



PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Commissioner Jason Sarnoski – Chair
Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski – Vice Chair

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE

Commissioner Charles Kenny – Chair
Commissioner Zach Rich – Vice Chair

Joint Meeting Minutes February 18, 2025

I. Roll Call of Members

Warren County Commissioner Jason Sarnoski, Chair of the Planning and Economic Development Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Denise Truvillion, Central Staff, called the roll. Twelve members of the Project Prioritization Committee (PPC) and 12 members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee (PEDC) were present (Attachment 1).

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2024, meeting was made by Union County, seconded by City of Newark, and the motion carried with one abstention from Monmouth County.

III. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Update

David Antonio reported on the February 10 Regional Transportation Advisory Committee meeting. The meeting featured a presentation from Keith Hamas, Central Staff, on the Active Transportation Plan Data Viewer.

This tool helps planners, engineers and stakeholders advance biking, walking, and micromobility improvements across the region. The data viewer shows potential on- and off-road improvements identified in the NJTPA's Active Transportation Plan and the potential for their use if implemented. The tool is available on the NJTPA website [here](#). NJTPA staff then presented a series of information items, including reports on public outreach for *Connecting Communities* and the Congestion Management Process needs identification effort.

NJTPA staff also reviewed the three action items included on the agenda. All details were included in the agenda package. The next RTAC meeting will be held virtually on April 14.

IV. Presentation: [Newark Airport City](#)

Darius Sollohub, Professor and Interim Chair of the School of Architecture at the Hillier College at NJIT, said the Airport City Newark Project, also referred to as an Aerotropolis, is a collaborative effort between the City of Newark, multiple agencies, universities, and community groups to enhance connections between Newark Liberty International Airport and the Dayton Neighborhood in Newark's South Ward. The initiative aims to integrate transit-oriented development and long-term planning for airport and community connectivity.

In addition to Newark, NJIT and NJTPA, project partners include the Port Authority, Rutgers University, University of Pennsylvania, Regional Plan Association, Invest Newark, the Prudential Foundation and state and federal economic development agencies. The NJTPA, Prudential Foundation and federal grants are helping fund the project.

Mr. Sollohub said an economic development study by Hatch International identified Newark's airport area as underserved by approximately 1,000 hotel rooms. The City of Newark has expanded redevelopment designation to more than 39 acres, extending to the Elizabeth border and includes coordination with Lionsgate's new film studio to leverage workforce and economic development opportunities. Next steps for the project include ongoing community engagement ensuring local input and endorsement, creating a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) with Prudential Foundation support and developing a comprehensive transit-oriented plan.

Mr. Sollohub said the Airport City Newark Project presents a transformative opportunity for economic growth, transit connectivity, and urban redevelopment. The presentation is available on the NJTPA's website and more information can be found in the [InTransition](#) magazine article *Grand Plans Taking Shape for Newark Aerotropolis*.

V. Action Items

Planning and Economic Development Committee

1. FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program

Angellita Young, Central Staff, said that each year NJTPA is responsible for developing its Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and budget, which describes the task activities to be undertaken by Central Staff, the subregions and Transportation Management Associations to meet goals of our Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), metropolitan planning priorities and federal emphasis areas. A draft copy of the proposed FY 2026 UPWP was distributed in December for review. A list of the comments received was included in the package with NJTPA responses, as well as a list of revisions made to the draft UPWP.

Ms. Young said the handouts also include an updated draft of the FYU 2026 UPWP budget, summary charts of expenditures and revenues, a list of proposed new consultant efforts, subrecipient efforts, and the pass-through programs. Minor changes were made to the allocations of Central Staff time and efforts. Under contractual efforts, the proposed subrecipient project to partner with the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council for the regional household travel survey is no longer needed and was removed from the work program. Minor edits were also made to the other chapters.

Chapter 4, Regional Transportation Planning initiatives, is still under development. It describes transportation and planning studies conducted by other agencies and is provided for informational purposes

[A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 16 here](#)]

Morris County moved the item, Union County seconded, and it carried unanimously.

Commissioner Sarnoski turned the meeting over to Hunterdon County Commissioner Zach Rich, Vice Chair of the Project Prioritization Committee to continue the meeting.

V. Action Items

Project Prioritization Committee

Commissioner Rich asked John Witsch, Central Staff, to present the two Project Prioritization Committee action items.

1. Minor Amendment to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Low Emissions Intermodal Trucks for Healthy Newark Communities Project in Essex County

Mr. Witsch said the Port Newark Container Terminal was awarded a Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities grant from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and has requested that this project be added to the TIP. This project will be programmed with \$2.2 million of the awarded funds and \$1.6 million of local match funds, totaling \$3.8 million for capital acquisition work in FY 2025. This project involves the replacement of twenty diesel trucks with low emission propane trucks, reducing pollution from idling trucks at the port, while modernizing infrastructure and strengthening supply chains.

[A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 27 here](#)]

Sussex County moved the item, Hudson County seconded, and it carried unanimously.

2. Minor Amendment to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Sayreville Waterfront Multimodal Transportation Improvement Project in Middlesex County

Mr. Witsch said the Sayreville Economic and Redevelopment Agency was awarded a Congressionally Directed Spending grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and has requested that the Sayreville Waterfront Multimodal Transportation Improvement Project be added to the TIP. This project will be programmed with \$1.3 million of the awarded funds for planning study work in FY 2025. The planning study will examine, identify, and assess the feasibility of multimodal connectivity between isolated parcels in the Sayreville waterfront redevelopment area in the South Amboy transit station and ferry terminal.

