



PROJECT PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE

Commissioner John W. Bartlett – Chair
Commissioner Jason Sarnoski – Vice Chair

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Commissioner John P. Kelly – Chair
Commissioner Sara Sooy – Vice Chair

Joint Meeting Minutes **August 16, 2021**

I. Roll Call of Members

Commissioner Charles Kenny, Middlesex 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 11 members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee (PEDC) were present.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2021 meeting was made by Sussex County, seconded by Somerset County, and carried with 16 affirmative votes. Monmouth County abstained.

III. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Update

RTAC Vice Chair Byron Nicholas, Hudson County, reported on the activities of the August 9 virtual RTAC meeting. He said members heard a presentation by Central Staff on Plan 2050, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Air Quality Conformity Determination for both. Staff also provided updates on the FY 2023 Subregional Transportation Program Solicitation and Together North Jersey Initiative activities. Written information items provided by Central Staff to RTAC covered: the beta version of the Freight Activity Locator, the Accessibility and Mobility Strategy Synthesis, safety performance measure targets, and TIP performance measures.

Mr. Nicholas also reported the RTAC was briefed on the standing committees action items on this meeting's agenda.

IV. Presentation: Planning North Jersey's Transportation Future: Plan 2050, TIP and Conformity

Lois Goldman, Central Staff, said Plan 2050 focuses on transportation, people and opportunity. Priorities that include safety, accessibility, equity, active transportation, climate change, transportation technologies and freight. She said outreach for plan development included a Board guest speaker series, a Board retreat, and a symposium series. As the pandemic precluded in-person outreach events, online options were used to good advantage. Ms. Goldman said more than 2,100 persons took an online survey at the Plan 2050 website. More than 500 attended virtual public meetings, and nearly 350 participated in the symposia. Four background papers that focus on key planning priorities for the region were issued:

- [Active Transportation in the NJTPA Region](#)
- [Climate Change and Transportation](#)
- [The COVID-19 Pandemic and North Jersey Freight](#)
- [Transportation Technology](#)

Ms. Goldman said the plan includes a financial element that analyzes three possible financial futures: limited funding, aspirational additional resources, and a fiscally constrained scenario of reasonably anticipated funding. This constrained scenario estimates that \$120.6 billion will be invested in the region over the life of the plan to meet preservation and systems enhancement needs.

Ms. Goldman said the Plan contains technical appendices and she noted that Plan 2050 is the first long range plan to include a report on the region's progress toward meeting federally mandated performance targets.

Ms. Goldman said the FY 2022-2025 TIP is a four-year, fiscally constrained list of projects and programs that is updated every two years. The draft TIP totals nearly \$11.5 billion of investment for four years and emphasizes safety and maintaining infrastructure in a state of good repair. The FY 2022 element of the TIP invests \$3.12 billion on roads and bridges, \$1.8 billion for related NJDOT projects and programs, and \$1.3 billion for NJ TRANSIT projects and programs.

Ms. Goldman said the federally mandated Air Quality Conformity Determination analysis for Plan 2050 and the TIP was performed for three pollutants: ozone, fine particulate matter and carbon monoxide. She said the current conformity determination confirms that all projects and programs in the region meet federal air quality standards and do not negatively impact air quality.

Ms. Goldman said a formal 30-day public comment period on Plan 2050, the TIP and the Air Quality Conformity Determination was held from July 6 to August 4. This included a public workshop on conformity determination, and a virtual open house public meeting on July 27. She said these events elicited many comments and questions from the public, partner agencies and the NJTPA subregions, and a social media campaign drew many comments that reinforced themes heard during plan outreach. Ms. DeRuchie noted that comments on the TIP and Air Quality Determination are reflected in these documents and include issues such as transit, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, equity, greenways, trains and other specific issues.

V. PEDC Action Items

1. Approval of *Plan 2050: Transportation, People, Opportunity, the Long Range Transportation Plan* and Accompanying Air Quality Conformity Determination

Ms. Goldman said the draft plan was posted on the NJTPA website and included revisions and tracked changes.

Liz DeRuchie, Central Staff said the NJTPA air quality conformity determination considers only mobile tailpipe emissions from cars, trucks, buses and motorcycles and fine particulate matter from brake and tire wear. She said the NJTPA is not required to conduct project level conformity analyses for National Environmental Policy Act purposes or hot spot conformity analyses for individual projects, which are handled by NJDOT or project sponsors. She said the requirement for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) is strictly a regional analysis done on aggregate projects in the TIP and long range transportation plan to show how a combination of all projects affects the region's air quality.

Ms. DeRuchie said the NJTPA conformity process is guided by an Interagency Consultation Group, which includes members from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT. She said the NJTPA passed the analysis with emissions results that were well below the budget established in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and therefore the TIP and Plan 2050 conform to the State Implementation Plan established by NJDEP and approved by EPA.

