



## Event Summary

# “Connecting Communities: Our Transportation Future Begins!”

Location: Newark, NJ

Date: Saturday, September 22, 2025, 2:00 to 3:45 pm



### About UpNext North Jersey

UpNext North Jersey (UpNext) is an advisory group that engages young North Jersey residents in a dialogue with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA). The NJTPA seeks to better understand the values and needs of this demographic group regarding key transportation issues. The NJTPA provides UpNext members with unique opportunities to learn about and discuss timely topics related to regional planning and public policy, develop a network of peers who share similar interests, and engage with regional thought leaders and decision-makers.

The Public Outreach and Engagement Team (POET), part of the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University, collaborated with the NJTPA to plan and conduct this in-person meeting on September 20, 2025, in Newark, NJ, to enhance the group’s understanding of the NJTPA’s newly adopted Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). This was the first UpNext event of Fiscal Year 2026.

### Overview of *Our Next Move: The Region, the Subregions, and YOU* Meeting

UpNext members, NJTPA staff, and POET staff met at Newark’s Riverfront Park at a newly opened section of the park called “The Notch.” This in-person meeting included short introductions by NJTPA and POET staff, including Eugene McGuinness, the NJTPA’s Principal Planner of Performance Analysis. Attendees shared their professional backgrounds as well as their interests in transportation planning.

McGuinness presented on the newly adopted LRTP, called “Connecting Communities,” and introduced the breadth

of the NJTPA's work, including bike infrastructure, accessibility in public transportation, and travel demand modeling. Members asked follow-up questions about these topics and discussed their experiences with various transportation infrastructure throughout the region.



## Agenda

*2:00 to 2:10 pm – Arrival*

*2:10 to 2:25 pm – Introduction and icebreaker, POET staff*

*2:25 to 2:40 pm – NJTPA Presentation by Eugene McGuinness, NJTPA staff*

*2:40-3:45 pm – Follow-up discussion*

## Attendance

Five UpNext members attended this event.

## Feedback

UpNext members discussed their interests and experience in transportation planning. Some members are established professionals with several years of experience in planning, marketing, and environmental education; others are at an earlier stage in their careers and are navigating graduate school. Members are interested in having a mix of in-person and virtual UpNext events that allow them to network with their peers and transportation planning professionals. Some members expressed interest in having an NJTPA website review meeting to become familiar with NJTPA programs and opportunities that may be relevant for their professional projects. In summary, this in-person meeting provided members with a high-level overview of the NJTPA's LRTP as well as an opportunity to network with their peers and share their feedback on the types of activities they would like UpNext to offer.