adds \$32 million for Construction in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023, which increases total funding for Construction to \$98 million. The increase is due to escalating construction costs observed in recent bid prices and an increase in construction duration by more than one year.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by NJDOT, seconded by Hudson County and carried unanimously.

3. Minor Amendments to the FY 2022 – 2025 TIP to Add Federal Funds to the Pavement Preservation, NJTPA Regional Program as Requested by the New Jersey Department of Transportation

Mr. Witsch said the amendments involve adding \$98.18 million in federal funds to the program to increase the total available for Engineering and Construction in FY 2023 from \$64.6 million to \$162.8 million. This action is needed to cover \$84.1 million for 11 pavement preservation projects in the NJTPA region. The funding increase also includes an additional \$4.1 million to balance the overall program and \$10 million to account for potential cost increases. Funding for the increase is available from two projects which have experienced unanticipated schedule changes:

- For the Route 206 Valley Road to Brown Avenue project in Somerset County, \$79 million in federal funds would be reprogrammed for Construction in FY 2026 due to project phase delays, and another \$8 million would be added for a total of \$87 million.

- For the Route 71 Bridge over NJ TRANSIT project in Monmouth County, \$31 million for Design, Right-of-Way, and Construction would be converted into Bridge Formula Program funds in FFYs 2024, 2025 and 2026, all due to project phase delays. Also, \$1 million for Right-of-Way and \$1 million for Construction would be added.

NJTPA Chair John Bartlett said Somerset County had reached out to the Board expressing concerns about delays to the long-standing Route 206 project. Commissioner Sara Sooy, Somerset County, requested that the action be tabled and expressed concerns that the modifications would further delay the project by at least three years, worsening a bottleneck problem there. Commissioner Jason Sarnoski, Warren County expressed support for Somerset County's concerns and his willingness to make a motion to table.

Andy Swords, Pankesh Patel, and Eric Powers, NJDOT, explained the issue from the agency's perspective. Mr. Power noted that the action aims to preserve federal funds and accelerate 11 other paving projects in the region. He said tabling the action could potentially eliminate \$84 million for the NJTPA region. He said there are other programming considerations at play and only a few months left to use the funds before the end of the fiscal year.

At the suggestion of Chairman Bartlett, it was agreed that NJDOT would meet with Somerset County before the July 10 Board meeting to discuss the Route 206 project's schedule and related issues. On that condition, the Committee recommended the action be approved by the full Board. Chairman Bartlett said he hopes NJDOT can improve its communication with counties and municipalities going forward, beginning with its meeting with Somerset County. Commissioner Bartlett said if NJDOT is unable to meet with Somerset County prior to the Board meeting, the item would be removed from the Board agenda.

A motion to endorse the resolution was made by NJDOT, seconded by Bergen County, and carried with 10 positive votes. Warren County cast a negative vote.

4. Minor Amendment to the FY 2022 – 2025 TIP to Add the Pavement Preservation, Statewide Program as Requested by the New Jersey Department of Transportation

Mr. Witsch said the amendment would add the program to the NJTPA TIP with \$12.6 million in federal funds to be programmed in the new line item for statewide projects in FY 2022 and 2023 from two sources, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act and the National Highway Performance Program.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by NJDOT, seconded by Sussex County and carried unanimously.

5. Modifications to the FY 2022 - 2025 TIP to Add Federal Funds to Two Projects as Requested by the New Jersey Department of Transportation

Mr. Witsch described the modifications to the two projects as follows:

- For the Route 23, Route 80, and Route 46 Interchange Project in Essex and Passaic Counties, \$4.7 million in federal funds will be added for Design in FY 2023, increasing the total to \$8.5 million. The revision is due to design complexities and new environmental regulations.
- For the Route 35 Northbound Bridge over Route 36 Northbound & Garden State Parkway Ramp G in Monmouth County \$2.2 million in federal funds will be added for Preliminary Engineering in FY 2023, increasing the total to \$3.7 million. This change is due to a revised Preliminary Engineering cost estimate that was received in anticipation of a FY 2023 authorization.

A motion to approve the modifications was made by Monmouth County, seconded by Passaic County and carried unanimously.

6. Modifications to the FY 2022 – 2025 TIP to Add Federal Funds to Three Programs as Requested by the New Jersey Department of Transportation

Mr. Witsch said the revisions are necessary to cover anticipated authorization contract costs. He described the modifications to the three programs as follows:

- For the Restriping Program and Line Reflectivity Management System, \$10 million will be added for Engineering and Construction in FY 2023, increasing the total to \$22.7 million.
- For the Bridge Maintenance Fender Replacement, \$14.5 million in federal funds will be added for Engineering, Right-of-Way, and Construction in FY 2023, increasing the total to \$17.8 million.
- For Bridge Preventive Maintenance, \$25.5 million in federal funds will be added for Engineering and Construction in FY 2023, increasing the total to \$29.4 million.

A motion to approve the modifications was made by Union County, seconded by Ocean County and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Kelly turned the meeting over to Commissioner Soloway, Vice Chair of the Planning and Economic Development Committee (PEDC)

V. Information Items:

1. Update on the FY 2024 TIP and the Study & Development Program

Ms. Johnson said the draft TIP had been sent to the Committee for review. She shared some statistics on the proposed TIP, which amounts to a \$3.4 billion annual program. The budget includes \$1.9 billion for bridge, road and related NJDOT projects and nearly \$1.5 billion for transit projects and programs. Also, \$27 million has been allocated for the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey Port Street Quarter Improvement Project, which received Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant funds.

