



PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE

Commissioner Charles Kenny – Chair
Commissioner Susan Soloway – Vice Chair

Joint Meeting Minutes December 16, 2024

I. Roll Call of Members

Warren County Commissioner Jason Sarnoski, Chair of the Planning and Economic Development Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:27 a.m. Denise Truvillion, Central Staff, called the roll. Eleven 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 October 21, 2024, meeting was made by Union County, seconded by City of Newark, and carried unanimously.

III. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Update

RTAC Chair David Antonio reported on the December 9 meeting, which featured a presentation from Michael Grant, Vice President of ICF on the NJTPA's Project Prioritization Scoring Process Update. This project, which began in the summer, will update the process for scoring projects during TIP development to better align with the Long Range Transportation Plan goals and Regional Capital Investment Strategy. The project includes extensive interagency coordination and engagement, including meetings with RTAC, subject matter experts, partner agencies and the Board standing committees to help gauge regional priorities going forward. This project is scheduled to be completed by June 2026.

RTAC was also briefed on five information items, including a Transportation Management Association report from Dan Callas, Avenues in Motion, which focused on local safety action plans; the FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); a Roadway Functional Class update; a Demographic and Employment Forecasts update; and the final draft Climate Action

Plan, which RTAC was asked to review. RTAC does not have a teleconference scheduled for January, but committee members were invited to the Technical Advisory Committee meeting for the Project Prioritization Scoring Process Update on January 10 at 10:30 am.

IV. Presentation

The planned presenter had a conflict and was unable to attend the meeting.

V. Action Items

Commissioner Sarnoski asked Keith Miller, Central Staff, to present the two Planning and Economic Development Committee action items.

Planning and Economic Development Committee

1. Adoption of NJTPA-Specific Roadway Safety Performance Measure Targets for 2025

Mr. Miller explained that adopting NJTPA-specific Roadway Safety Performance Targets for 2025 is an annual process that began in 2017. Since 2022, NJTPA has set its own regional safety targets, rather than adopting those set by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), aiming to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries by 2050. The 2025 targets were based on trend lines developed in 2022, reflecting the long-term goal. The five roadway safety performance measures include total crashes, fatality rates per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, serious injuries, serious injury rates, and combined non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. NJTPA must set these targets within 180 days of NJDOT reporting its targets to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which occurred in September. Data continues to show increases in fatalities and serious injuries, partly due to unsafe travel behaviors since the COVID-19 pandemic. Preliminary 2024 data suggest even higher totals. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 17](#) here]

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

2. Support for Adjusted Pavement and Bridge Performance Measure Targets Set by the New Jersey Department of Transportation

Mr. Miller said the NJTPA is being asked to support NJDOT's adjusted targets for six national pavement and bridge performance measures. These targets cover the 2022–2025 performance period. The NJTPA board initially adopted the targets in May 2023. He said that on October 1, 2024, NJDOT submitted a mid-performance progress report to FHWA for 2022–2023, detailing progress on four pavement condition measures and two bridge condition measures, rated as good, fair, or poor. NJDOT met two-year targets for non-interstate National Highway System (NHS) pavement and bridge conditions that were in poor condition but missed targets for the other four measures. Challenges included limited pavement improvements in primary directions, variability in data reporting to the nearest tenth of a percent, and aging infrastructure diverting resources to prevent further deterioration. NJDOT adjusted its four-year targets for all six measures based on updated projections in the 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP), accounting for anticipated

declines in conditions. In conclusion, Mr. Miller added that as per FHWA regulations, MPOs must decide within 180 days whether to support adjusted statewide targets or establish new metropolitan area targets. This action reaffirms the NJTPA's support for NJDOT's adjusted targets. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 25](#) here]

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

Commissioner Sarnoski turned the meeting over to Middlesex County Commissioner Charles Kenny, Chair of the Project Prioritization Committee.

