



2022 Transit Hub Planning Program Solicitation for Proposals

INTRODUCTION:

The Center for Community Planning, the American Planning Association-NJ Chapter (APA-NJ) and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) are co-sponsoring a Transit Hub Planning Program. The Program will provide technical planning support by a team of volunteer planners for up to two community groups or municipalities. The projects will be selected on a competitive basis by a committee made up of staff from the three organizations. The teams of volunteer planners will develop strategic plans for the re-use, redevelopment, or improvement of a transit hub in the selected communities. For our purposes, a transit hub is an area surrounding a transit station, including bus, rail, light rail, or ferry. The goal is that the plan will result in strategies that improve access to the transit station, increase economic activity in the hub area, create improved public spaces and create a more vibrant and connected community.

For the selected municipalities, teams of volunteer planners with the appropriate skills and background will provide support to prepare the strategic plan. The volunteers will be recruited through the APA-NJ's Community Planning Assistance Program. Work will consist of evaluating transportation and land use conditions at the transit station and surrounding project area, identifying challenges in the area and opportunities for future improvements. The planning process will include a robust community outreach process in collaboration with municipal officials and leaders. The team will produce a set of goals and objectives for the area, and a coordinated vision of strategic transportation, land use, business, and quality of life improvements. The team will also prepare guidance for advancing the elements of the plan after the study is complete, including advancing an application to New Jersey's Transit Village Program, which is administered by NJ TRANSIT and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT).

(<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/village/index.shtml>). Selected municipalities are expected to provide planning and engineering champions to support the work and be available for discussions with agencies at the municipal, county, regional, and state levels.

ELIGIBILITY:

Any municipality or community organization in New Jersey is eligible. Any projects that are selected in the NJTPA region – Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren counties – would be eligible for support from the NJTPA staff.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:

Through an annual solicitation process, interested municipalities prepare a proposal recommending a specific transit hub location in their municipality for potential study. The proposal must include:

- The name and contact information for primary municipal staff person responsible for submitting the proposal and providing guidance and coordination throughout the project.
- A description and map of the proposed transit hub location, including the transit stop's name and the surrounding community that would be included in the study area.
- A brief description of the existing conditions of the proposed transit station or stop and surrounding land uses in the area and how well they serve the needs of the community.
- A brief review of the community's initial goals for the study.
- List of current and previous planning studies performed within the municipality involving the proposed study area (with availability of documents upon request).
- Brief explanation as to how the proposed study will help advance the regional policies, strategies and actions identified within the:
 - NJTPA Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), *Plan 2050: Transportation. People. Opportunity.* (<https://njtpa.org/Plan2050>)
 - Together North Jersey Regional Plan (TNJ Plan) (<http://togethernorthjersey.com/>) and
 - Transit Friendly Planning Program (<https://njtransit.com/transitfriendly>)
- An official statement of support from elected officials in the municipality for conducting the study, and (if possible), designation of a senior or elected municipal official to serve as a project liaison or “champion” for the project.
- List of municipal agencies, officials, stakeholders, and organizations that would be expected to participate in the study.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

Locations will be selected by a committee of up to five individuals from the partnering organizations based on the following criteria:

- The potential of the location as a transit hub based upon the description in the proposal and a field visit if necessary.
- The potential for a successful mixed-use vision for the transit hub as described in the proposal.
- Demonstrated strong commitment to a community-driven planning process and mixed-use vision for the transit hub. The following will help make this case:
 - ✓ A reference to the transit hub area in an earlier plan.
 - ✓ Letter(s) of support from local officials and/or other organizations in the community.
 - ✓ A resolution supporting the project by the municipal governing body or the non-profit's board of directors.

Effective outreach will be an important part of a successful proposal. All transit hubs have unique properties; therefore, the successful proposal should demonstrate a community-driven approach to planning to ensure the eventual plan reflects the concerns and desires of the local community.

BENEFITS TO SELECTED COMMUNITY:

- The Program will provide a team of volunteer planners at no cost to the municipality to support a community-driven process to create a strategic plan for the transit hub. This includes conducting community outreach, analyzing the current conditions in the area, identifying strategies for addressing challenges in the area, and steps for advancing the development of the transit hub after the strategic plan is complete.
- The strategic plan will include a listing of the community's goals, a description of the transit hub's overall strengths, how the hub can be used to advance the community's objectives, and an approach for advancing further through plan development, design, and implementation.
- The Program will provide guidance on potential resources to help implement the strategic plan. Possible sources could include NJTPA's Complete Streets Technical Assistance Program, Planning for Emerging Centers programs, NJDOT's Local Bike/Ped Planning Assistance, and the state Department of Community Affairs Local Planning Services Office. These programs have their own selection procedures. The initial strategic plan can support a stronger application for these next steps.

APPLICATIONS:

Applications no longer than two pages and a map should be emailed to tomschulze@aol.com by the solicitation deadline.

SCHEDULE:

- November 1, 2022 - Release of the Proposal Solicitation package.
- December 15, 2022 - Transit Hub proposals due 5:00 PM - Email only to **TOMSCHULZE@AOL.COM**.
- January 15, 2023 - Select Transit Hub Pilots and notify applicants.