

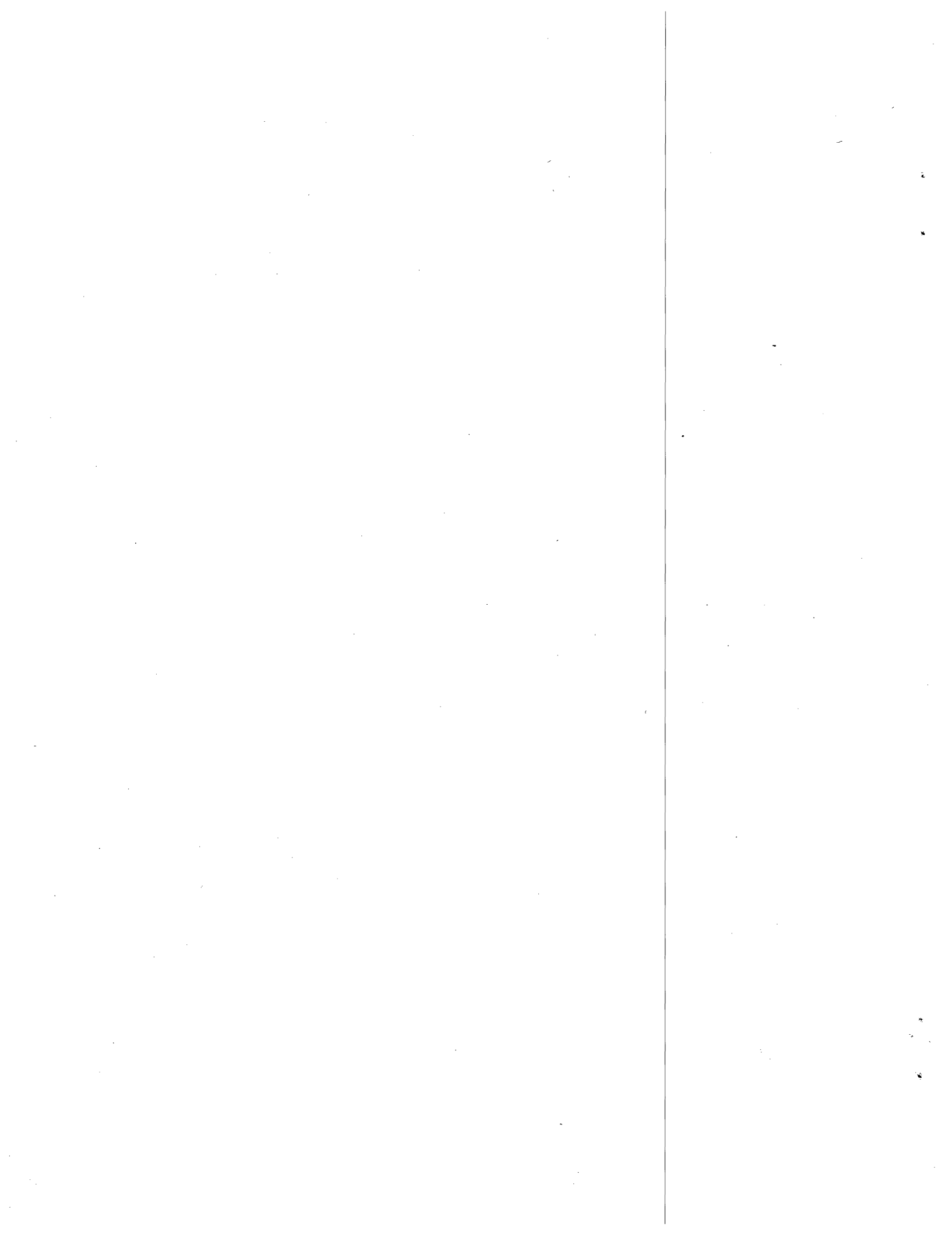
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# Recommendations for Northeastern New Jersey

A report  
to Governor Jim Florio  
from the  
Transportation Executive Council  
Tom Downs, Chairman

