



PROJECT PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE

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

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Commissioner Michèle Delisfort – Chair
Commissioner Jack DeGroot – Vice Chair

Joint Meeting Minutes February 17, 2026

I. Roll Call of Members

Warren County Commissioner Jason J. Sarnoski, Chair of the Project Prioritization Committee (PPC), called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Denise Truvillion, Central Staff, called the roll and 13 members of the PPC and 12 members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee (PEDC) were present (Attachment 1).

II. Approval of Minutes

Middlesex County moved the minutes of the December 15, 2025 joint committee meeting, Monmouth seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

III. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Update

Andras Holzmann, RTAC Chair, reported on the February 9 meeting. The meeting featured a presentation on the transportation impacts of Jersey City's strong growth on the City and Hudson County. Elias Guseman from Jersey City said future growth is moving toward the West Side, Journal Square, and Bergen-Lafayette neighborhoods. Kevin Force from Hudson County noted the county is looking at a Bus Rapid Transit Study for John F. Kennedy Boulevard to improve efficiency, and he said the recent West Hudson Circulation Study showed that people want better options for getting to government services in Jersey City. Five information items included updates on the Project Prioritization Scoring Process; Complete Streets Technical Assistance Program; the Financial Plan for Route 206 from Doctors Way to Valley Road, and Valley Road to Brown Avenue; Regional electric vehicle registrations; and the state's annual transportation conference, TransAction. Two additional written information items included a new consultant effort to support Local Safety Action Plan Advancement and updates to the NJTPA's Regional

Performance Measures Dashboard. RTAC was also briefed on the action items before the Project Prioritization and Planning & Economic Development committees today.

IV. Presentation: Project Prioritization Scoring Process Update

Michael Grant, Vice President at ICF, gave an update on the Project Prioritization Scoring Process. He confirmed that the project has entered its final stages after beginning in mid-2024.

The process has moved from researching best practices to developing specific scoring methodologies and includes input from RTAC and various subject matter experts. The updated scoring framework process is designed to be more transparent and web based. It categorizes projects into three distinct buckets; each scored on a 1,000-point scale:

- Local Highway and Bridge: Funded through the Local Capital Project Delivery Program.
- State Highway and Bridge: Advisory scores provided to the NJDOT.
- Transit Projects: A newly reinstated category providing advisory scores for NJ TRANSIT projects.

Mr. Grant said the scoring criteria are grouped into seven goal areas that align with *Connecting Communities: The NJTPA Long Range Transportation Plan*, adopted in September 2025.

Key takeaways included:

- Safety and System Condition: These remain the top priorities, accounting for 50 percent of the total score.
- Flexibility: While weights are generally consistent, the team moved "Public Safety and Security" under the Resilience and Environment goal following feedback.
- Methodology: The process uses 22 unique criteria. While most apply across all categories, specific factors (like transit asset condition vs. pavement condition) are tailored to the project type.

The seven goal areas include:

- Safety: Focuses on crash data, vulnerable road users (bicyclists/pedestrians), and safe systems features.
- State of Good Repair: Primarily addresses infrastructure in poor condition and preventative maintenance.
- Land Use & Vibrant Communities: Supports placemaking, transit-oriented development, and active transportation.
- Resilience & Environment: Covers flooding risk, stormwater, land stewardship, and emissions.
- System Efficiency: Focuses on travel time reliability.

- Economic Competitiveness: Prioritizes goods movement, access to economic drivers, and brownfield redevelopment.
- Opportunities for All: Focuses on removing physical barriers and providing benefits to low-income, youth, and elderly populations.

In conclusion, Mr. Grant said the project is on track for a spring rollout. A presentation to the NJTPA joint committees of the board is scheduled for next week, and board approval is scheduled for the March 2026 meeting. The final phase includes completion of the Criteria Rulebook, finalizing the web application, and providing technical training for users.

Additional questions and answers related to the presentation can be found on the meeting recording located [here](#). The full presentation can be found [here](#).

V. Action Items

Project Prioritization Committee

Commissioner Sarnoski called on NJTPA Central Staff members to present the PPC action items.

1. Updated Transportation Improvement Program Project Prioritization Criteria.

John Witsch said this action is for the approval of the recently updated Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Prioritization Criteria, which Mr. Grant presented. Central Staff coordinated with partner agencies and RTAC to align criteria with federal requirements from the most recent transportation bill and priorities of the NJTPA Board. The new criteria include detailed questions and new data sources to enhance and better evaluate projects. Consultants and team members will deliver a Criteria Rulebook documenting definitions, weights, and guidelines for incorporation into an application that will streamline the project scoring process. NJTPA will begin using the updated system to evaluate projects for inclusion in the FY 2028 TIP.

A summary of the action item is included in the agenda package on page 15 [here](#).

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

2. Minor Amendments to the FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program to Add Federal Funds to One Program and Two Projects

- Planning, Federal-Aid, Statewide
- Route 1, Northbound Bridge over Raritan River, Middlesex County
- Route 23, Route 80 and Route 46 Interchange, Passaic County

John Witsch said the request is to add \$19.3 million in State Planning & Research funds for Planning Studies to the Planning, Federal-Aid program line in Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 to support the SPR/Management Systems and FHWA work programs.

