

NORTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AUTHORITY, INC.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Walter Lane, Chairman
Kamal Saleh, Vice Chairman

MINUTES

October 18, 2006

I. Roll Call

RTAC chairman Walter Lane called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m. There were 11 voting members present, four more arrived later.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 21st and July 17th meetings was made by Middlesex County, seconded by Union County and carried as follows: the June minutes were approved with 11 votes; NJ Transit abstained. The July minutes were approved with eight votes, Ocean County, Passaic County, NJ Transit and PANYNJ abstained.

III. Discussion Items

1. Strategy Evaluation: Objectives and Performance Measures

A packet of maps, charts and tables was distributed to the Committee members and was referred to throughout the presentation. It included:

- Draft Definition of Place Types
- Place Types by County
- Draft Planning and Transportation Objectives for Place Types
- Summary of Key Planning Objectives for Place Types
- Draft Description of Performance Measures

Also, a revised place type map was displayed.

Deva Dekka, Central Staff, emphasized that the place types identified in the Strategy Evaluation effort continue to be analyzed and are subject to refinement. Dr. Dekka went over the draft map and objectives. He noted that place types and objectives had been revised based on comments received from RTAC committee members at the August Strategy Evaluation workshop and on the State Development and Redevelopment Plan planning area objectives.

There was considerable discussion concerning whether or not the approach to designating place types adequately serves mixed-use areas. Acknowledging that the current data being used indicates that some place types are characterized by a mixture of uses, Dr. Dekka stressed the importance of simplicity to the project. Brian Fineman, Central Staff, suggested that objectives could be tailored to encourage places that are not currently mixed-use to develop in that fashion. Dr. Fineman also noted that, with RTAC's help, adjustments will be made to fine tune place types where appropriate as data evolves, such as when changes in existing municipal zoning occur.

The discussion turned to performance measures. Dr. Dekka discussed the draft descriptions of the following six measures:

- Access
- Transit share
- Transit accessibility
- Roadway reliability
- Route roadway delay
- Roadway hotspots

Dr. Dekka noted that the proposed performance measures do not address the areas of freight, safety or bicycle/pedestrian. Dr. Fineman pointed out that there are already ongoing studies and performance based planning for these efforts. Suggestions from committee members for additional performance measures included: transit headways, sharing of infrastructure, port activities, local components of rail freight corridors, commuting time, and travel time.

Dr. Dekka asked Bob Diogo, Central Staff, to speak about modeling as a performance measurement tool. Mr. Diogo provided two examples of performance measures – one for highways and one for transit. The examples showed the type of detail modeling can render, such as delay experienced per person at a particular hot spot.

The Committee members were asked to participate in two exercises. First they were asked to rank performance measures for each place type. For the second exercise, they were asked to choose targets for performance measures. Dr. Dekka said that the two exercises would help the RTAC in understanding the Strategy Evaluation process and provide Staff with insights for subsequent steps, especially for assessing place needs.

Dr. Fineman emphasized that the project is dynamic in form, and he pointed out the challenge of marrying simplicity with nuances in order to “get things right.” It was agreed that the place types and performance measures must be framed in a way that is understandable and meaningful for the Board of Trustees. It was noted that the project is still abstract. It also was noted that it still must be decided when and how to present this effort to the Board to keep them engaged and to enable them to use it to make wise investment decisions.

It was agreed that another Strategy Evaluation workshop would be arranged.

IV. October 23rd Standing Committee Action Items

No comments were offered on the action items.

V. Information Items

1. Update: North Jersey Regional Transportation Model Enhancement and Validation Project (NJRTME)

Mr. Diogo provided an update on the \$1 million project, 75 percent of which is funded by the NJTPA. The project objectives are to update and improve the region's current travel demand model, integrate it with NJ Transit models, and make it more useful for modelers working on conformity, RTP development, and project analysis. URS has been hired as the main consultant.

Mr. Diogo reported that, since the last update to the RTAC in October 2005, a great deal of progress has been made on model development. The highway and transit networks are largely complete along with the trip generation analysis. Mr. Diogo then described some examples of improvements in the trip generation process in the new model as compared to the current model. Mr. Diogo described the use of lifecycle variables for estimating trips, improved trip purpose definitions and the inclusion of a non-motorized trip estimation. The consultant is currently working on the trip distribution and mode choice portions of the model.

The completed model is expected by December 31, 2006. Subregional "cuts" of the total model are expected by the end of February 2007, with training to begin shortly thereafter. A brief general discussion ensued with questions from the RTAC regarding their use of the model. Mr. Diogo indicated that staff would research this issue and come before RTAC at a later meeting to follow up.

2. NJTPA Truck Stop Study Update

John Hummer, Central Staff, reported that the study has received good industry cooperation and the website – NJRest.com – is up and running. He said the next steps include a survey of truck drivers, counts of official and unofficial truck resting sites in the region, and a full inventory of official rest stops in the New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut region.

Mr. Hummer said that RTAC can play a vital role in identifying possible sites for rest areas by helping to link Central Staff and the consultants with influential local stakeholders. If this is done early in the selection process, it should help minimize adverse local reaction. Robert Bzik, Somerset County, emphasized that local outreach should take place before sites were identified so that municipalities will be informed of the study prior to hearing its results.