December 12, 1990

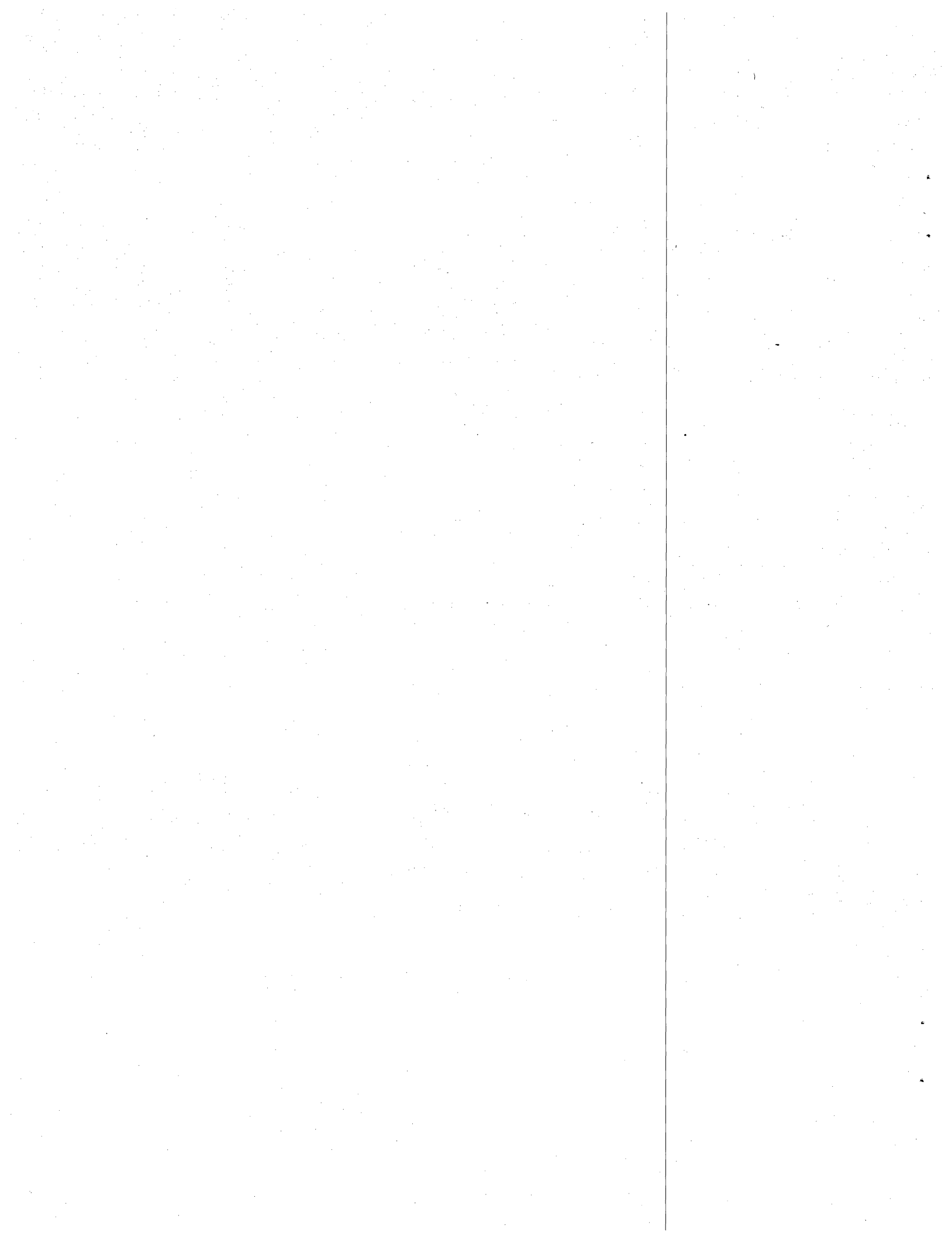
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# NORTHEASTERN NEW JERSEY

New Jersey's northeastern counties are its gateway to the nation and world. Home to five million New Jerseyans and the daily destination of 2.5 million commuters, the region is the most densely populated and heavily traveled in the state. The region is critical not just to the economic vitality of New Jersey but to the entire Northeast as well.

Transportation services are provided to this region through one of the most complex networks in the nation. Millions of commuters and business travelers depend on the roadways and rail lines each day to get to and from jobs. The same facilities serve recreational spots in the tri-state area and thousands of inter- and intrastate freight haulers using both trucks and rail.

Northeastern New Jersey has one of the world's largest container port facilities at Port Newark/Elizabeth and several rail heads that serve as major termini for transcontinental rail freight shipping. In addition, the corridor also has numerous truck terminals and warehouse facilities. Moreover, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's (PANYNJ) Newark International Airport, the state's primary international airport, is becoming a major air cargo hub.

While the transportation network is an extensive one, it is also the oldest in the state. Problems resulting from its extensive use are exacerbated by the lack of connectivity between pieces of the system. These challenges must be addressed in this decade to ensure that the network can continue to meet the daily demands placed on it.

On September 26, 1990, the Transportation Executive Council (TEC) issued *The Decision-making Framework for Transportation in the 1990s*, a set of policies that the Council will use to shape the capital program of the 13 member agencies and authorities in the coming decade. The report represented the TEC's first step in fulfilling the mission established by Governor Jim Florio of developing an integrated statewide transportation investment plan. A Technical Advisory Group comprised of the executive directors of the Council's member agencies was established to assist the TEC in its efforts.

In issuing the *Framework*, the Council promised that a series of regional reports would follow, detailing specific project recommendations based on the

policies. This report, the third in the series, focuses on recommendations for the northeastern counties of Essex, Hudson and Union and portions of Bergen, Passaic, Middlesex and Monmouth Counties.<sup>1</sup> The final report in the series will deal with goods movement throughout the state.

## The Region

**Highways.** Several high capacity highways provide north-south access through the region — the New Jersey Turnpike (I-95), the Garden State Parkway, and Routes 1 & 9 — all of which are severely congested and subject to almost constant delays. This north-south corridor is linked to the east and west by such major roadways as Interstates 78, 80, 280 and 287, and Route 3.

**Hudson River Crossings.** The region is linked to New York City by the PANYNJ's Goethals, George Washington, Outerbridge Crossing and Bayonne bridges, the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels and the New York State Thruway's Tappan Zee Bridge.