The Route 1, Northbound Bridge over Raritan River project request is to add \$27 million of Bridge Formula Program funds for Construction in FY 2026 to cover a cost estimate increase due to inflation and support for inspection services and on-site engineers during repairs.

The Route 23, Route 80 and Route 46 Interchange project request is to add \$47.4 million of Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for Construction in FY 2026 to cover costs indicated in the financial plan. This includes replacement of parapets and decking on the Route 80 eastbound bridge over the Passaic River, upgrades to the barriers along Ramp CD, and unit price adjustments.

A summary of the action item is included in the agenda package on page 55 [here](#).

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

3. Minor Amendment to the FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program to Transfer NJTPA Carbon Reduction Program Funds to Small/Special Services Program for Local Mobility Initiatives Projects

Jasmine Lawrence said this action item informs the committee that NJTPA has selected two projects to advance through the Local Mobilities Initiative Program, the Jersey City Protected Bike Parking Expansion and the Jersey City Bike Share Expansion. The NJTPA will use Carbon Reduction Funds for these projects.

A summary of the action item is included in the agenda package for the Joint Committee meeting on page 82 [here](#).

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

Modifications to the FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program to Add Federal Funds to One Program and Three Projects

- Statewide Traffic Operations and Support Program
- Cutters Dock Road, Bridge Over North Jersey Coast Line, Middlesex County
- Route 18, Bridge over Conrail, Middlesex County
- Route 23, High Crest Drive to Macopin River, Passaic County

Mr. Witsch said the Statewide Traffic Operations and Support Program request is to add \$14.3 million in National Highway Performance Program funds for engineering and construction in FY 2026 to support mobility operations, safety service patrol, and incident management response.

The Cutters Dock Road, Bridge Over North Jersey Coast Line project request is to add \$6.5million Bridge Formula Program funds for Right-of-Way acquisition and relocation in FY 2026.

The Route 18, Bridge over Conrail project request is to add \$8.6 million of Bridge Formula Program funds for construction in FY 2026 to cover construction increases due to new structural

design, rising unit prices, utility relocation needs, and construction engineering and inspection costs.

Route 23, High Crest Drive to Macopin River project request is to add \$13.2 million of National Highway Performance Program funds for construction in FY 2026 to cover inflation, high friction surface costs over the entire project limits, and wall design revisions.

A summary of the action item is included in the agenda package on page 89 [here](#).

The Citizens Representative moved the item, NJ TRANSIT seconded, and it carried unanimously.

4. Modifications to the FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program to Transfer Federal Funds from the Metropolitan Planning Program to the Transit Enhancements Program

Mr. Witsch said this request is to reallocate \$1 million in Urbanized Surface Transportation Grant funds for Planning Studies in FY 2026 from the Metropolitan Planning Program to the Transit Enhancements Program. The funds will support survey work on the NJ TRANSIT Raritan Valley Line, Northeast Corridor, and North Jersey Coast Line.

A summary of the action item is included in the agenda package on page 96 [here](#).

Monmouth County moved the item, Governor's Authorities Unit seconded, and it carried unanimously.

Planning and Economic Development Committee

Commissioner Delisfort called on Angellita Young, Central Staff, to present the PEDC action item.

1. FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Ms. Young said each year the NJTPA develops the UPWP and budget. This document details all Central Staff tasks and projects managed by our consultants and subrecipients.

The UPWP also highlights the vital work our subregions and transportation management associations (TMAs) do to help us meet our long-range goals and stay aligned with federal planning priorities.

Ms. Young said the draft was distributed for review in December 2025, and feedback was received from NJDOT and our federal sponsors. A full list of comments and responses is included in today's handout. The handout also contains an updated draft of the budget summary with charts for expenditures and revenues, a list of new consultants, subrecipient projects, and the pass-through programs for the coming year.

Ms. Young said minor adjustments were made to the budget related to fine-tune operations and staff time allocations. . The general feedback was focused on gaining clarity regarding Central Staff activities and specific budgets for the subregions and TMAs. Revised drafts to select

chapters have been posted to the NJTPA website for review, with the exception of Chapter 4, which covers regional transportation planning initiatives other agencies are undertaking for informational purposes. That chapter will be finalized soon.

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

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

VI. Information Items

Commissioner Delisfort introduced Vanessa Koenigkramer, Central Staff, to present the information item.

1. Financial Plan Update: Route 206, Doctors Way to Valley Road, and Valley Road to Brown Avenue

Ms. Koenigkramer said recipients of federal funds for projects with a total cost over \$100 million are required to prepare a financial plan prior to the first construction authorization and annual updates until its completion.

NJDOT prepared the initial financial plan for this project in 2017 and updates it annually. NJDOT provided a draft copy for Central Staff's review for consistency with the TIP. This project proposes a new roadway alignment bypass from Route 206 over Pike Run, south of Mountain View Road, to Doctors Way in Hillsboro Township and widening of existing 206 between Doctors Way and the Somerville Circle in Hillsboro Township, Somerville Borough, Raritan Borough, and Bridgewater Township.

