



Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC)

Andras Holzmann, Chair
Ryan Conklin, Vice Chair

Meeting Minutes August 10, 2026

I. Roll call

RTAC Chair Andras Holzmann called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Denise Truvillion, Central Staff, called the roll and 17 voting members were present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Union County moved the minutes of the June 8, 2026 meeting, Somerset County seconded, and the motion carried with one abstention from Bergen County.

III. Presentation: Discover Elizabeth Culture and Arts (DECA) Placemaking Plan – Cate Heady, Research Project Coordinator, Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center, Rutgers University

Ms. Heady presented an overview of the recently completed placemaking plan for Midtown Elizabeth, a special improvement district in the city. The project was completed through the NJTPA's Vibrant Places Program, which provides funding to the Placemaking, Outreach and Engagement Team at the Voorhees Transportation Center to provide municipal technical assistance. The District of Elizabeth Culture and Arts, a partnership between the Elizabeth Development Company, [City of Elizabeth](#), [Midtown Elizabeth Special Improvement District](#) and other local stakeholders, applied to the NJTPA's program for help developing a shared vision for the area that infuses public art directly into streetscaping, district programming, and physical activation. Community engagement for the plan was conducted via an online and printed bilingual (English/Spanish) questionnaire, direct canvassing, library info tables, and pop-up outreach at community events.

The feedback collected showed a high interest in:

- Themes reflecting local culture and diversity, Elizabeth's history, local pride, and natural elements.
- Events and programs targeting children, older adults, and specialized community groups.
- A strong demand for functional art (art integrated into infrastructure and lighting), and plans for addressing pedestrian safety and area security.

Recommendations included:

- Rebranding suggestions, such as changing the committee's name from District of Elizabeth Culture and Arts to Discover Elizabeth Culture and Arts — retaining the same DECA acronym — to distinguish it from the Midtown Elizabeth Special Improvement District.

- Expanding the brand color palette to better reflect the area's diverse immigrant communities.
- Prioritizing art near bus stops, train stations, intersections, and crosswalks (including daylighting with artistic elements).
- Enhanced entrances to the district's key transit points, parking facilities, and the River Trail with distinct branding and public art.
- Art projections at the train station where physical mural installation and scaffolding present spatial challenges.

Ms. Heady said additional recommendations included displaying art in vacant storefront windows, using parking lots as temporary gathering areas, pop-up venues, or stages, and establishing a database of local artists who could create murals, sculptures, installations, and functional art as funding becomes available. The plan also identified vacant and underutilized areas that could be transformed into child-friendly spaces, such as playgrounds featuring interactive musical instruments were also included.

The project's funding and implementation strategy involved combining NJTPA technical assistance, state/federal programs, and local funding, emphasizing public-private partnerships, and leveraging existing relationships with the Midtown Elizabeth Improvement District.

Next steps for the project include:

- Embedding the interactive public art map onto the DECA website.
- Continue building the artist registry via the online portal.
- Pursuing public-private funding opportunities for initial functional art and streetscaping projects.

The meeting presentation and recording can be found [here](#).

IV. Information Items

TMA Update – Avnish Gupta, EZ Ride

Mr. Gupta, COO and General Counsel of EZ Ride, gave a detailed overview of regional Transportation Management Association (TMA) human services transportation programs in partnership with county agencies. He discussed the funding structures, technological integrations, emerging transit needs, and key operational challenges across various New Jersey counties. While each of the TMAs offer different programs and services, they experience common challenges serving these populations, which include seniors, people with disabilities and low-income residents:

Emerging Needs

- Non-emergency medical transportation demand has significantly outpaced traditional paratransit capacities statewide.
- Human services and judicial programs require mobility plans embedded directly into initial case management.
- Growing reliance on Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) across all transit agencies.

Gaps & Limitations

- TNCs (Uber/Lyft) offer curb-to-curb service only, lacking higher levels of personal care during transport.
- Rural regions face continuous driver shortages.
- Lack of wheelchair-accessible vehicles (WAV) within existing TNC networks (EZ Ride is collaborating with NJ TRANSIT and Uber Health to pilot a solution).

Systemic Challenges

- High out-of-pocket costs remain a barrier for unsubsidized seniors and low-income residents.
- Programs require continuous, multi-year funding sources; single-instance grants are insufficient for long-term viability.
- Balancing simple, friction-free rider intake with strict compliance, eligibility, and reporting controls required by funding entities.

The presentation and recording can be found [here](#).