**Public Transportation.** NJ TRANSIT and several private bus companies offer the area extensive local and long-distance bus service. Approximately two-thirds of all bus service in these seven counties is provided by NJ TRANSIT. Buses serve midtown Manhattan via the Port Authority Bus Terminal, using the Lincoln Tunnel's exclusive bus lane (XBL) during rush hours. Private vans also serve commuters.

Rail service to Hoboken is provided by NJ TRANSIT's Bergen, Main, Pascack Valley, Boonton, and Morristown rail lines and the Gladstone and Montclair branches. From Hoboken, service to Manhattan is provided by PATH or the Hoboken Ferry.

Rail service to Newark and midtown Manhattan is provided by Amtrak and by NJ TRANSIT's Northeast Corridor, Raritan Valley and North Jersey Coast lines. Service to downtown Manhattan is available from Newark Penn Station via PATH.

Within Newark, the Newark City Subway provides excellent intra-city service. Seven private ferry lines link commuters from the coastal communities in Monmouth County and from communities along the Hudson River to midtown and downtown Manhattan destinations.

Meadowlink is New Jersey's oldest transportation management association (TMA). A TMA is a public/private corporation that works directly with employers to encourage and promote the use of ridesharing, public transit and other alternatives to reduce the number of single passenger vehicles and increase high

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<sup>1</sup> Monmouth County was also discussed in the second report dealing with the northern and central counties.

occupancy travel to commercial and office developments. Meadowlink serves the Hackensack Meadowlands, Bergen County and portions of the Waterfront and has been exceptionally successful in promoting high occupancy transportation service for employees of firms relocating to the area.

This complex public transportation network serves commuters from as far away as Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and Orange and Rockland Counties in New York.

## **Problems**

The transportation system serves many different kinds of users and its components converge in a small area. Multiple commuter markets, as well as recreational, business, and freight travel, are layered on the same infrastructure. The result is some of the most severe and economically debilitating congestion in the state.

Almost 50 percent of the state highways in this region are near or at capacity. Moreover, many of the smaller highways feeding the larger system are also at capacity. These roads are among the state's most antiquated, yet most crucial, infrastructure. Routes that carry heavy volumes of trucks serving the state's primary goods movement hubs (the Newark and Elizabeth ports; Oak Island, Croxton, Kearny, and Little Ferry rail yards; and Newark International Airport) and the warehousing industry in the Meadowlands routinely suffer from severely impeded mobility.

Clearly, the most important priority in the northeastern region is **infrastructure renewal**. This is especially true of the area's bridges, many of which are in a serious state of disrepair, old, heavily traveled and, in some cases, functionally obsolete. Inadequate facilities affect congestion and safety for auto and bus traffic and choke the goods movement industry.

Moreover, this corridor is most severely affected by congestion induced by toll collection, whether at the Hudson River, Arthur Kill or Kill Van Kull crossings, along the Parkway or on the Turnpike. **Toll booth back-ups** are becoming an increasing annoyance to consumers. On the other hand, the very existence of the toll facilities permits the use of pricing policies to manage demand, an option not possible along most state highways.

Because volume and congestion make this portion of the state a primary area of noncompliance with **air quality standards**, all of the strategies implemented in this corridor must be directed toward improving the air quality in the region.

This region boasts the **highest public transit ridership in the state**, but most of it is concentrated on trans-Hudson travel. For example, a commuter using public transit from Bergen County to Newark has limited options which often require several transfers between systems under the jurisdiction of separate agencies. To

commute by rail, the commuter would transfer from NJ TRANSIT to PATH in Hoboken, then to Newark PATH in Jersey City. By bus, with the exception of one NJ TRANSIT route from Hackensack, there is no direct service to Newark and only very limited opportunities for bus-to-PATH transfer at Hoboken and Jersey City or bus-to-bus transfer at Secaucus.

Before any new construction or widening can be undertaken on existing roads, busways or rail lines in the region, a final, critical hurdle is the almost certain need for costly **environmental cleanup** necessitated by past industrial uses of the land.

In spite of these problems, the area's varied transportation infrastructure, coupled with the region's vast labor pool and proximity to Manhattan, has led the TEC to highlight specific investment opportunities in **Newark, the Meadowlands, and along the Waterfront**. The opportunity to use transportation investment to lead economic development in these areas is the driving force behind the recommendations in this report.

The need to renew the infrastructure, improve air quality, **move more people in fewer vehicles** and clean up the environment shaped many of those recommendations. Below, several of the general recommendations are presented, followed by a discussion of the separate markets within the corridor and the TEC's recommendations for better service to those markets.

### **Short-term Strategies**

- **Expand roadway capacity where feasible in primary corridors and reserve some of that capacity for peak period priority travel lanes.**

**New Jersey Turnpike.** The Turnpike is an important link to the economic vitality of the state. This is particularly true for the section between Interchange 11 and the "Southern Mixing Bowl" at Interchange 14, the point where I-78 merges with the Turnpike Extension. This section of the Turnpike traverses the most heavily industrialized portion of New Jersey and serves as the gateway for international commerce and travel. More than 13,000 trucks use this portion of the Turnpike each day to transport goods through New Jersey and the whole northeastern region. While important to commerce, this section of the Turnpike is also extremely congested, hindering goods movement and causing daily frustration for thousands of commuters.

