

Draft
**North Jersey Regional Coordinated
Human Services Transportation Plan**

Prepared for:

**North Jersey
Transportation Planning Authority, Inc**



Prepared by:
Wilbur Smith Associates
in association with:
Abrams-Cherwony & Associates
Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates
Mundle & Associates, Inc.

May 12, 2008



Table of Contents

Chapter 1:	Introduction	1-8
Chapter 2:	County Plans, Services, Programs, Practices & Issues	2-43
Chapter 3:	Public Outreach and Focus Groups Findings	3-18
Chapter 4:	Recommendations and Implementation Plan	4-20
Chapter 5:	Transportation Setting	5-30



Chapter 1 Introduction

The North Jersey Regional Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) has been prepared by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA). The Plan provides a regional perspective for ongoing efforts by the region's 13 counties to develop individual local coordination plans as required by the federal *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005. The report includes analysis, a thorough "3-C" (comprehensive, cooperative and continuing) planning process and suggests potential activities to further improve mobility opportunities for residents and travelers in the region. This introduction provides background to the plan and an outline of the report.

A. Regulatory Background

This Regional Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan has been developed through the sponsorship of the NJTPA, which serves the 13-county region in northern and central New Jersey. Figure 1-1, on the following page, shows the 13 counties that make up the region and highlights those municipalities with over 100,000 residents that form the region's densely populated urban core.

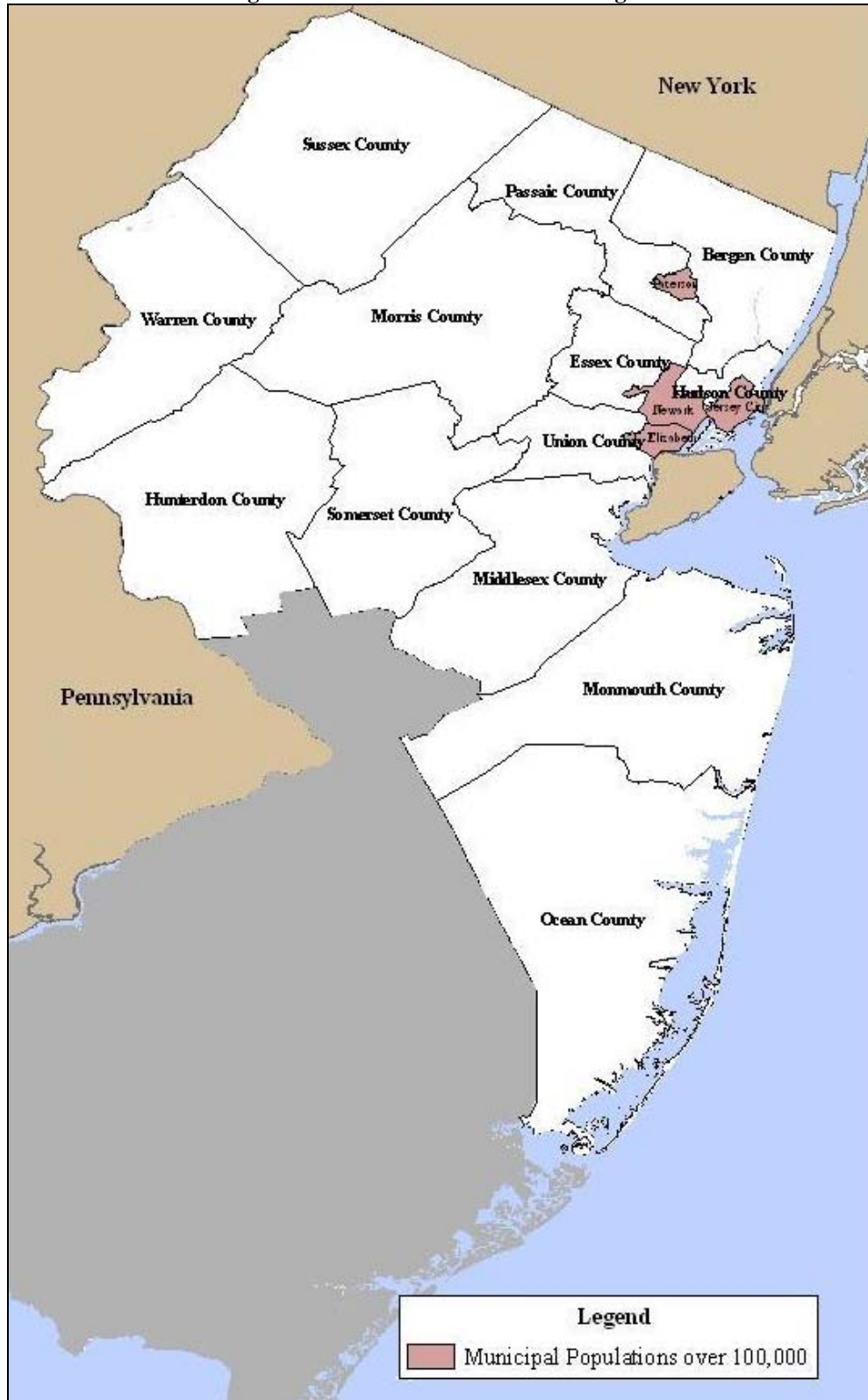
As discussed in the Regional Transportation Plan, *Access and Mobility 2030*, the NJTPA has established six goals to enhance the quality of life in the region. These include:

- protect and improve the quality of natural ecosystems and the human environment;
- provide affordable, accessible and dynamic transportation systems responsive to current and future customers;
- retain and increase economic activity and competitiveness;
- enhance system coordination, efficiency and intermodal connectivity;
- maintain a safe and reliable transportation system in a state of good repair; and
- select transportation investments that support the coordination of land use with transportation systems.





