



## **Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC)**

David Antonio, Chair  
Andras Holzmann, Vice Chair

### **Meeting Minutes October 15, 2024**

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#### I. Roll call

RTAC Chair David Antonio called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Denise Truvillion, Central Staff, called the roll and 18 voting members were present.

#### II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2024, meeting was made by Passaic County, seconded by Somerset County and carried with two abstentions (Bergen County and City of Newark).

#### III. Presentation: The North Jersey Trail Network Initiative

Debra Kagan, Executive Director of New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition, and Tom Sexton, Northeast Regional Director of the Rails to Trails Conservancy, introduced the North Jersey Trail Network Initiative, which aims to develop a network of shared-use paths to enhance active transportation and recreational access while supporting sustainability, equitable mobility, and community development. [A summary of the presentation is included in the NJTPA Blog: [Regional Trail Network Initiative Aims to Identify Priorities.](#)]

Liza Betz, Union County noted that \$2.5 million in grants has been received by Union County for two bike paths including developing the Raritan Valley Rail Trail, which has gained momentum following community events. Union County resident Stephen Dunn said he is happy to see that more resources are being allocated towards this and other trails because there is a huge demand, especially with the threat of climate change and unsafe road conditions. The full presentation and discussion can be found here: <https://njtpa.org/Get-Involved/Info-Resources/Calendar/2024/October/RTAC-Meeting.aspx>

#### IV. Information Items

##### **Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory Summary**

Zenon Tech-Czarny, Central Staff, provided an update on the Regional Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory for fiscal years 2023-2024, focusing on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and GHG emissions in the NJTPA region. The inventory makes use of the EPA MOVES model and the Alternative Vehicle Fuel Technology (AVFT) file incorporating New Jersey's actual electric vehicle (EV) registrations. Key findings include:

- 2019–2021 Trends: VMT dropped by 6.51 percent due to the pandemic, with a 9-10 percent GHG reduction.
- Future Projections: VMT is expected to rise 8.28 percent by 2050. GHG reductions are forecasted at 36.96 percent (default model) and 45.29 percent (adjusted for NJ EV registrations).
- Challenges: Current forecasts suggest state and federal GHG reduction goals may not be met without further measures.

Future strategies include EPA's new vehicle standards, NJDOT's carbon reduction strategy, and regional climate action plans. A new GHG inventory report for FY 2023-2024 will feature updated data and reduction recommendations.

In response to a question regarding whether emission reduction modeling includes various e-bike expansion models, Mr. Tech-Czarny responded that this information has not been looked at in detail yet. He said some emission reduction modeling will be conducted as part of the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan that the NJTPA is working on with New York City and the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), which may include some active transportation bike lane modeling.

In response to a question asking if the modeling measured the reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> from swapping internal combustion engine to electric, Mr. Tech-Czarny responded that the modeling and forecasting used is based on existing data and trends in vehicle electrification, which could change.

##### **Draft Municipal and Traffic Analysis Zone Population and Employment Forecasts**

Eugene McGuinness, Central Staff, said the NJTPA is developing demographic and economic forecasts for 2050 for the upcoming Long Range Transportation Plan. Central Staff have been collaborating on this with NYMTC, and this past spring gathered feedback and produced final regional and county-level forecasts for population, households, and employment. Since then, Central Staff have been allocating these forecasts to municipalities and traffic analysis zones (TAZs). Central Staff has also incorporated data provided by many subregions, including approved developments and regional information on preserved land and other factors.

Mr. McGuinness said Central Staff expects to provide subregions workbooks for each county's municipal and TAZ allocations for review and comment soon. Web maps will also be available to visually track changes across the forecast horizon years. Once the forecasts are finalized, they will be applied in NJTPA and NYMTC's modeling for air quality conformity and long-range planning efforts.

### **FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program**

Angellita Young, Central Staff, provided an overview and update on the development of NJTPA's FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). She said a handout distributed for today's meeting included an overview of the UPWP development process, schedule, and the program structure and activities. It also included Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and NJTPA planning priorities and goals. [The handout is available [here](#).]

