

# **NORTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AUTHORITY, INC.**

## **PROJECT PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE**

*FREEHOLDER SUSAN ZELLMAN, CHAIRMAN*  
*COUNTY EXECUTIVE DENNIS MCNERNEY, VICE CHAIRMAN*

### **MINUTES**

**October 23, 2006**

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#### **I. Joint Committee Presentation to Planning and Economic Development and Project Prioritization Committees:**

Development of the FY 2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

A Central Staff presentation on the development of the FY 2008 UPWP to both the Planning and Economic Development and Project Prioritization committees preceded the PPC meeting. The UPWP is based on federally mandated activities, directed by emphasis areas issued by the FHWA and FTA, and guided by regional priorities developed by the NJTPA Board.

Deputy Executive Directors Cliff Sobel and Karen Shannon and the agency's seven division directors provided an overview of ongoing programs and important new initiatives proposed for the FY 2008 UPWP. It was noted that the program responds to emerging regional and subregional needs and that the Board members and subregions are relied upon to provide input that will help craft a comprehensive and effective program. Ms. Shannon said the plan is developed from a zero-based budgeting perspective and was open for change and augmentation. She stressed the importance of interagency and subregional collaboration to the effort.

The presentation was followed by a question and answer period that yielded ideas to be considered for inclusion in the UPWP. Freeholder Susan Zellman, Sussex County, suggested that attention be given to the problems experienced in rural areas concerning transit access to services and jobs. Central Staff responded that the Community Transportation Plan required under SAFETEA-LU, which will be developed in FY 2007 and carried over into FY 2008, includes fixed routes as well as human services needs. In addition, the Strategy Evaluation will identify needs and strategies in all parts of the region, including rural areas.

Freeholder Zellman also suggested providing transportation and land use planning guidance and assistance to municipal level planning boards. It was noted that with more than 350 municipalities in the region it would be necessary for transportation planners from the 15 subregions to support any such effort the Board wishes to pursue. This is an issue the RTAC could help define and develop. Staff will discuss further at the next RTAC meeting.

Regarding Congressionally earmarked projects that can tie up much-needed funding, Freeholder Zellman suggested the Trustees could work to find ways to get the region's congressional delegation to seek NJTPA guidance before earmarks are granted.

In response to a question from Deena Cybulski, Morris County, Freeholder Zellman suggested that the RTAC could provide a forum for familiarizing the subregions with features of the

enhanced North Jersey Regional Transportation Model. It was agreed that it would make sense to hold such a forum in the spring prior to the subregional training sessions already planned.

The draft UPWP is expected in November, and the final document will be submitted for Board approval by March 2007. Ms. Shannon asked that additional suggestions be e-mailed to her at shannon@njtpa.org.

## **II. Roll Call of Members**

Committee Chairman Susan Zellman called the PPC meeting to order at 11:25 a.m. There were 10 voting members present.

## **III. Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting was made by Ocean County, seconded by Essex County and carried with six votes. Bergen, Sussex and Union counties and NJ Transit abstained.

## **IV. Action Items**

### 1. Approval of a Series of NJDOT Modifications to the FY 2007-2010 TIP

Eve Chamberlain, Central Staff, reported that two projects in the TIP have shown an immediate need for additional funds.

- Route 280, Garden State Parkway, Interchange 145 project in Essex County is in need of an additional \$2.2 million for consultant inspection services.
- Route 17, Essex Street Bridge in Bergen County needs an additional \$6 million in FY 2008 because of increased costs of construction materials.

Two projects would serve as funding resources in order to maintain fiscal restraint:

- Routes 3/46, Valley Road and Nitch/Rifle Camp Road Interchange in Passaic County (\$2.2 million would be reprogrammed. The project is being re-scoped and will not be ready for Final Design until FY 2008)
- Route 3, Passaic River Crossing in Bergen and Passaic Counties (\$8 million can be moved from FY 2010 for fiscal constraint purposes without impacting the project schedule. Those funds would be restored in FY 2011.

A motion to approve the modifications was made by Essex County, seconded by Bergen County and carried unanimously.