Figure 1-1: Counties in the NJTPA Region





In the ongoing processes using this plan to develop and implement regional strategies for coordination of human services transportation, the NJTPA will continue to support the attainment of the overall regional goals that have been established for facilitating mobility of residents and travelers by enhancing access.

The overall goal of this planning effort is to provide an opportunity for those with an interest in human services transportation to convene and collaborate in the development of regional strategies to improve and enhance specialized transportation services. This plan will become part of the Regional Transportation Plan for the NJTPA, formalizing the process of incorporating the broad interests of the region, including the human services and public transportation communities. Stakeholder outreach and participation are also key elements to the development of this plan.

New Jersey has long been a leader in the establishment of broad programs designed to enhance regional mobility, beginning with advocacy of transportation to promote the Welfare to Work efforts of the 1990s. New Jersey met that national effort with the early establishment of the Work First New Jersey program, creating a statewide, consistent application of actions designed to promote regional job access coordination and cooperation. This coordination plan builds on that prior work.

Coordination is a continuing process, and cannot be achieved in a single plan. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has indicated that these plans should be crafted to reflect the transportation needs of the community and should not merely reflect rationales for accessing relevant funding sources in SAFETEA-LU. The greatest benefits of the process are derived in the longer term, as opportunities increase for the NJTPA, the counties, NJ TRANSIT and other affected parties to work together to develop an incremental process to improve mobility for communities and impacted populations.

B. Purpose of Program

In February 2004, President George W. Bush issued an Executive Order aimed at improving human services transportation coordination for individuals with disabilities, older adults and people with lower incomes. The Executive Order established the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM), representing 11 Federal departments. A broad range of Federal funding provides for transportation services – in fact, 62 different Federal programs were identified that support human services transportation. The CCAM, in turn, launched United We Ride, a national initiative intended to simplify and coordinate rules and regulations regarding access to transportation services, and improve the productivity of existing programs through increase cost efficiencies.



SAFETEA-LU requires local jurisdictions to develop a coordinated plan as a condition for receiving formula funding under three FTA programs. The three programs include 49 U.S.C. Section 5310: Special Needs of Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities; 49 U.S.C. Section 5316: Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC); and 49 U.S.C. Section 5317: New Freedom. SAFETEA-LU also requires that projects proposed for funding be derived from a “locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.” The coordinated plan must have been developed through a process that included representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers, as well as the public.

C. Federal Grant Programs

The affected federal programs are more fully described below:

- ***Job Access Reverse Commute Program (JARC) (Section 5316):*** The FTA’s JARC grant program supports new or expanded transportation services that connect welfare recipients and other low-income persons to jobs and other employment related services. Job Access projects are targeted to developing new or expanded transportation services such as shuttles, vanpools, new bus routes, connector services to mass transit, and guaranteed ride home programs. Reverse Commute projects provide transportation services to suburban employment centers from urban, rural and other suburban locations for all populations.
- ***Elderly Persons & Persons With Disabilities Program (Section 5310):*** The ongoing Section 5310 program provides funding to states to assist private or nonprofit groups with meeting the transportation needs of people with disabilities and senior adults. The funds are distributed based on each state’s population of these groups, not by urbanized areas, as is the case with the JARC and New Freedom Initiative programs. Although this program must be included as part of the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan, the funds will be awarded on a statewide basis. Section 5310 applications must also meet the goals and priorities of the CHSTP.
- ***New Freedom Initiative Program (Section 5317):*** The New Freedom Initiative (NFI) is a new grant program under the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT). It is intended to provide transportation services for people with disabilities *beyond* the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). New Freedom funds will be allocated based on the population of persons with disabilities by Urban Area designation. All NFI projects will also be selected through the CHSTP.



The other program to be considered as part of the RCHSTP is:

- **Rural Transportation Assistance Program (Section 5311):** Although USDOT does not require that the Rural Transportation Assistance Program be included in the CHSTP, the state of New Jersey feels strongly that the transportation disadvantaged segment of the rural population should be included in the 3-C planning process and the CHSTP.

NJ TRANSIT has stated that these plans will satisfy the Coordination Planning requirements of the state funded Senior Citizens and Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTAP), funded through casino revenues.

D. Report Contents

The findings of the report begin in Chapter 2 with information from the individual county plans. A series of meetings with representatives from each county significantly enhanced this information, which includes discussion of services, programs, practices and issues. This chapter also contains an overview of the funding sources and uses for the county programs, which is important because the type and availability of funding heavily influences the scope of the programs. In addition, the effects of NJ TRANSIT fixed-route and paratransit services are also mentioned.

Chapter 3 contains the results of focus group meetings, including comments from the intended users of the services. Although these responses are anecdotal, they point out the importance of the availability of public transportation to the elderly, persons with disabilities and those with low income who are seeking employment. Discussions were also held with the region's rural counties where needs and services, as well as issues and opportunities, were identified. These are also discussed in this chapter.

With the information from those chapters as a foundation, Chapter 4 discusses the development of potential regional coordination strategies based on the recurring themes and needs and shows how these ideas can be more fully developed as alternatives. Chapter 4 concludes with recommendations for demonstration programs. In Chapter 5, a series of demographic and other data are presented to reinforce the input received from the focus groups and county plans to develop the alternatives and recommendations.