

NORTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AUTHORITY, INC.

Joint Meeting

THE PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Freeholder John DiMaio, Chairman
Elease Evans, Vice Chairman

THE PROJECT PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE

Freeholder Susan Zellman, Chairman
County Executive Dennis McNerney, Vice Chairman

Minutes

December 18, 2006

I. Roll Call of Members

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. There were eight voting members of the Project Prioritization Committee (PPC) present and five members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee (PED). One more member of each committee arrived after the vote for approval of the minutes.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 23rd PPC meeting was made by Ocean County, seconded by Bergen County and approved with seven votes. Essex County abstained.

There was no quorum for approval of the October 23rd PED meeting minutes.

III. Presentation: The Draft FY 2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Cliff Sobel, Central Staff discussed the highlights of Volume I of the draft FY 2008 work program, which contains Central Staff activities. He said that the Board of Trustees must adopt the program by March of each year in order to comply with mutual service standards established by USDOT, NJDOT and the state's three MPOs. The program will take effect July 1, 2007.

Mr. Sobel noted that the four basic sources for developing Volume I of the work program are: federally mandated activities, USDOT emphasis areas, recommendations from the Strategic Business Plan, and comments from NJDOT. He said the majority of the 35 tasks contained in the document are long-standing and mandated activities, which were discussed at the last Committee meeting. He then highlighted new initiatives for FY 2008 and activities that were started in FY 2007 and will carry over into this program. Some of these include:

- An enhanced coordination effort with neighboring MPOs,

- Initiation of work to develop the next cyclical update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP),
- Completion of the Strategy Evaluation Project,
- Conclusion of the Regional Safety Priorities Project,
- Development of a coordinated human services transportation plan for the region,
- Completion an assessment of freight rail grade crossings in the region,
- Advancement of recommendations from the Truck Rest Stop Study,
- Support of the Liberty Corridor Project, and
- Development of a new Strategic Business Plan.

Mr. Sobel also noted that the NJTPA will continue to work closely with NJ Transit on the second phase of two collaborative bus studies. The Greater New Brunswick Area BRT Study (\$100,000) is in the second year of a two-year funding arrangement. The Newark Elizabeth Area Bus Study (\$150,000) is in the second year of a three-year funding effort. Both efforts reflect a 50/50 cost sharing arrangement between the NJTPA and NJ Transit.

Liza Betts, Union County, pointed out that the federal requirement for individual county Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plans (CHSTPs) was not accompanied by an increase in funding to the counties. Mr. Sobel reminded the committee members that the Subregional Transportation Planning Program budget was increased by 25 percent last year and that flexibility is built into the program to accommodate changing federal requirements. He also said that these plans likely will be assembled by human service offices and not necessarily by the county transportation planners. Liz DeRuchie, Central Staff, discussed the background of the program and noted that the funding issue for Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and CHSTP has been raised throughout the state. Chairman Zellman suggested that Central Staff investigate whether other federal funding is available or whether some county tasks related to the plan's development can be supported by a consultant and Central Staff.

Ms. DeRuchie summarized the progress of the CHSTP initiative, which was generated by a presidential decree mandating that transportation services be provided to disadvantaged groups. She said this region will include four groups experiencing transportation challenges: the job access/reverse commute population, the employment disadvantaged, the elderly and disabled, and the rural population. The plans will build upon the existing JARC program. She reported that a kick-off meeting was held at NJ Transit on November 16th and surveys were distributed to the counties.

Ms. DeRuchie outlined the next steps for subregional implementation of the plan:

- Identification of a representative in each county to coordinate the effort,
- Completion of the survey distributed by NJ Transit, and
- Utilization of a self-assessment tool by the counties.

Ms. DeRuchie announced that the NJTPA will host a CHSTP workshop with representatives from NJ Transit and the New Jersey Department of Human Services immediately following the February 14th RTAC meeting.