Project Prioritization Committee

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

1. Minor Amendment to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Align and Increase Federal Funds on the CR 508 (Bridge Street), Bridge over Passaic River Project in Essex and Hudson Counties

Mr. Witsch said Essex County requested this action to align anticipating funding needs for this project by reprogramming \$7 million of Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) funds for final design from FY 2024 to FY 2025 and increasing the funding amount by \$15.2 million. This request also includes advancing \$100,000 of STBGP funding for right of way from FY 2026 to FY 2025 and adding another \$6.4 million for that phase of work. The NJTPA Future Projects Program line item has funds available for the project's needs. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 31](#) here.]

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

2. Minor Amendment to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Route 7, Kearny Drainage Improvements Project in Hudson County

Mr. Witsch said NJDOT is requesting this project be added to the TIP. The project will be programmed with \$26 million of federal Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program funds and \$7 million of state funds for construction in FY 2025. These funds were programmed in the FY 2022 TIP and FHWA approved advancing the project to construction in FY 2023. However, the INFRA funds only recently became available for obligation, so the project needs to be reprogrammed in the current TIP to proceed with federal authorization. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 38](#) here]

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

3. Modification to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Add Federal Funds to the Other Rail Station/Terminal Improvements Program

Mr. Witsch said NJ TRANSIT is requesting \$13.2 million of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 funds be added to the TIP to support the design and construction of the Long Branch Station Pedestrian Tunnel project in Monmouth County. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 42 here.](#)]

NJ TRANSIT moved the item, Passaic County seconded, and it carried unanimously.

4. Modifications to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program to Add Federal Funds to Two Projects in Bergen County

Mr. Witsch said NJDOT is requesting \$6.54 million of Bridge Formula Program (BFP) funds be added to the TIP for right of way in FY 2025 for the Route 4, Grand Avenue Bridge project to accommodate PSE&G utility relocations.

NJDOT is also requesting \$8.9 million in BFP funds be added to the TIP in FY 2025 for construction of the Route 4, Hackensack River Bridge project. The additional funding covers estimated cost increases including line items for mobilization, maintenance, protection of traffic, construction, engineering and inspection. It also includes recent increases in bid prices, in-depth subsurface investigations to mitigate unanticipated site conditions, contingency costs, and compensation for fluctuating fuel prices. The project is expected to be authorized for construction in late 2025 and completed in 2031. [A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on [page 46 here.](#)]

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

VI. Information Items

FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Angellita Young, Central Staff, said the FY 2026 UPWP has been posted on the NJTPA website [here](#), and was submitted to NJDOT on December 6. It was also emailed to the Board and RTAC members. Comments on the draft are requested by January 10, so that feedback can be incorporated into the final draft, which will be presented to the Joint Committee Meeting in February and the March Board meeting. Among new proposed activities for FY 2026:

- Systems Planning, Data, and Forecasting: NJTPA Travel Model Applications (with NJIT) and Regional Household Travel Survey (with the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council).
- Long-Range Transportation Planning: Active Transportation Plan refinement and Safe Streets and Roads for All advancement program.
- Environmental and Sustainability Planning: FY 2026 Emerging Centers Program and Complete Streets Technical Assistance.
- Freight Planning: Exploring freight industrial opportunities.
- Capital Programming: Development and adoption of the FY 2026 TIP.

- Local Project Development: New rounds of local concept development studies, local safety, and rural road projects, plus a pilot trail crossing safety improvement project.
- Communications and Public Affairs: Expanding accessibility standards on social media and websites, and innovative public engagement with assistance from Rutgers.

Two Subregional Studies are also recommended for FY 2026: Middlesex County Transportation and Mobility Plan and Passaic County Urban Core Trucking Study. [A handout with details is available [here](#).]

Roadway Functional Class Update

Mr. Miller said the functional classification updates are the second step of a process that began with the updated urban boundaries that the NJTPA Board endorsed earlier this year. He said functional classification is important because it relates to highway design, criteria, and applicability of federal funding. The NJDOT made limited changes from the 2010 classification, which is the last time this was done, and comments on these and any other potential changes were solicited from RTAC. Once the NJDOT finalizes the functional classification map, the NJTPA Board will be asked to endorse it.