This congestion is expected to increase with the expansion of the global gateways of Newark International Airport and Port Newark/Elizabeth and the continued development of residential areas in Monmouth and Ocean Counties and Staten Island. Commuters living in communities south of

Interchange 11 will add to congestion as they travel through the portion between Interchange 11 and the Southern Mixing Bowl to job markets in Manhattan, the Waterfront, the Meadowlands and Newark. In addition, this portion of the Turnpike will continue to serve commuters traveling between employment centers and residential communities along Route 1 in Middlesex and Mercer Counties.

Therefore, the TEC supports the Turnpike's proposed addition of one lane in each direction on the two outer roadways of the existing 12-lane, dual-dual road between Interchanges 11 in Woodbridge/Perth Amboy and 14 in Newark. The project does not depend on further widening to the north since 45 percent of the vehicles on this section of the Turnpike begin and end their trips within this section.

The Turnpike should also carry out improvements to the Southern Mixing Bowl. This area suffers from short decision times and relatively complex weaves that confuse drivers and can result in accidents. The Council supports the concept of improving operational movements through the mixing bowl and will continue to work with the Turnpike to detail an appropriate level of investment for this area.

**Garden State Parkway.** The TEC supports the New Jersey Highway Authority's proposal to expand the capacity of the Garden State Parkway from four lanes to five lanes in each direction by restriping between Interchanges 129 in the Woodbridge area and 137 in Roselle/Cranford.

**NJDOT.** The NJDOT will advance several projects on Route 1 and Routes 1 & 9 to rehabilitate them and widen certain sections to bring them to a uniform width between Pierson Avenue in Woodbridge, Middlesex County, and East Scott Avenue in Rahway, Union County.

These three projects may well be the last major capacity improvements in this complex network. Therefore, it is critical to reserve some of the added capacity as rush hour priority lanes for multiple occupancy vehicles.

- **Evaluate and implement rush hour priority lanes in urban areas and on the Turnpike between Interchanges 8A and 14.**

The Turnpike should reconfirm the feasibility of, and then implement, priority lanes for trucks, buses and car- and vanpools between Interchanges 8A and 14. The Turnpike already carries large numbers of buses during peak periods, starting with about 40 at Interchange 8A increasing to more than 400 between Interchanges 11 and 14. More than one-third of the vehicles traveling between Interchanges 11 and 14 are multiple occupant vehicles. Unlike many locations in the state, priority lanes here would be well used from the start. A preliminary analysis suggests that such priority treatment lanes could cut as much as 15 to 25

minutes from the trips of those using the lanes without substantially increasing the travel time of the single occupant vehicles in adjacent lanes.

In Newark, two very successful curbside bus priority lanes are already in operation, one on Broad Street and one on Market Street as far as Washington Street. Extension east to Mulberry Street of the Market Street priority lane should be explored along with transportation system management improvements to improve bus access to the east side of Newark Penn Station.

In the same vein, the Waterfront Office will continue its work on short-range bus priority treatments in Bayonne, Jersey City and Hoboken to relieve the most critical bottlenecks there.

- **Support the Turnpike priority lanes with park and rides.**

At a minimum, the Turnpike Authority should construct park and ride lots at Interchanges 8A and 10. In addition, the Turnpike should expand the Vince Lombardi park and ride between Interchanges 18E and 18W near Ridgefield. NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT will increase the amount budgeted for park and ride development and actively seek new sites, particularly where they will support the use of this transit spine.

Development of a park and ride near Interchange 13A has been proposed a number of times. Analysis, however, indicates that highway access may not be adequate. This fact, coupled with the acute need for land to expand air cargo facilities around Newark International Airport, leads the TEC to reject the concept of a park and ride at this site.

- **Use discount pricing strategies to encourage public transit use on key highway links.**

Given mounting air quality compliance issues and congestion problems in this region, and given the TEC's stated policy of moving more people in fewer vehicles, and given the density of toll roads in the area, the TEC strongly recommends that the agencies in this region take a leadership role in aggressively exploring and implementing congestion and other pricing techniques that will explicitly encourage transit use. For example, PANYNJ, the Highway Authority and the Turnpike should work to exempt regularly scheduled commuter buses from tolls. The PANYNJ should consider additional opportunities to provide financial relief to publicly subsidized bus carriers operating through Port Authority terminals. In the same vein, the PANYNJ should consider discontinuing its commuter discount policy.

- **Manage demand on major highway links to achieve greater capacity.**

The parallel configuration of the Turnpike, the Parkway and Routes 1 & 9 offers the potential to manage them together as a "smart system" to better serve motorists. The components of a smart corridor include variable message signs, radio communications, loop detectors and ramp metering as well as the institutional capacity to manage the system on an integrated basis. The Turnpike, the Highway Authority and NJDOT should incorporate such electronic capability into their current designs and begin working with TRANSCOM to develop an institutional means for delivering such integrated management.