FY 2028 Subregional Transportation Planning (STP) Program Solicitation Comments – Frank Tolbert, Central Staff

Mr. Tolbert said the NJTPA is preparing to release the FY 2028 STP solicitation. The previous year's solicitation was shared with RTAC on July 15 to gather input and identify clarifications or improvements before the FY 2028 solicitation is finalized. Mr. Tolbert thanked the subregions that submitted comments and said the NJTPA is reviewing feedback and will incorporate revisions where appropriate. Additional information about the Zoning Atlas and questions about the cost tracking system will also be addressed. Comments on the solicitation are due by close of business today.

He said the NJTPA anticipates that the FY 2028 STP Program will largely continue the framework established in FY 2027. One area of focus for FY 2028 will be preparing for the next Long-range Transportation Plan update. The updated plan will be adopted during the first quarter of FY 2030. Subregions may be asked to assist with data requests, outreach, and other related activities. The FY 2028 solicitation is scheduled for release during the week of August 24 and subregions would have about two weeks to submit draft work programs.

Mr. Tolbert thanked everyone for their continued cooperation and asked anyone with questions to contact him at FETolbert@njtpa.org.

Financial Plan Update – Vanessa Koenigkramer, Central Staff

Ms. Koenigkramer presented a financial plan update for the Rumson-Sea Bright Bridge project in Monmouth County. Recipients of federal funds for projects with a total cost over \$100 million are required to prepare a financial plan prior to construction authorization and submit annual updates until completion of the project. The first plan was completed in 2020 and has been updated annually. This is the last update as the new bridge opened last summer. The most recent update reflects a total project cost of \$133.3 million, with no increase from the previous plan update.

This project included construction of a new bridge south of the original bridge, improvements to the intersection of Rumson Road, County Route 520, and Ward Avenue in the borough of Rumson, and improvements to Rumson Road and Route 36 in the Borough of Sea Bright. This is the first project completed through the NJTPA's Local Capital Project Delivery Program.

Competitive Grants and Congressionally Directed Spending Update – John Witsch, Central Staff

Mr. Witsch highlighted two federal grants that were recently added to the FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as informational modifications. The first was a request from Passaic County to add the Paterson-Newark Transit Market Project to the TIP. The county received a \$1.2 million congressionally directed spending grant from the Federal Transit Administration to further study and design a potential new transit service between Paterson and Newark along the existing Newark Industrial Track freight rail corridor. This service was first explored in the Paterson-Newark Transit Market Study, completed in 2020 through the NJTPA's Subregional Studies Program.

The second request was from Hudson County, to add a \$5 million congressionally directed spending grant from the Federal Highway Administration to the TIP for the County Route 508 (Newark-Jersey City Turnpike) Route 280 to Route 7 Project. This project involves safety improvements, including roadway resurfacing and striping, traffic signal upgrades, upgrading existing guide rails, and end treatments.

V. Written Information Items

The Chair read the titles of the two written information items and the relevant Central Staff members. There were no questions about these items:

1. Active Transportation Plan Refinement Website and Survey – Peter Zambito, Central Staff
2. Public Comment Period on Draft NJTPA Public Engagement Plan – Melissa Hayes, Central Staff

VI. Review of Standing Committees Action Items

Project Prioritization Committee

1. Minor Amendment to the FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program as requested by New Jersey Department of Transportation
 - South Main Street, Bridge over Washington Secondary (Conrail) Project, Warren County

Ms. Koenigkramer said this request will add the project to the FY 2026-2029 TIP and is necessary for bridge emergency repairs and replacement. \$2.6 million of National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) funds for Preliminary Engineering in Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2027, \$2.9 million of NHPP funds for Final Design in FY 2030, \$634,000 of NHPP funds for Right-of-Way in FY 2030 and \$10 million of NHPP funds for Construction in FY 2032.

A summary of the action item is included in the agenda package for the Joint Committee meeting on page 14 [here](#).

2. Modification to the FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program as requested by New Jersey Department of Transportation
 - Route 440, Route 95 to Kreil Street Project, Middlesex County

Ms. Koenigkramer said this action item is a modification to the TIP for the Route 440, Route 95 to Kreil St Project in Middlesex County. The request is to add \$6 million of NHPP funds for final design in FY 2026, increasing the total to \$24 million. This action is necessary to support an estimated increase in final design for roadway, structural, geotechnical, and environmental work.

A summary of the action item is included in the agenda package for the Joint Committee meeting on page 19 [here](#).