A motion to endorse the resolution was made by the Citizens' Representative, seconded by Essex County and carried unanimously.

2. Approval of the FY 2022 Study and Development (S&D) Program

John Witsch, Central Staff, said the S&D program is a schedule of concept development work over the next two years to advance proposed transportation projects toward possible federal funding through the TIP. He said the program contains initiatives by NJDOT, NJ TRANSIT and Local Concept Development Projects that have been initiated by the subregions and approved by the NJTPA. The draft program contains 94 projects – 75 that are continuing and 19 new ones. Ten projects have graduated from the FY 2020 S&D program to the draft FY 2022 TIP for implementation. Mr. Witsch said the NJTPA appreciates the cooperation from the RTAC members in developing the draft program, which can be found in Appendix J of the draft FY 2022 TIP and in Section III of the Unified Planning Work Program.

A motion to endorse the resolution was made by Warren County, seconded by Jersey City and carried unanimously.

3. Approval of NJ TRANSIT CMAQ Funding Request for Bike Shelter Program

Jeff Perlman, Central Staff, said NJ TRANSIT proposes the development of a pilot program to install bicycle and electric scooter shelters at train stations using \$1.233 million in unobligated CMAQ funds from the NJTPA Local Mobility Initiatives program for a three-five-year period. The shelters would be installed, operated and maintained by a third party vendor to be identified through a request for proposals managed by NJ TRANSIT. The shelters are designed to be used year-round and at all hours. A prototype is in use at Jersey City's Journal Square PATH station, and NJ TRANSIT plans to deploy them at train stations where there is high demand. NJ TRANSIT staff worked with NJTPA staff to calculate air quality benefits. Mr. Perlman recalled that NJ TRANSIT worked with the NJTPA last year to reallocate unspent Local Mobility Initiatives program CMAQ funds for the Henry Hudson Trail. He said no further action by the Board is needed on this PEDC decision action.

A motion to approve the funding request was made by NJ TRANSIT, seconded by Middlesex County and carried unanimously.

PPC Action Items

4. Approval of the FY 2022 North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority Self-Certification

Ann Ludwig, Central Staff, said the federal regulations call for MPOs to certify that their planning process is carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements, including requirements under Title VI, the Clean Air Act and Americans with Disabilities Act. A congestion management process and public engagement plan are also required.

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

5. Approval of the FY 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program and the Accompanying Air Quality Conformity Determination

Ms. Ludwig said a summary of project changes was issued since the previous version of the draft TIP. It includes six changes: inclusion of the PANYNJ's Port Street Corridor Project and two ferry projects (the Carteret Ferry and the South Amboy Intermodal Ferry projects received additional state funding). Also, three Middlesex County projects that share borders with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission were reinstated (the Route 1 Alexander Road, Route 130 Bridge over the Millstone River, and the Route 130 Westfield Avenue projects.)

Ms. Ludwig said many comments that were received on the TIP concerned two rockfall projects (I-80 Rockfall Mitigation Project in Warren County and a similar project on Route 29 in Kingwood, Hunterdon County). She said several organizations have voiced concerns and requested that the projects be paused or returned for concept development pending additional coordination with the affected communities concerning safety and environmental, architectural and historical impact studies.

Ms. Ludwig said NJTPA staff spoke with NJDOT staff, who said the agency maintains a rockfall hazard management system to prioritize rock cut locations within the state. They said the system is supported by FHWA and the two rockfall projects mentioned were the Numbers One and Three concerns. NJDOT representatives also said that concerns should be communicated directly to NJDOT project sponsors so they can be addressed earlier during project development.

A motion to endorse the resolution was made by Union County, seconded by Monmouth County and carried with eleven affirmative votes. Warren County abstained.

VI. Information Items

1. Federal Policy Update

Dave Behrend, Central Staff, reported on the status of federal infrastructure legislation. He said the senate just passed a bipartisan infrastructure bill by a vote of 69 to 30, and that legislation includes \$550 billion in new spending and reauthorizes funding levels from the FAST Act and other programs (energy infrastructure, water, broadband, etc). He said the law would expand and grow current funding levels for roads, bridges, rail, ports, transit, etc.

Mr. Behrend said the Senate approved an additional \$3.5 trillion budget resolution along party lines that outlines the parameters for a reconciliation package and that is a wide-ranging budget bill for all aspects of federal government (Medicare, immigration policy, universal pre-K, etc.). Mr. Behrend said there is an ongoing debate in congress about how the bill and budget will be processed. A reconciliation package is not expected to be debated in the House and Senate until late September, causing uncertainty of the path forward for both bills. He said the Speaker of the House has asked the House of Representatives Committee on Rules to look for a way to advance both measures together.