Motorists traveling on other key links in the corridor, such as Route 18, will benefit substantially from a computerized traffic signal control system, while the implementation of a highway advisory radio system along the Parkway will help to advise tourists of congested spots during peak tourism seasons.

- **Implement automatic toll collection equipment.**

TEC members should implement compatible automatic toll collection equipment to allow greater flexibility in pricing. They should also experiment aggressively with electronic toll traffic management (ETTM) as a way to reduce toll plaza delays. These experiments should be carried out jointly with the ultimate goal of implementing a single system that is compatible not only within this corridor, but throughout the state as a whole.

- **Explore the use of reversible lanes and shoulders at critical bottlenecks.**

Using shoulders as travel lanes during rush hours has been successful on Route 1 between Lawrence Township and West Windsor, Mercer County. NJDOT will evaluate the feasibility of using this technique on other highway segments with strong directional flows.

The Route 9 and GSP bridges combined offer 14 lanes of capacity but both will remain at directional capacity during rush hours unless significant improvements are made. Where these routes intersect, both auto and bus flows are severely impeded. In the short term, implementing reversible lanes or rush hour priority lanes across the bridges could cost-effectively increase capacity.

- **Prioritize system preservation projects.**

NJDOT's five-year capital program will earmark substantial funding for infrastructure improvements such as the Routes 1 & 9 bridges over Waverly Yards in Essex County and the Route 3 bridge over Berry's Creek in Lyndhurst.

The PANYNJ will advance major projects, including redevelopment of Newark International Airport and continued rehabilitation of the Holland and Lincoln Tunnels.

The Highway Authority will continue its bridge deck repair and replacement programs, as well as pavement restoration activities.

### **Long-term Strategies**

- **Explore extension of the public transit spine on the Turnpike from Interchange 14 north.**

The Turnpike, in cooperation with NJDOT, the PANYNJ and NJ TRANSIT, should explore extending the priority lanes for buses and/or high occupancy vehicles through Interchange 16E to serve Newark, the Meadowlands, the Waterfront and trans-Hudson markets.

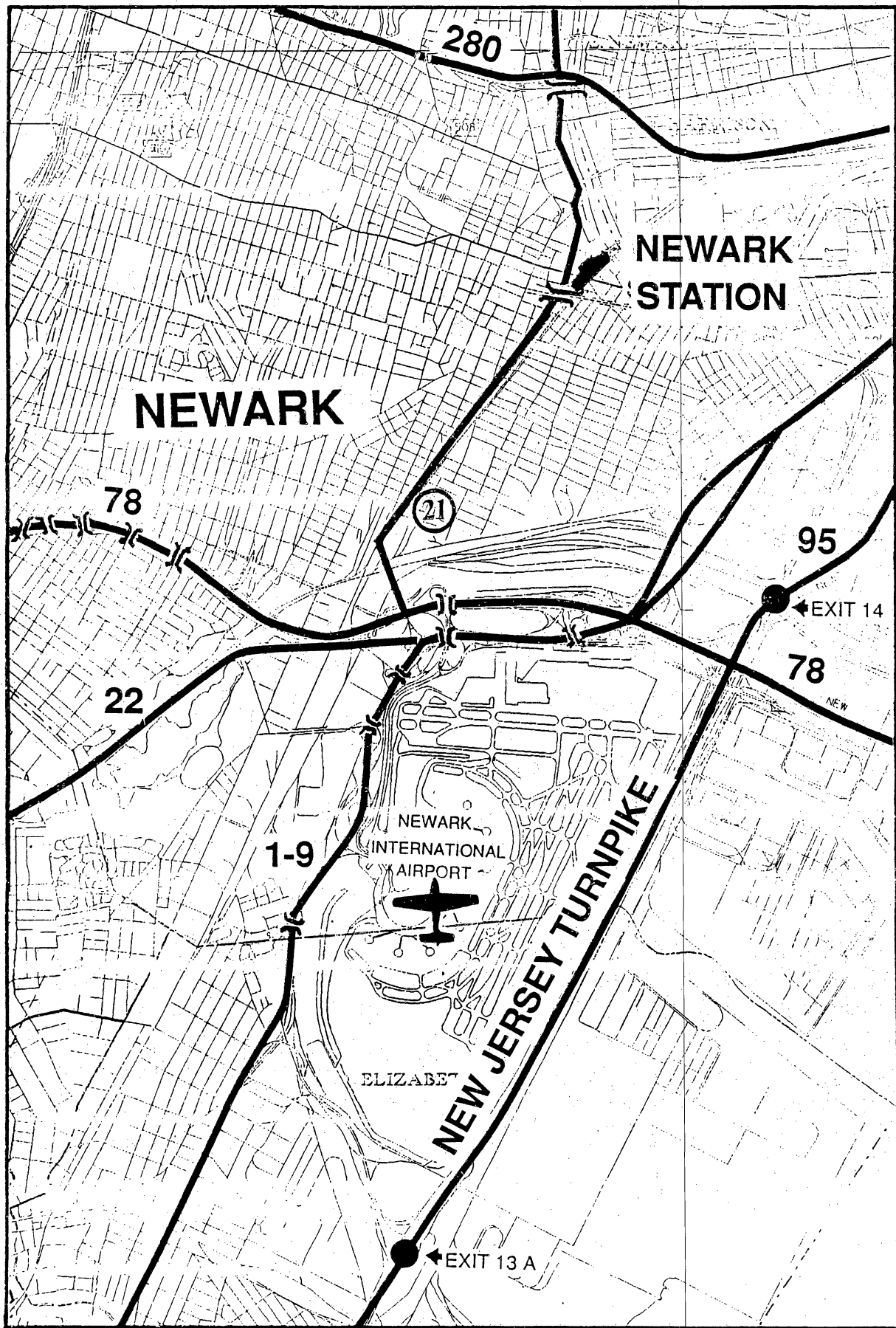
There are numerous problems associated with such an extension, but the TEC believes the feasibility of it should be explored.