Planning and Economic Development Committee

1. Endorsement of Established Traffic Congestion Performance Measure Targets for New York-Jersey City-Newark, Trenton, and Allentown Urbanized Areas

Keith Miller, Central Staff, reviewed proposed traffic congestion targets under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program for the 2026-2029 performance period. These targets apply to the New York City, Trenton, and Allentown urbanized areas (UZAs) within the NJTPA region. Following the 2020 Census, the Philadelphia UZA no longer overlaps the NJTPA region, while the Trenton UZA now does.

Mr. Miller said that targets must be established for two congestion measures, non-single occupant vehicle travel and peak hour excessive delay, with two-year and four-year targets set for each UZA. Coordination for target-setting is conducted with partner metropolitan planning organizations and state departments of transportation for the three UZAs in the NJTPA region. In developing the targets, agencies considered planning goals, travel and congestion trends, near-term constraints, and uncertainties.

Several key factors highlighted include:

- Post-pandemic travel patterns
- Changes in transit ridership and work-from-home trends
- Ridesharing growth and Congestion pricing in New York City
- Construction impacts, transit capacity, and broader economic conditions.

Mr. Miller noted that the peak hour excessive delay performance measure tracks excessive delay per capita on the National Highway System during weekday peak periods from 6:00 to 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. This measure reflects time spent in extreme congestion over an entire calendar year and focuses on delays experienced by people rather than vehicles.

Excessive delay has increased since the pandemic and future efforts would focus on moderating and stabilizing the measure. These proposed traffic congestion targets were established to reflect improving conditions where appropriate and may be adjusted during the four-year period.

A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on page 22 [here](#).

2. Approval of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Emissions Reduction Performance Measure Targets for the NJTPA Region – Keith Miller, Central Staff

Mr. Miller said this action item sets targets for reducing carbon monoxide, fine particulate matter, volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxide pollutants. As with the first action, the NJTPA worked with partners to establish agreed upon targets for the region. The group examined emissions reductions from CMAQ projects authorized during the last four fiscal years and those expected to be authorized over the next four years to establish the targets.

A summary of the action item is included in the Joint Committee meeting agenda package on page 30 [here](#).

VII. Other Items for Discussion

There were no other items for discussion.

VIII. RTAC Teleconference – (Tentative)

IX. Next meeting: October 13, 2026

X. Adjournment

The Port Authority of New York, New Jersey made a motion to adjourn at 11:30 a.m., Somerset County seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Regional Transportation Advisory Committee Attendance
August 10, 2026

RTAC Committee Members

- Andras Holzmann, Chair, Passaic County
- Ryan Conklin, Vice Chair, Warren County
- Christopher Helms, Bergen County
- David Antonio, Essex County
- Blair Gerold, Governors Authorities Unit
- Mark Kataryniak, Hudson County
- Alan Hunt, Hunterdon County
- Elias Gusman, Jersey City
- Meghna Hari, Middlesex County
- Joseph Ettore, Monmouth County
- Ryan Sprong, Morris County
- Trevor Howard, City of Newark
- Farzana Ahmed, NJDOT
- Jay Shuffield, PANYNJ
- Ken Wedeen, Somerset County
- Tom Drabic, Sussex County
- Kamal Saleh, Union County

Other Attendees

- Various members of Central Staff, NJTPA
- Cate Heady, Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center
- Avnish Gupta, EZ Ride
- Brian Tobin, Keep Middlesex Moving
- Chris Townley, Middlesex County
- Jack Kanarek, Dewberry
- Gregory Smith, Ocean County
- Katherine Fullerton, Hunterdon County
- Amy Polachak, NJDOT
- Evan Hanson, NJDOT
- Andy Kaplan, City of Jersey City
- James Adams, City of Newark
- Vincent Palmieri, Monmouth County
- Sean Lamb
- Rosemary Nivar, NJTA
- Mark Cassel, Bowman
- Moises Luque, Supreme Green Team LLC
- Patrick Farley, Cross County Connection TMA
- Rob Werkmeister
- Suzanne Ishee-NJIT Hub for Creative Placemaking
- Tara Shepherd, goHunterdon TMA
- Dan Callas, Avenues in Motion TMA

- Erin Bush
- Peter Kortright, Bergen County
- David Schmetterer, Monmouth County
- Jonathan Eagle, Warren County
- Sal Presti, Passaic County
- Samantha DeAndrea, Somerset County