### 2. Approval of a Program Change to the FY 2007 NJTPA Local Safety Program

Martin Hofler, Central Staff, reported that urgent safety needs compelled Essex County to fund three intersection improvement projects in Irvington that were programmed in the FY 2006 Local Safety Program to receive \$670,000. He explained that the County was requesting that three other intersection improvement projects take their place in the Board approved program. Mr. Hofler said that the intersections had documented safety concerns, with a higher rate of pedestrian and vehicle accidents than at similar intersections. The project would cost a total of

\$800,000 – utilizing the original programmed amount of \$670,000 plus \$130,000 to be covered by the County. Philip LiVecchi, Essex County, said that fiscal constraint required that the additional three projects, which were planned for next year, be pushed forward sooner than expected in order to prevent loss of the Local Safety Program funding.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Hunterdon County, seconded by Ocean County and carried unanimously.

## **V. Discussion Items:**

### **1. Update on the Local Scoping Program Reevaluation**

Sascha Brathwaite, Central Staff, reported that, as part of the reevaluation process, members of Central Staff attended a recent meeting of the New Jersey County Engineers Association to ask for feedback concerning the Local Scoping Program. She said some of those present offered recommendations for improving the program, and she noted that Staff would extend the outreach to project managers throughout the region in the coming month.

Ms. Brathwaite called the committee members attention to a \$42 million deficit the program will face in FY 2008. She stressed the immediate need to put in place a system for prioritizing scoping graduate projects about to enter the project pool. She said prioritization of the projects is needed before formal Capital Construction Program negotiations with NJDOT commence in January/February 2007. Freeholder Zellman suggested that requiring the subregions to fund a percentage of their Local Scoping Projects could facilitate a prioritization process. It was agreed that Central Staff would develop some funding scenarios for the committee to consider at its next meeting.

During a wide-ranging general discussion a suggestion was made concerning reaching out to the region's Congressional delegation in order to suggest that funds currently tied to inactive earmarked projects be reallocated to projects that rank very high on the regional list. It was noted that some projects funded by the Local Scoping Program are not scoping graduates, and there was a brief discussion about the possibility of those projects being eligible for other sources of federal funds.

### **2. Update of the Project Prioritization Criteria**

Kevin Twine, Central Staff, reported that the project had advanced to the stage where weights could be applied to the updated criteria for project scoring purposes. He announced that the Criteria Update Subcommittee would meet for a criteria weighting workshop on October 26<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Twine said the project objectives now are to present the updated criteria for PPC action in December and Board action in January 2007. He indicated that, pending Board adoption, Central Staff plan to apply the updated criteria to projects in the FY 2008 Project Pool.

## **VI. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Middlesex County, seconded by Ocean County and carried unanimously at 11:58 a.m.

**Project Prioritization Committee  
ATTENDANCE  
October 23, 2006**

<b>V O T I N G M E M B E R S</b>	
Freeholder Susan Zellman	Sussex County
Donna Orbach	Bergen County
Philip LiVecchi	Essex County
John Lane	Hudson County
Sue Dziamara	Hunterdon County
George Ververides	Middlesex County
Jerome Lutin	NJ Transit
Jerry Mooney	NJDOT
Dick Lane	Ocean County
Kamal Saleh	Union County
<b>O T H E R S</b>	
Freeholder Peter Palmer	Somerset County
Brian Wahler	NJ Turnpike Authority
Deena Cybulski	Morris County
Liza Betz	Union County
Fernando Rubio	City of Newark
Jim Berzok	NJDOT
Inkyung Englehart	Monmouth County
Mehdi Mohammad	Essex County
Chris Helms	Bergen County
Jim Yeager	Michael Baker Jr. Inc.
Damien Newton	Tri State Transportation Campaign
Walt Lane	Somerset County
David Dech	Warren County
Naomi Hsu	Jersey City
Steve Brown	PANYNJ
Jen Freidberg	PANYNJ
Joel Weiner	Central Staff
Karen Shannon	Central Staff
Cliff Sobel	Central Staff
Mark Solof	Central Staff
Kevin Twine	Central Staff
Tracy Lockhart	Central Staff
Martin Hofler	Central Staff
Sascha Brathwaite	Central Staff
Eve Chamberlain	Central Staff
Dave Behrend	Central Staff
David Stein	Central Staff
Mary Ameen	Central Staff
John Hummer	Central Staff
Liz DeRuchie	Central Staff
Angelitta Young	Central Staff
Ann Ludwig	Central Staff
Beverly Morris	Central Staff