- **Advance design and permitting on a new trans-Palisades transitway**

The Palisades are a virtually unpenetrated barrier to easy waterfront access. To avoid choking the economic potential of the area, new access through this natural formation must be developed. An abandoned right of way in the Jersey City area known as the Bergen Arches represents an important resource to accomplish this objective. The Turnpike should take the lead in evaluating this option and based on its feasibility, advance its design and environmental permitting for ultimate construction.

- **Continue to target system preservation projects.**

Continued reconstruction and rehabilitation of bridges and roads throughout the region, including I-80 and Routes 4 and 7, will be critical to the future of the northeastern counties.



## Newark and the Global Gateways

Newark, New Jersey's largest city, is the destination for 130,000 commuters. Serious employment losses and physical deterioration in the 1960s and '70s began to be reversed in the 1980s. New development in the Gateway area near Newark Penn Station spurred additional development around Raymond Boulevard, resulting in a general eastward expansion of the central business district.

Expansion of the Gateway Complex, One Penn Center, the Newark Legal and Communications Center, the Belle Mead/Seton Hall Law School Complex, the Art Center, and the Summit at Gateway sparked a major revitalization for the city but intensified congestion as well.

Newark's strength is its rich public transit infrastructure. Its local subway system and extensive bus network serve communities marked by pockets of underemployment. Newark is the terminus for NJ TRANSIT's Newark Division, which reaches expanding labor markets to the south and southwest, and for the PANYNJ's PATH system, which links Newark to the business centers of lower and midtown Manhattan and the Waterfront.

Constructing strategic links between these systems would encourage additional economic development in the coming decade. For example, if built, the Kearny Connection would link NJ TRANSIT's M&E rail lines with midtown Manhattan via Newark's Broad Street Station, encouraging revitalization around Broad Street similar to that which occurred near Penn Station.

Newark is also the site of New Jersey's primary global gateways. The TEC has identified Newark International Airport and Port Newark/Elizabeth as the focus of strategic opportunity in the 1990s. Uncongested highways will be needed to give these facilities a competitive edge in the international market place.

Sustaining and improving mobility in this area is essential to the region's economic success.

### Problems

Access from the highways around Newark to the heart of the city can be difficult. Newark's aging and often obsolete infrastructure suffers disproportionately from the volume of truck traffic heading for the Port, Newark Airport, the Turnpike, and other regional goods movement facilities.

New Jersey's ability to compete in the global market is threatened by acute congestion on these highways and on local roads, such as North and Doremus Avenues. Certain overhead rail height clearances must be improved to bring double-stack rail cars closer to the Port and to introduce a second competitive double-stack line. Without such improvements, Newark may be choked by further growth. (These issues will be discussed in greater detail in the Goods Movement Report.)

The infrastructure renewal needed in the area is so extensive that it cannot be accomplished by Newark alone. However, the failure of these facilities would have significant regional impacts, particularly on Port Newark/Elizabeth and the Airport. Recent traffic counts show that 60% of the traffic on Doremus Avenue is truck traffic bound for Port Newark/Elizabeth. Financial partnerships between the city, county, state and the PANYNJ must be explored to address these critical renewal issues.

At the same time, it is important that Newark's revitalization and infrastructure renewal not result in a "highway city" fueled by the development of substantial new parking capacity. In the long run, this strategy would undermine a major selling point of the city's redevelopment plan.

## **S t r a t e g i e s**

- **Improve key public transit connections.**

Construction could begin on two important transit projects during the next five years:

- **The Kearny Connection.** Proposed in NJ TRANSIT's capital program, it would link Newark's Broad Street Station directly with New York Penn Station, giving Newark a second major commuter hub to support continued downtown growth and development.
- **The Secaucus Transfer.** Also proposed in NJ TRANSIT's capital program, this project would connect the Bergen, Pascack and Main rail lines to the Northeast Corridor. For Newark, this would create a new commuter shed to the north since these commuters could transfer at Secaucus to trains headed to Newark Penn Station.

To accomplish these two projects, substantial work would have to be done on the Northeast Corridor to rehabilitate its infrastructure to preserve existing service capability and to expand the capacity of both the rail line and Penn Station New York.

- **The Newark Airport Transit Link.** In addition to linking Newark to the growing airport, this project could foster easier access from each of New Jersey's rail corridors to both the Penn and Broad Street Station

areas, further increasing Newark's attractiveness as a business hub in the region.