The work program includes chapters detailing Central Staff Activities, the Subregional Transportation Planning (STP) and Subregional Studies Programs, and the Transportation Management Association (TMA) Program. She said the first draft would be circulated for review in early December, with presentations at the December committee meetings. Final comments are due by January 10 and adoption is scheduled for the March Board meeting.

Ms. Young welcomed feedback and emphasized the collaborative development process.

### **Update on Connecting Communities: The NJTPA Long Range Transportation Plan**

Lois Goldman, Central Staff, expressed gratitude to everyone who participated in the October 10 Board visioning workshop, noting it was an engaging discussion and valuable in shaping the next Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), *Connecting Communities*, which has a [website](#). Emerging key themes for the plan include safety, equity, resilience, and multimodal transportation, encompassing active transportation, public transit, roadways, and freight. A new requirement for the plan is the inclusion of a housing element, involving an inventory of housing developments and their accessibility via regional transportation infrastructure.

Peter Zambito, Central Staff, highlighted the importance of subregional involvement in developing the financial element of the *Connecting Communities* plan. He said the financial consultants would discuss transportation needs, priorities, funding and planned projects with the subregions at an RTAC teleconference on November 8.

Ted Ritter, Central Staff, highlighted outreach efforts. The process will include committee reviews, a 30-day public comment period, and partner agency input, supported by an extensive public outreach program. Outreach efforts will include regionwide engagement through in-person and virtual events, online surveys, and the [Connecting Communities](#) website. It will include special efforts to reach diverse groups and young adults.

## Local Safety Action Plan Development Update

Keith Hamas, Central Staff, provided an update on the ongoing development of Local Safety Action Plans, a consultant-supported initiative aimed at reducing fatal and serious injury crashes. These plans align with the US Department of Transportation's Safe System Approach and the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program guidelines, ensuring eligibility for implementation funding. Participating counties include Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, and Warren.

Mr. Hamas said that county-specific websites were launched over the summer (visit [www.safetyplansnj.com](http://www.safetyplansnj.com)) featuring data dashboards, a survey, and an interactive web map to collect public input, with the survey and map open through October. The Safety Action Plan team has conducted pop-up outreach sessions at public events to gather feedback, with efforts continuing through October.

Mr. Hamas said that data analysis for each county is ongoing, and a second round of Local Implementation Committee meetings is scheduled for the fall to discuss strategies and countermeasures, which will form a primary output of the plans. These committees include planners, engineers, law enforcement, public health officials, and other stakeholders tasked with overseeing plan development and implementation. He said the plans will be finalized by Spring 2025.

He said NJTPA is also monitoring the progress of municipal and county grantees under the SS4A program, offering guidance and resources where needed. He said Central Staff is seeking to help advance the safety plans toward implementation in the FY 2026 UPWP.

### V. Written Information Items

The Chair said there were six written information items:

- Climate Action Plan Survey – Blythe Eaman, Central Staff
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Performance Plan – Rick Cippoletti, Central Staff
- Congestion Management Process Update – Eugene McGuinness, Central Staff
- Active Transportation Plan Data Viewer Tool – Keith Hamas, Central Staff
- Regional Capital Investment Strategy Update – Keith Miller, Central Staff
- Local Safety and High Risk Rural Roads Programs – Sascha Frimpong, Central Staff

Ms. Betz commented on the Active Transportation Plan Data Viewer Tool, saying that the maps highlighting areas along roadways for potential trails were too extensive and added that these maps do not include a disclaimer whether the suggested roadways have been vetted either by NJDOT or the County, or who the jurisdictions belong to. She said this could be misleading, especially to a non-professional looking at these maps. Ms. Goldman said Central Staff are looking at how this can be enhanced and explained on the website.

### VI. Review of Standing Committees Action Items

## **Planning and Economic Development Committee**

1. Amendment to the NJTPA Long Range Transportation Plan, to include the Resilience Improvement Plan

Blythe Eaman, Central Staff, said this is an amendment to the current LRTP to include the recently developed Resilience Improvement plan (RIP). [A summary of the action item is included in the agenda package for the Joint Committee meeting on page 17 [here.](#)] Ms. Eaman said the RIP was included in the packet and encouraged anyone with questions to contact her.