VIII. Executive Director's Update

NJTPA Executive Director David Behrend said President-elect Trump announced in December that Sean Duffy, former Wisconsin Representative, will be nominated as Secretary of Transportation. Duffy served in Congress from 2010 to 2019 and recently co-hosted *The Bottom Line* on Fox Business. Representative Sam Graves of Missouri will continue as Chair of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, focusing on the next long-term surface transportation reauthorization bill. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act expires September 30, 2026.

In other news, the Gateway Development Commission announced in December that the Tonelle Avenue Bridge and Utility Relocation Project in North Bergen is over 50 percent complete, on schedule, and on budget. This phase is expected to finish in 2025, enabling tunnel boring to begin in 2026. NJ TRANSIT President and CEO Kevin Corbett will resign effective January 15. Kris Kolluri, former NJDOT Commissioner and CEO of the Gateway Development Commission, was confirmed as his replacement.

In conclusion, Mr. Behrend thanked the NJTPA staff, the Board, subregions, and partner agencies for a productive year and wished everyone happy holidays.

VIII. Written Information Items

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

1. Local Safety Action Plan Development Update – Keith Hamas, Central Staff
2. *Connecting Communities: The NJTPA Long Range Transportation Plan* Update – Lois Goldman, Ted Ritter, Peter Zambito – Central Staff

3. Project Prioritization Scoring Process Update – John Witsch
4. Accessibility and Mobility Regional Reassessment Update – Eugene McGuinness, Central Staff
5. Demographic and Employment Forecasts Update – Eugene McGuinness, Central Staff
6. Air Quality Conformity Determination Procedures – Liz DeRuchie, Central Staff
7. Climate Action Plan- Blythe Eaman, Central Staff

IX. Other Items

There were no other items to discuss.

X. **Next Meeting:** February 18, 2025, at 10:30 a.m. (Virtual)

XI. Adjournment

At 11:13 a.m., Ocean County made a motion to adjourn, Passaic County seconded, and it carried unanimously.

JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING
ATTENDANCE
December 16, 2024

| Project Prioritization Committee Members | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Charles Kenny (Chair) | Middlesex County |
| Hon. Susan Soloway (Vice Chair) | Hunterdon County |
| Peter Botsolas | Bergen County |
| Tom Malavasi | Hudson County |
| Hon. John Kelly | Ocean County |
| John Bartlett | Passaic County |
| Tom Drabic | Sussex County |
| Laura Wilton | Governor's Authorities Unit |
| Eric Powers | NJDOT |
| Megan Massey | NJ TRANSIT |
| Hon. Jason Sarnoski | Warren County |

| Planning and Economic Development Committee Members | |
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| Hon. Jason Sarnoski (Chair) | Warren County |
| Hon. Bette Jane Kowalski (Vice Chair) | Union County |
| Hon. Stephen Shaw | Morris County |
| Hon. John Kelly | Ocean County |
| Sara Sooy | Somerset County |
| David Antonio | Essex County |
| Dolores Martinez Wooden | City of Newark |
| Elias Guseman | Jersey City |
| Laura Wilton | Governor's Authorities Unit |
| Eric Powers | NJDOT |
| Megan Massey | NJ TRANSIT |
| Jay Shuffield | PANYNJ |

| Other Attendees | |
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| Kevin Stephens | Morris County |
| Tanner Thul | Hudson County |
| Gregory Smith | Ocean County |
| Adam Iaccheo | Alaccheo |
| Katherine Fullerton | Hunterdon County |
| Janice Marino-Doyle | NJDOT |
| Walter Lane | Somerset County |
| John Hayes | Morris County |
| Various members of Central Staff | NJTPA |
| David Dech | Warren County |

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| Bob Hornby | Hunterdon County |
| Ricardo Matias | Union County |
| John Hayes | Morris County |
| Ken Wedeen | Somerset County |
| Linda Weber | Middlesex County |
| Trevor Howard | City of Newark |
| Jack Kanarek | Dewberry |
| Andras Holzmann | Passaic County |
| Jon Bartlett | Passaic County |
| Matt Wagner | |
| Adam Bradford | Passaic County |
| JMAGRON | |
| Mike Manzella | Jersey City |
| Luis Delgado | Hudson TMA |
| Ryan Conklin | Warren County |
| Nathan Chadwick | NJ TRANSIT |