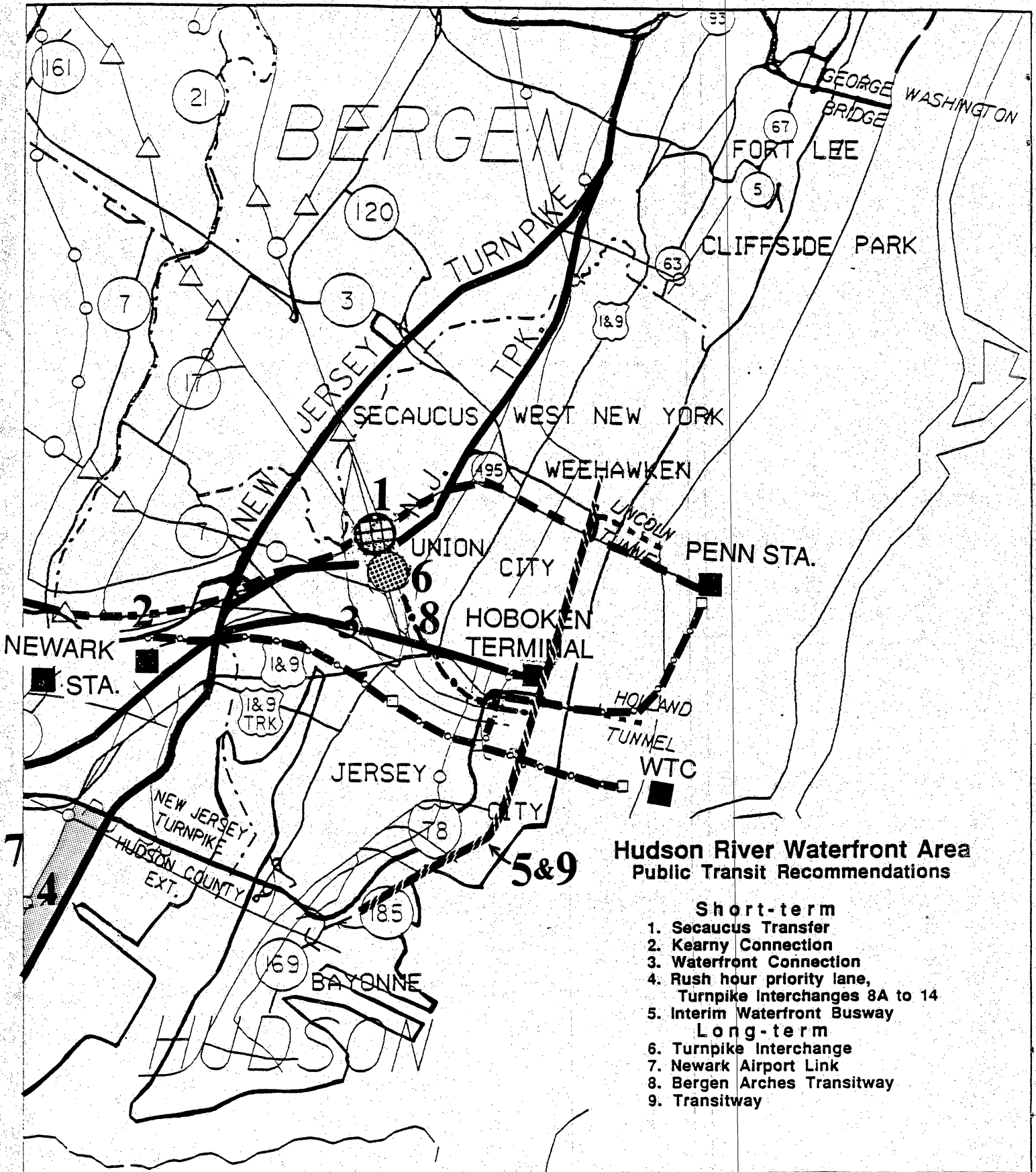
Each of these projects is a major financial undertaking. They all cannot be accomplished within the first five-year capital program. Indeed, if they are to be completed in this decade, they will need innovative funding packages which weld the resources of the numerous public and private beneficiaries of these projects into a viable financial base.

- **Improve Newark's access to regional highway facilities.**

- **Routes 1 & 9.** In the short term, NJDOT will continue work on \$175 million worth of infrastructure improvements on Routes 1 & 9 in the Newark area.
- **Route 21.** NJDOT will also make operational improvements to Route 21 (McCarter Highway) in Newark to support development in the area.
- **Access to Newark International Airport.** In addition, the TEC strongly supports the PANYNJ's planned redevelopment of Newark International Airport. To accommodate the anticipated demand at the Airport, the Turnpike will substantially expand toll booth capacity at Interchanges 13A and 14. The PANYNJ should include expanded ramp connections from I-78, a North Avenue flyover and revisions to many of the connections to state and local roads in their redevelopment planning process.

In the long term the NJDOT will advance major improvements to Newark's highway connections. This strategy may eventually involve:

- Construction of new ramps to improve access to the central business district from I-280 via either Raymond Boulevard or Orange Street/Broad Street.
- Better access to regional highway facilities, such as improvements to the structurally deficient Route 21 viaduct over the Hunter Street rail yards with improved links to I-78, Broad Street and the Ironbound Section.