## **Project Prioritization Committee Action Items**

2. Approval of Regional Transportation Alternatives Program Projects

Sascha Frimpong, Central Staff, said the NJTPA and New Jersey's other two metropolitan planning organizations accepted proposals for the Regional Transportation Alternative Set Aside Program for FY 2024 to utilize federal funds for regionally significant transportation projects. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on page 81 [here.](#)] She congratulated Warren County for being selected for \$1.5 million in funding for the Morris Canal Greenway Inclined Plane 9 West to Strikers Road trail project.

3. Minor Amendments to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Increase and Align Federal Funds for a Program and a Project as Requested by
  - Mobility and Systems Engineering Program
  - Route 287, Route 202 Ramapo River Project

John Witsch, Central Staff, described these two minor amendments. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on page 87 [here.](#)]

4. Modification to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Increase Federal Funds on the Ferry Program as Requested by NJ TRANSIT – John Witsch, Central Staff

Mr. Witsch said this request is to add \$14.2 million dollars of FTA Passenger Ferry Grant Programs funding for engineering, right of way acquisition and construction. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on page 94 [here.](#)]

## **VII. Other Items for Discussion**

There were no other items for discussion.

## **VIII. RTAC Teleconference – November 8, 2024**

The Chair said the RTAC Teleconference scheduled for November 8 will focus on the LRTP financial element at Mr. Zambito mentioned.

IX. Next Meeting: December 9, 2024, 10:30 a.m.

The Chair said the next virtual RTAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 9, 2024.

Before the meeting concluded, Ken Wedeen, Somerset County, shared that the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, whose region includes four counties in New Jersey, is hiring a consultant to help these counties with the cross acceptance process required as part of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan update. He asked if the NJTPA could do this for the counties in its region. NJTPA Executive Director, David Behrend and Jeffrey Perlman, Central Staff, said they would further investigate this suggestion.

Adam Bradford, Passaic County, shared that the American Planning Association and the National Association of County Planners are accepting applications for the 2024 Project Awards Program. He encouraged subregions who have outstanding achievements to apply.

Ms. Betz suggested the RTAC leadership poll members to see if they would like to hold an in-person meeting. The Chair said it could be a good topic for the meeting on December 16 and since it is the last meeting of 2024, the committee can have discussions for 2025 going forward.

X. Adjournment

Union County moved adjournment and Somerset County seconded. Upon voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 11:53.

Regional Transportation Advisory Committee  
Attendance  
October 15, 2024

Voting Members	
David Antonio (Chair)	Essex County
Aam Bradford	Passaic County
Chris Helms	Bergen County
Tom Malavasi	Hudson County
Bob Hornby	Hunterdon County
Elias Guseman	City of Jersey City
Linda Weber	Middlesex County
Michael Nei	Monmouth County
John Hayes	Morris County
Trevor Howard	City of Newark
Ken Wedeen	Somerset County
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Liza Betz	Union County
Farzana Ahmed	NJDOT
Megan Massey	NJ TRANSIT
Jay Shuffield	PANYNJ
Laura Wilton	Governor's Authorities Unit
Charles Burton	Citizens' Representative
David Dech	Warren County
Other Attendees	
Various members	NJTPA Central Staff
Dolores Wooden	City of Newark
Mike Dannemiller	Middlesex County
Joseph Ettore	Monmouth County
Kevin Stephens	Morris County
Tanner Thul	Hudson County
Jack Kanarek	Dewberry
Jonathan Eagle	Somerset County
Tom Sexton	Rails to Trails Conservancy
Debra Kagan	New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition
Lou Luglio	HNTB
Andrew Mikesh	Northern Valley Greenway
Bettina Zimny	NV5
BikeWalk	Montclair
Michael Popovich	Monmouth County
Nathan Chadwick	NJ TRANSIT
Peter Kortright	Bergen County
Ruchi Shrivastava	HDR

Ryan Fisher	goHunterdon TMA