Next, Ms. DeRuchie discussed Volumes II and III of the UPWP, which are two subregional pass-through programs: the Subregional Transportation Planning (STP) Program and the Subregional Studies Program (Volumes II and III, respectively). She said the emphasis areas for Volume II will include:

- Development of the CHSTP,
- Enhancement of the public participation process and broadening the planning decision making forum by including less traditional groups such as human services agencies,
- Support for the next RTP, and
- Continuation of the development of the bicycle/pedestrian development projects.

Ms. DeRuchie noted that the review committee for Volume III, the \$2.4 million Subregional Studies Program, was chaired by John Lane, Hudson County, and consisted of representatives from Union, Somerset, Morris, and Passaic Counties as well as NJDOT, NJ Transit and Central Staff.

Karen Shannon, Central Staff, distributed selected worksheets from the UPWP budget. She noted that the ambitious \$12,658,422 program must balance federal requirements and revenue received. The three revenue sources are Federal Highway Authority PL funds, Federal Transit Authority-Section 5303 funds, and local (non-federal) matching funds. Next, Ms. Shannon outlined the four major categories of expenditures: staff operations, pass-through programs, the Subregional Support Program, and new contractual services.

Ms. Shannon expanded on the success of the additional financial resources provided to the subregions in three categories:

1. Technology Library – \$4,000 per subregion per year for hardware/software support
2. Training – Funds have been set aside to provide a training program similar to the model training to be conducted this year. Staff and RTAC will discuss and determine potential training needs for FY 2008.
3. Intern Program – This program was a great success in FY 2006. Seven subregions hired interns last summer and greater participation is anticipated this year.

Ms. Shannon said the overall FY 2008 budget has not changed dramatically from FY 2007. She said that there could be a change in the areas of fringe benefits and the NJIT administrative flat fee. This change would occur after the university conducts its audit, and Central Staff will adjust the Budget accordingly.

Ms. Shannon noted that the FY 2008 UPWP is still in draft form, and that recommended changes should be submitted by January 17th. It is expected that the program will be presented for PED endorsement in February and to the Board for approval in March.

IV. RTAC Comments on Action Items

There were no comments.

V. Action Items

1. Approval of an Update to the Project Prioritization Criteria

Kevin Twine, Central Staff, reported that, in June 2005, PPC Chairman Zellman appointed a seven-member subcommittee to consider updates to the Project Prioritization Criteria, which are used to rank and prioritize Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects. Freeholder Zellman thanked Bergen County Executive Dennis McNerney for serving as Chairman of the subcommittee. Mr. McNerney reported that the criteria update incorporates changes in New Jersey and Federal legislation and results from NJTPA studies conducted since the last criteria update in 2002. He said that comprehensive changes make the criteria more data-driven and easier to understand.

Mr. Twine introduced the project's lead consultant, Al Racciatti of the Louis Berger Group, who presented highlights of the outcome of the effort and its process. Mr. Racciatti reported that the revised criteria were based on recommendations from RTAC, coordination with NJDOT and NJ Transit, a review of effective practices at other MPOs, results of analysis of current criteria, and review and coordination with the Criteria Update Subcommittee. He said the criteria now address new issues such as legislatively protected areas, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, security, etc. Other enhancements include:

- Removal of redundant criteria and performance measures,
- Clarification of wording and definitions of performance measures,
- Establishment of a method for earlier consideration of candidate projects,
- Revision of the score structure, and
- Development of a weighting system.

Mr. Racciatti said the key deliverables of the project are technical memoranda, updated criteria, technical tools for establishing criteria weights, documentation, and a guidebook for updates. The next steps for the project will be a review of the FY 2008 Project Pool scoring, finalization of the documentation and guidebook, finalization of NJ Transit criteria, and technical support.