Ms. Johnson said the schedule for the development of the TIP includes a 30-day public period to run from July 24 to August 22, with a public meeting scheduled for August 3. Board approval of the TIP is scheduled for the September meeting.

Ms. Johnson said a draft of the Study & Development Program was sent to the PPC and PEDC for review on June 6. The program includes 29 projects, with 19 new projects (15 from NJDOT and four local Concept Development projects) and 10 continuing projects. She said 42 projects from the current program have graduated from the Study & Development phase and will be programmed into the FY 2024 TIP. Next steps include presentations to the PPC in August and to the Board in September. The program will also be included in the appendix of the FY 2024 TIP.

Ms. Johnson noted that Ann Ludwig, Central Staff, Senior Manager, Capital Programming, will retire as of July 1, and she thanked her for all her years of service.

2. Report on the Autonomous Vehicle Symposium

Andy Kaplan, Central Staff, reported that the June 6 NJTPA Autonomous Vehicle Symposium, was held in the NJTPA boardroom and attended by more than 60 people. The first panel focused on the state of the practice, featuring presentations on the proposed Trenton MOVES system, which could employ up to 100 on-demand automated vehicles; NJ TRANSIT's research pilot program into autonomous shuttles; and pilots of autonomous micro-transit services in Minnesota and Texas launched by the company, Via, which runs Jersey City's micro-transit system.

Mr. Kaplan said the second panel discussed the potential impacts of autonomous vehicles on local communities and counties. Topics included infrastructure, investment, land use, zoning, and the overall transportation system. The discussion emphasized the need to design and build for efficient and safe travel today, rather than solely focusing on future autonomous vehicles, as well as the importance of leveraging technology advancements to address equity, safety, and other focus areas outlined in the NJTPA long-range plan. A video of selected presentations from the event has been posted on the NJTPA website.

VI. Written Information Items

The following written information items were included in the agenda package for the meeting.

1. Demographic and Employment Forecasting – Eugene McGuinness, Central Staff
2. PRIME 2.0 Update – Jeffrey Vernick, Central Staff
3. Regional Capital Investment Strategy (RCIS) Refinement and Strategy Effectiveness Project – Keith Miller, Central Staff
4. North Jersey Regional Transportation Model-Enhanced (NJRTM-E) Validation – Bob Diogo, Central Staff
5. Together North Jersey (TNJ) Initiative Update – Blythe Eaman, Central Staff

There were no comments or questions on the written items.

VII. Executive Director's Update – Dave Behrend, Central Staff

Mr. Behrend said the next Board meeting will be held off-site at the Great Falls Center in Paterson on July 10. Chairman Bartlett mentioned that following the meeting there would be tours of the Great Falls National Park and the newly renovated Hinchcliffe Stadium, which will soon be home to a Negro league museum.

Mr. Behrend announced that the August joint committee meeting was rescheduled from August 21 to August 28 to accommodate the PPC's consideration of the FY 2024 TIP and the required public comment period. He said comments and responses will be shared with the PPC before the meeting.

Mr. Behrend said the Freight Initiatives Committee will still meet on August 21 at 1:00 p.m. with presentations on federal and state grant programs.

Mr. Behrend said the deadline for the federal Safe Streets and Roads for All Program applications is July 10, and more information and links can be found on the NJTPA website. Also, efforts are underway to support subregional local safety action plans, including workshops and collaboration with Federal Highway Administration and local partners.

Mr. Behrend said final reports and studies are being finalized by Central Staff and the subregions, and they will be posted on the NJTPA website. He expressed appreciation to NJTPA staff, the subregions, and partner agencies for a successful FY 2023.

VIII. Next Virtual Meeting: August 28, 2023, 10:30 a.m.

IX. Adjournment

**JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING
ATTENDANCE
June 20, 2023**

Project Prioritization Committee

VOTING MEMBERS	
Hon. John Kelly (Chair)	Ocean County
Hon. Susan Soloway	Hunterdon County
Hon. John Bartlett	Passaic County
Hon. Bette Jane Kowalski	Union County
Hon. Jason Sarnoski	Warren County
Peter Botsolas	Bergen County
Tom Malavasi	Hudson County
Shilpa Bhojappa	Monmouth County
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Janice Venables	Governor's Authorities Unit
Andrew Swords	NJDOT
Megan Massey	NJ TRANSIT
Jared Rodriguez	Citizens' Representative

Planning and Economic Development Committee

VOTING MEMBERS	
Hon. Susan Soloway (Vice Chair)	Hunterdon County
Hon. John Bartlett	Passaic County
Hon. Sara Sooy	Somerset County
David Antonio	Essex County
Elias Guseman	Jersey City
Mike Dannemiller	Middlesex County
John Hayes	Morris County
Trevor Howard	City of Newark
Janice Venables	Governor's Authorities Unit
Andrew Swords	NJDOT
Megan Massey	NJ TRANSIT
Jay Shuffield	Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Citizens' Representative	Jared Rodriguez

Also in Attendance	
Jack Kanarek	Dewberry
Zach Kourgialis	GIS Info
Bob Werkmeister	GPI

[illegible]