Mr. Behrend said, changes to the infrastructure element are possible before the bills come to a vote. He said, according to New Jersey Senators Booker and Menendez, over the next five years the state would receive \$6.9 billion for highways, \$1.1 billion for bridges and \$4.2 billion for transit under current funding formulas.

2. Trans-Hudson Update

Mr. Behrend said the infrastructure bill contains several possible funding sources for a big project like the Hudson River Tunnel and related Gateway program improvements. The bill contains \$30 billion for improvements on the Northeast Corridor. He noted the recent visit by Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg to Westfield with NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti and others to tout the infrastructure bill and talk about the importance of the Hudson River Tunnel project and related work. Mr. Behrend said this indicates that the current administration is showing strong support for moving that work forward.

Mr. Behrend noted that the PANYNJ began the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a new Manhattan bus terminal. Public scoping meetings were held in June, and the NJTPA participated in a kickoff agency coordination meeting. He said the NJTPA looks forward to ongoing

involvement in a project so critical to many thousands of New Jersey commuters who use the bus terminal daily.

VII. Next Meeting: October 18, 2021

VIII. Other

It was noted that standing committee meetings normally do not feature public comments, but Commissioner Kenny permitted a statement from Tara Mezzanotte, I80 DWG Coalition, who said she was obligated to respond to NJDOT statements reported by Ms. Ludwig earlier in the meeting concerning two rockfall projects. Ms. Mezzanotte said several members of the communities affected by the rockfall projects have provided an abundance of comments. Concerning the statement that the projects are Numbers One and Three concern for the state, Ms. Mezzanotte said members of the surrounding communities have been asking to see supporting documentation since the inception and introduction of these projects.

Addressing the NJDOT comment that the public should contact NJDOT project sponsors with their concerns earlier in the process, Ms. Mezzanotte said they have been commenting on the projects since inception. She noted that Knowlton Township passed a resolution about the I-80 rockfall project in 2015. She said she can cite an abundance of comments on record about concerns over safety, visual impact, etc. that have been “submitted at the right time every step of the way.”

Ms. Mezzanotte said, since 2013, “everybody has been provided with inaccurate information on the projects because something happened behind closed doors.” She said, at the July Board meeting, NJDOT was permitted to comment after she did and the NJDOT representative incorrectly stated that said the I-80 project is undergoing an EIS. She said he misspoke, and the Board has been guided incorrectly by NJDOT. She said the project is undergoing an Environmental Assessment (EA), not an EIS, and an EA denies the public an opportunity to participate at a more vigorous level, which is provided during an EIS. She said a perpetual EA is not appropriate or standard.

IX. Adjournment

At 11:24 a.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Union County, seconded by the PANYNJ and carried unanimously.

**JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING
ATTENDANCE
August 16, 2021**

Project Prioritization Committee

VOTING MEMBERS	
Hon. Jason Sarnoski (Vice Chair)	Warren County
Hon. Charles Kenny	Middlesex County
Hon. Chris Carney	Sussex County
Hon. Bette Jane Kowalski	Union County
Joseph Baladi	Bergen County
Byron Nicholas	Hudson County
Carrie Fellows	Hunterdon County
Inkyung Englehart	Monmouth County
John Hayes	Morris County
Jeffry Nielsen	Governor's Authorities Unit
Andy Swords	NJDOT
Lou Millan	NJ TRANSIT
Jared Rodriguez	Citizens' Representative

Planning and Economic Development Committee

VOTING MEMBERS	
Hon. Jason Sarnoski	Warren County
David Antonio	Essex County
Elias Guseman	Jersey City
John Hayes	Morris County
John Ernst	Ocean County
Walt Lane	Somerset County
Jeffry Nielsen	Governor's Authorities Unit
Andy Swords	NJDOT
Lou Millan	NJ TRANSIT
Jay Shuffield	PANYNJ
Jared Rodriguez	Citizens' Representative

Also In Attendance	
Hon. Paul Drake	Somerset County
Anna Aleynick	AECOM
Jack Kanarek	Dewberry
Bob Werkmeister	GPI
Thomas Malavasi	Hudson County
Katherine Fullerton	Hunterdon County

Tara Mezzanotte	I80 DWG Coalition
Doug Greenfeld	Middlesex County
DeDe Murray	Morris County
Trevor Howard	City of Newark
Brian Leckie	NJDOT
Eric Powers	NJDOT
Sudhir Joshi	NJDOT
Various members of Central Staff	NJTPA
Mark Jehnke	Ocean County
Andras Holzmann	Passaic County
Sal Presti	Passaic County
Ken Wedeen	Somerset County
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Liza Betz	Union County
Brian Appezzato	Warren County
Chris Mroczka	
Dan Healey	