During a wide ranging general discussion it was agreed that, in the criteria document, references made to the Highlands Master Plan would be changed to the Highlands "Act," since the Master Plan is not yet finalized. It was also agreed that any problems that may emerge with the criteria could be discussed and addressed at the next Board meeting. The discussion of the draft Highlands Plan led the committee to address the public comment period, which is currently underway for comments on the Highlands Master Plan. It was noted that key technical information used in developing the plan has not yet been released. The committees agreed to send a letter to the Highlands Council requesting the immediate release of that information and the extension of the comment period by 60 days following that release. This would allow sufficient time for the NJTPA and its affected member agencies to assess the compatibility of its updated criteria and other plans and programs with the Plan. It was also agreed that a resolution seeking this 60-day extension be recommended for Board consideration.

A motion was made by Middlesex County to both send a letter to the Highlands Council and recommend that Board of Trustees consider a resolution requesting a 60-day extension of the Highlands Act comment period after the technical data for the Master Plan is released. Bergen County seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the update to the project prioritization criteria was made by Ocean County, seconded by Bergen County and carried unanimously.

2. Approval of the FY 2008 Project Pool

Mr. Twine explained that the Project Pool is a list of projects that are eligible for inclusion in the TIP. He noted that the vast majority of the 419 projects and programs in the pool is already in the FY 2007 TIP and underway. Mr. Twine noted that the FY 2008 list is fiscally unconstrained, pending receipt of the Capital Construction Program (CCP) from NJDOT in January.

It was noted that the resolution being considered included approval of the FY 2008 Project Pool, the ranking of the projects therein and authorization for the PPC to enter into negotiations with NJDOT on the development of the CCP.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Bergen County, seconded by Middlesex County and approved unanimously.

3. Approval of a Series of Modifications to the FY 2007-2010 TIP

Martin Hofler, Central Staff reported that NJDOT had requested an increase in funding for four projects utilizing funds from seven other projects. He said that, of these seven, all but two were funded in the previous fiscal year, allowing 2007 funds to be diverted to the projects in need. One other project has experienced a delay and, therefore, cannot use the funds this year. Mr. Hofler said the final project change involved only the switching of funds between 2010 and 2011 without delaying the construction start date. He noted that the affected subregions concurred with the modification request.

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

VI. Information Items

1. Strategies for Funding FY 2008 Local Lead Projects

Sascha Brathwaite, Central Staff, reported that the NJTPA reached an agreement with NJDOT concerning the Local Scoping Program. She said that NJDOT released \$15 million in STP-NJ funds for FY 2008 and \$13.5 million for FY 2009 for the program. This means that slightly more than half of the anticipated Local Scoping graduates can be funded in FY 2008. Ms. Brathwaite said that Central Staff is recommending 13 of 20 graduate projects for the FY 2008 TIP. The graduates were prioritized based on schedule. She noted that Staff suggests that the remaining graduates be added in an appendix to the TIP as future candidates, schedules

permitting. These candidates also could be advanced should existing Local Lead projects slip, making more funding available. Ms. Brathwaite asked the Committee to consider these recommendations and provide any comments by January 17th, in preparation for the negotiation of the CCP. A brief general discussion ensued.

2. Revenue Assumptions for the FY 2008 TIP

Mr. Hofler reported that federal regulations require state transportation agencies to meet each year with their respective Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and present, discuss and agree to estimated federal and state funding resources for the next four years. He said that, on December 4th, NJ Transit and NJDOT hosted a meeting with representatives of the state's MPOs to discuss the anticipated resources from 2008 to 2011. Mr. Hofler said these resources constitute the funds that will be programmed in the next Capital Construction Program and subsequent TIP. It was agreed that state and federal resources will amount to about \$3.2 billion statewide for each year, and will be relatively flat through 2011. Mr. Hofler said the proposed funding amount is consistent with the levels estimated in the Regional Transportation Plan. Mr. Hofler said the next step in this process is PPC selection of the projects that will be programmed for funding.