[A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 34](#) here]

Bergen County moved the item, Hunterdon County seconded, and it carried unanimously.

VI. Information Items

FY 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development

Vanessa Koenigkramer, Central Staff said the development of the FY2026 TIP is underway. Project meetings were held with the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) in November and December, and a meeting is scheduled in February for an update on the status and funding of projects. NJDOT has shared the project pool and Central Staff distributed the project pool analysis sheets to the subregions on February 5 to compare 2026 programmed information against the 2024 TIP.

Financial Plan Update: Route 72 Manahawkin Bay Bridges

Ms. Koenigkramer said the financial plan update for the Route 72 Manahawkin Bay Bridges complies with federal requirements for projects with a total cost between \$100 million and \$500 million dollars. The project involves the construction of a new structure parallel to and south of the existing Manahawkin Bay Bridge and the rehabilitation of the existing bridge and three trestle bridges over Hilliard's Thoroughfare, East Thoroughfare and West Thoroughfare. The anticipated completion date is in Spring 2025. Ms. Koenigkramer said the 2022 TIP was programmed and authorized to cover the updated cost. No additional money is needed, and there are no TIP revisions associated with this update.

VIII. Executive Director's Update

NJTPA Executive Director David Behrend said that the new Administration and Congress in Washington have raised questions about the future of federal funding for transportation and infrastructure investment. These issues are a priority for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) nationwide. The NJTPA is awaiting guidance from federal partners on what the recent executive orders might mean for the agency's work. Central Staff will adapt as necessary while staying aligned with our long-range plan and work program. NJTPA will keep everyone informed as more information is available. Mr. Behrend believes Congress and the Federal

Government recognize the essential role that NJTPA and other MPOs play in supporting regional infrastructure and helping counties and cities implement federally funded projects to improve transportation efficiency and access to opportunity. He encouraged Board members and attendees to share this message with their representatives in Washington.

Mr. Behrend reminded everyone about the upcoming [2025 NJ TransAction Conference](#). NJTPA is a sponsor, will staff a booth and participate in several panel discussions. Many Board members and staff will be in attendance. This conference is the largest annual gathering of the transportation community in New Jersey. For more details, visit njtransaction.com.

VIII. Written Information Items

Commissioner Rich read the titles of the following written items. There were no questions.

1. *Connecting Communities* Development and Outreach – Lois Goldman and Ted Ritter, Central Staff
2. Congestion Management Process Needs Identification – Eugene McGuinness, Central Staff
3. Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Solicitation – Sascha Frimpong, Central Staff

IX. Other Items

There were no other items to discuss.

X. **Next Meeting:** April 21, 2025, at 10:30 a.m. (Virtual)

XI. Adjournment

At 11:12 a.m., Morris County made a motion to adjourn, Ocean County seconded, and it carried unanimously.

JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING
ATTENDANCE
February 18, 2025

Project Prioritization Committee Members	
Peter Botsolas	Bergen County
Hon. Zachary Rich (Vice Chair)	Hunterdon County
Tom Malavasi	Hudson County
Michael Nei	Monmouth County
Hon. John Kelly	Ocean County
Andras Holzmann	Passaic County
Hon. Jack DeGroot	Sussex County
Alexis Franklin	Governor's Authorities Unit
Amanda Gendek	NJDOT
Megan Massey	NJ TRANSIT
Hon. Jason Sarnoski	Warren County
Michael Dannemiller	Middlesex County

Planning and Economic Development Committee Members	
Hon. Jason Sarnoski (Chair)	Warren County
Hon. Bette Jane Kowalski (Vice Chair)	Union County
Hon. Stephen Shaw	Morris County
Hon. John Kelly	Ocean County
Matt Loper	Somerset County
David Antonio	Essex County
Dolores Martinez Wooden	City of Newark
Elias Guseman	Jersey City
Alexis Franklin	Governor's Authorities Unit
Amanda Gendek	NJDOT
Megan Massey	NJ TRANSIT
Mary K. Murphy	PANYNJ

Other Attendees	
Various members of Central Staff	NJTPA
Hon. Paul Drake	Somerset County
Darius Sollohub	NJIT
Kevin Stephens	Morris County
Tanner Thul	Hudson County
Katherine Fullerton	Hunterdon County
Joseph Baladi	Bergen County
John Hayes	Morris County

Lou Luglio	
Bob Hornby	Hunterdon County
Trevor Howard	City of Newark
Jack Kanarek	Dewberry
Adam Bradford	Passaic County
Ryan Conklin	Warren County
Nathan Chadwick	NJ TRANSIT
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
David Schmetterer	Monmouth County
Robert Werkmeister	
Upenda Sapkota	Rails to Trails
Frank Bell	Hunterdon County
Bernice Dieter	
Max Carlson	Warren County
Ricardo Matias	Union County
Hon. Michele Delisfort	Union County
Kamal Saleh	Union County
Todd Goldman	PANYNJ
D. Roberts	Climate Revolution
Mark Jehnke	Ocean County