She said the project aims to improve safety, capacity, and level of service throughout the 206 corridor. The remaining construction costs are divided into two contracts. Valley Road to Brown Avenue is in final design, with construction anticipated to start in October 2027 and be completed by fall 2030. Doctors Way to Valley Road is under construction and is expected to be completed in Spring 2027. The project has expended \$383 million. The most recent update reflects a current project cost of \$559 million, an increase of \$12 million from the previous plan update. Funding changes for Doctors Way to Valley Road include increases for change orders related to flooding repairs, as well as detention basin and noise barrier work. Additional funding for Valley Road to Brown Avenue was needed for the design phase to be reestablished in the current TIP. The 2026 TIP was programmed adequately to cover all changes and does not need to be revised, and the update does not affect the project's air quality conformity determination.

VII. Commissioner Delisfort read the written items submitted by Central Staff and asked for questions from the committee members and participants. There were no questions.

1. NJTPA Support for Local Safety Action Plan Advancement – Lois Goldman, Central Staff
2. NJ TransAction Conference Update – Ted Ritter, Central Staff
3. Updates to NJTPA Regional Performance Measures Dashboard – Keith Miller, Central Staff

VIII. Executive Director's Update

Mr. Behrend said the recently signed funding package for the USDOT indicates that our funding remains stable, and core funding MPOs and transit agencies rely on is preserved. The bill also reclaims slow moving Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funds and redirects them to projects that are shovel-ready and can be delivered immediately. There is more than \$100 million earmarked for planning and capital expenses for FIFA World Cup host areas.

IIJA expires on September 30, and it is unlikely we will see full reauthorization before the midterm elections. Congress has never passed the transportation bill on time, and we expect a short-term extension until it is passed.

In addition, a new bipartisan bill called the Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act was just introduced. It is backed by a large coalition of local officials (LOT Coalition) and aims to give local MPOs more control over federal dollars.

If this passes, five key things can be expected:

- **Bridge Funding:** Directs money to the bridges that need repair, regardless of who owns them (local vs. state).
- **Flexibility:** Increases funding for the Surface Transportation Block Grant, our most flexible funding.
- **Safety First:** Boosts safety funding and ensures 25 percent of those dollars are delivered regionally.
- **Transparency:** Mandates better collaboration between federal, state, and local partners.
- **Smart Planning:** Increases formula dollars for planning to ensure we're picking the right projects from the start.

In conclusion, Mr. Behrend gave an update on Gateway funding, which is our region's top priority. He said that following a court order, \$30 million was released for the Hudson River tunnel project, allowing the Gateway Development Commission to restart work. There is still \$175 million being withheld that needs to be restored. He added that he would continue to keep everyone informed about the project's status.

IX. Other Items

Commissioner Delisfort reminded attendees that the Freight Initiatives Committee meeting will be held in the afternoon and thanked everyone for their participation.

There were no other items to discuss.

X. Next Meeting

April 20, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. (Virtual)

XI. Adjournment

At 11:22 a.m., the Port Authority made a motion to adjourn, Morris County seconded, and it carried unanimously.

**JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING
ATTENDANCE
February 17, 2026**

Project Prioritization Committee Members	
Hon. Jason J. Sarnoski, Chair	Warren County
Joseph Baladi	Bergen County
Mark Kataryniak	Hudson County
Hon. Susan Soloway	Hunterdon County
Hon. Charles Kenny	Middlesex County
Michael Nei	Monmouth County
Andras Holzmann	Passaic County
Hon. Jack DeGroot	Sussex County
Amanda Gendeck	NJDOT
Hon. Frank Sadeghi	Ocean County
Blair Gerold	Governor's Authorities Unit
Megan Massey	NJ TRANSIT
Charles Burton	Citizens Representative
Planning and Economic Development Committee Members	
Hon. Michèle Delisfort, Chair	Union County
Hon. Jack DeGroot, Vice Chair	Sussex County
David Antonio	Essex County
Charles Burton	Citizens Representative
Blair Gerold	Governor's Authorities Unit
Hon. Charles Kenny	Middlesex County
Hon. Stephen Shaw	Morris County
Trevor Howard	City of Newark
Amanda Gendeck	NJDOT
Megan Massey	NJ TRANSIT
Jay Shuffield	Port Authority of NY & NJ
Hon. Sara Sooy	Somerset County
Other Attendees	
Various members of Central Staff	NJTPA
Michael Grant	IFC
Alan Hunt Bob Hornby	Hunterdon County
Amy Polachak	NJDOT
Antonio Scanziani	
GRE	
Jash Gill	
John Hayes	Morris County

RJ Paladino Nathan Chadwick Michael Dannemiller	NJ TRANSIT
Ken Wedeen	Somerset County
Meghna Hari	
Michael Manzella	NJDOT
Nida Khan	Jacobs
Tanner Thul	Hudson County
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Bob Wekmeister	
Ryan Conklin	Warren County
Scott Parker	Jacobs
Syd Chan	