3. Safety Update

Lois Goldman, Central Staff, asked committee members who participated in the first phase of the safety priorities study in 2005 to call her with feedback and suggestions about the study and any

implementations made from recommendations. She said she is moving forward with developing a request for proposals for the second phase.

Ms. Goldman distributed information concerning two upcoming workshops:

- “Safety Consideration in Roadway Landscaping,” sponsored by NJDOT, November 2nd or November 3rd.
- “Driving Down Deaths,” sponsored by Rutgers University, November 29th and 30th.

Ms. Goldman also announced that information about the “Safe Routes to School” workshops would be available on the NJDOT website within a week. Applications for the program are due by the end of December. She noted that counties may apply in coordination with school districts.

Concerning the FY 2008 Local Safety Program solicitation (November to December), Ms. Goldman emphasized that the subregions must use local crash data to support their proposals for the program.

Ms. Goldman reported that the North Jersey Deer-Vehicle Crash Coalition public outreach campaign is underway. She said that the NJTPA and the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety were distributing 50,000 brochures and 2,000 trunk magnets throughout the region. She asked the subregions for their help in getting the word out by distributing the materials through their regular channels.

4. Environmental Justice (EJ) Update

Dr. Deka reported that six of the project’s nine tasks are either completed or ongoing, and he pointed out that staff would work closely with RTAC on the task that focuses on assessing the transportation needs of EJ communities.

The study’s Technical Advisory Committee consists of members from Essex County, Union County, Somerset County, The Department of Human Services, Jersey City, NJDOT, and NJ Transit. Dr. Deka reported that 34 communities have been identified for further analysis and said the draft list of places eventually would be reviewed and finalized. The next meeting of the TAC is scheduled for November 2nd at the NJTPA offices.

Dr. Deka pointed out that the study relied on diverse data from several sources, such as the New Jersey Department of Human Services. He distributed a packet of handouts, including data tables showing the broad range of types of data being utilized by the study team and maps reflecting the analysis of the data. Some of the population data includes: households under poverty, median household income by race, unemployment rate, number of low-paying jobs per low-income or minority working-age person, vehicle ownership, ability to speak English, food stamp recipients, free and reduced lunch students, number of childcare centers per 1,000, etc. Commuting data used includes trip mode share, time and distance, and trip time per mile. Bob Bzik, Somerset County, offered to provide information about HUD Community Development Eligible Areas data. Mr. Bzik said this data is very specific in terms of median income by county. A brief general discussion ensued.

5. NJTPA IT Director to Visit Subregions

David Colon, Central Staff, announced that he would visit all the subregions within a few weeks to follow up on the previous year's needs survey and to assess future equipment, software and training needs in an effort to determine the NJTPA FY 2008 Technology Library Budget. It was requested that GIS personnel be present during Mr. Colon's visits to the subregions.

Karen Shannon, Central Staff, noted that if the survey indicates common subregional needs that require additional funding, they would be presented for the Board's consideration. She also noted that resources remain available in the FY 2007 program budget, and any funds that remain unused by any subregion would be put up for competitive bidding among the others.

V: Other Items

Walter Lane announced that Bergen County is planning training for its staff with Network Analyst software. He said two options were being considered. The first involves at least two persons cost sharing for the three-day training class for approximately \$900 per person. If there is enough interest in the training, the other option would involve the NJTPA working with NJIT to facilitate a class for 12 persons for approximately \$580 per person. He said interested persons should contact Donna Orbach of Bergen County.

Deena Cybulski, Morris County, asked about guidance for the subregions concerning two new tasks that were added to the Subregional Transportation Program. Ms. Shannon explained that one of the tasks would be to assist an NJTPA consultant who will be hired to evaluate the agency's public participation process and recommend improvements. The other task involves identification and analysis of three county roadway segments for bicycle/pedestrian possibilities. Cliff Sobel said reminders and further guidance would be provided by Liz DeRuchie, Central Staff, in the coming weeks.

VI. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for Wednesday, December 13th at 10:30 a.m.

VI. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Middlesex County, seconded by Union County and carried unanimously at 1:25 p.m.

RTAC ATTENDANCE
October 18, 2006

VOTING MEMBERS / ALTERNATES	
Walt Lane, Chairman	Somerset County
Kamal Saleh, Vice Chairman	Union County
Bruce McCracken	Middlesex County
Jerome Lutin	NJ Transit
Naomi Hsu	Jersey City
John Lane	Hudson County
Ken Bogen	Hunterdon County
Deena Cybulski	Morris County
Joseph Ettore	Monmouth County
Ralph Patterson	Ocean County
Steve Brown	PANYNJ
Michael Lysicatos	Passaic County
David Antonio	Essex County
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Peter Vaughan	Warren County
OTHERS	
Bob Bzik	Somerset County
Tiffany Robinson	Ocean County
Jennifer Friedberg	PANYNJ
Jim Yeager	Michael Baker Jr. Inc.
Karen Shannon	Central Staff
Cliff Sobel	Central Staff
Tracy Lockhart	Central Staff
Deva Deka	Central Staff
Veronica Alcon	Central Staff
Brian Fineman	Central Staff
Mary Ameen	Central Staff
Beverly Morris	Central Staff
David Colon	Central Staff
Bob Diogo	Central Staff
Liz DeRuchie	Central Staff
Keith Miller	Central Staff
Lois Goldman	Central Staff
David Stein	Central Staff
John Hummer	Central Staff
Beverly Morris	Central Staff