Mr. Hofler noted that the state must distribute a draft of the CCP to the legislature by March 1st. Central Staff anticipates receiving the NJDOT and NJ Transit proposals during January. After PPC review of the proposals Central Staff will commence negotiations on the CCP.

3. Transportation Clean Air Measures Project

Megan Schuster, Central Staff, said that one of the NJTPA's key goals is to protect and improve the quality of natural ecosystems and the human environment in the region. She said that, following the principles of this goal, the NJTPA is undertaking a project to identify and analyze clean air transportation projects for the region. Ms. Schuster said that the project will help the NJTPA serve as a more effective leader in improving air quality in the region by adding value to ongoing environmentally beneficial programs and by helping to advance innovative approaches.

Ms. Schuster said the project will investigate four types of transportation clean air measures:

- Measures to reduce vehicle miles traveled (shared ride services, flexible schedules, Intelligent Transportation Systems, etc.);
- Clean vehicle technology (particulate filters, diesel retrofits, etc.);
- Anti-idling measures; and
- Public education and outreach.

Ms. Schuster noted that other measures that might reduce harmful pollutants in the region would also be considered. She said the project will be led by an advisory group and noted that the NJTPA would like the group to include members from NJDOT, NJ Transit, RTAC and the Transportation Management Associations.

Ms. Schuster reported that, in response to a request for proposals, two proposals were received. The consultant selection review team is currently reviewing the proposals. The project is

expected to last 10 months. Ms. Schuster said that, upon the completion of the project, recommendations for specific projects, including action plans, are expected.

VII. Next Steps

1. Central Staff to implement a project scoring spreadsheet tool to be made available to the subregions.
2. A letter from the PPC and PED to the Highlands Council will be submitted calling for an extension of the public comment period pending release of the Master Plan technical data.
3. Potential sources of funding for the CHSTP to be researched and identified.
4. PPC to provide comments to Ms. Brathwaite regarding the Local Scoping/Local Lead Programs by January 17th.
5. Comments on the UPWP should go to Ms. Shannon by January 17th.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Middlesex County, seconded by Ocean County and carried by unanimous verbal acclaim at 12:12 p.m.

**JOINT COMMITTEE
ATTENDANCE
December 18, 2006**

Project Prioritization Committee

VOTING MEMBERS	
Freeholder Susan Zellman	Sussex County
County Executive Dennis McNerney	Bergen County
David Antonio	Essex County
John Lane	Hudson County
Sue Dziamara	Hunterdon County
George Ververides	Middlesex County
Richard Lane	Ocean County
Jerry Mooney	NJDOT
Dr. Jerome Lutin	NJ Transit

Planning and Economic Development Committee

VOTING MEMBERS	
Freeholder Peter Palmer	Somerset County
Deena Cybulski	Morris County
David Dech	Warren County
Jerry Mooney	NJDOT
Dr. Jerome Lutin	NJ Transit
Jennifer Friedberg	PANY&NJ

OTHERS	
Michael Lysicatos	Passaic County
Thomas A. Wospil	NJDOT
Jim Berzok	NJDOT
Liza Betz	Union County
Farouk Ahmad	Bergen County
Sharon MacLean	Hunterdon County
Naomi Hsu	Jersey City
Kamal Saleh	Union County
Donna Orbach	Bergen County
Bob Bzik	Somerset County
Walt Lane	Somerset County
Peter Vaughan	Warren County
Anthony Gambilonghi	Middlesex County
Jon Moren	Monmouth County
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Richard Brundage	New Jersey Turnpike Authority
Karen Shannon	Central Staff

Cliff Sobel	Central Staff
Tracy Lockhart	Central Staff
David Stein	Central Staff
David Colón	Central Staff
Mark Solof	Central Staff
Brian Fineman	Central Staff
Ann Ludwig	Central Staff
Liz DeRuchie	Central Staff
Megan Schuster	Central Staff
Kevin Twine	Central Staff
Dave Behrend	Central Staff
Beverly Morris	Central Staff