**Hudson River Waterfront Area  
Public Transit Recommendations**

- Short-term**
- 1. Secaucus Transfer
  - 2. Kearny Connection
  - 3. Waterfront Connection
  - 4. Rush hour priority lane, Turnpike Interchanges 8A to 14
  - 5. Interim Waterfront Busway
- Long-term**
- 6. Turnpike Interchange
  - 7. Newark Airport Link
  - 8. Bergen Arches Transitway
  - 9. Transitway

## The Hudson River Waterfront

The Waterfront, extending from Bayonne to Edgewater, is undergoing a dramatic transformation. Proposals for housing, office space, restaurants, hotels, marinas and parks have been made all along the Waterfront with a number of projects completed or in progress. Because of the concentration of transit infrastructure in Jersey City and Hoboken, 70 percent of overall Waterfront development is expected to occur in this area. Although the TEC recognizes the need to improve access to this urban core to support this development, transportation planning for this area must increase transit use to keep pace with new development

### Problems

The Waterfront lacks good north-south circulation from its major transit hubs and the Palisades, with only two major highway cuts, are serious transportation barriers.

The two existing trans-Palisades roadways are the Route 495 approach to the Lincoln Tunnel and the Route 1 & 9/Turnpike Extension corridor. Route 495 feeds developments on the northern portion of the waterfront and provides midtown Manhattan access for commuters and time-sensitive freight services. More than 1,600 buses use the existing bus priority lane daily. For vehicles in other lanes, 15 to 20 minute delays are routine.

The Routes 1 & 9/Turnpike Extension are the primary approaches to the Holland Tunnel. Current congestion causes 15 to 20 minute backups.

The queues on both of these approaches could double if growth on the Waterfront meets projections.

The Waterfront also lacks a continuous north-south distributor roadway through Jersey City, Hoboken, Weehawken and West New York. Even with heavy reliance on transit access, the already congested existing local street system will become increasingly overburdened as development progresses. From West New York north to Route 5 in Edgewater, River Road provides north-south circulation. However, this two-lane facility has become overburdened.

## Short-term Strategies

- **Link NJ TRANSIT's Newark Division trains to the Waterfront and advance a north-south distribution system.**

Nearly 70 percent of the proposed new waterfront development is clustered around the Jersey City/Hoboken area, which is extraordinarily well-served by public transit (NJ TRANSIT's Hoboken Division lines and PANYNJ's PATH).

The PATH link to the Newark Division lines will be strained beyond capacity with full build-out of the Waterfront. Therefore, the TEC recommends construction of Phases I and II of the "Waterfront Connection" to link the Newark Division lines to the Hoboken Terminal, with the PANYNJ as a major financial partner. The Waterfront Connection will increase rail capacity, provide flexibility when PATH malfunctions, and connect the commuter rail lines. The TEC also recommends a PANYNJ evaluation of the need for nine Newark/World Trade Center trains.

- **Relocate Conrail's River Line freight traffic to Conrail's Northern Branch.**

This would make available the vital north-south right of way along the waterfront. NJDOT and the Waterfront Office will continue to work on this relocation. Included in this proposal are the Paterson Plank Road and Secaucus Road overpasses over the Northern Branch.

- **Complete construction of Routes 169 and 185 improving access to the Waterfront from the Bayonne Bridge.**

Design and construction of both routes has been complicated by the need to clean up hazardous waste sites. These problems are being resolved and final design is proceeding on schedule.

- **Implement an interim transit distribution system.**

An interim system of bus priority lanes and upgraded transit hubs has been proposed and federal and state funds have been earmarked for near-term implementation. It is important to advance the plan in order to support immediate prospects for Waterfront development

- **The New Jersey Turnpike should build new ramps from the Turnpike Extension to improve access to the Waterfront and to Liberty State Park.**

The TEC recommends that the Turnpike construct new ramps from the Turnpike Extension and assist in the construction of a park and ride to improve

access to the Waterfront and to Liberty State Park. This would advance the north-south transit distributor system and provide another public transit option for auto-oriented corridors south and west of the Jersey City/Hoboken Waterfront area.

### **Long-term Strategies**

- **Advance transit alternatives analysis.**

The Waterfront Office will continue to advance the long-range waterfront transit alternatives analysis for construction in the second half of the decade.

- **Advance planning for new Waterfront Boulevard.**

NJDOT will continue to advance long-range planning for a new north-south Waterfront Boulevard from Route 185 in southern Jersey City to River Road in West New York. Widening River Road to four lanes north to Route 5 will also be pursued.

- **Advance new trans-Palisades access.**

New trans-Palisades access, such as the Bergen Arches Transitway discussed earlier, should be advanced by the Turnpike through the exploration, development and permitting stage.

## **The Hackensack Meadowlands**

The Meadowlands is literally the crossroads of northern New Jersey. It is a major goods movement hub, a warehousing and distribution center, and a rapidly emerging site for office development.

Environmental considerations have caused the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission (HMDC) to refocus development into four small, high-density areas that could be better served by the addition of several important links to the existing transportation infrastructure. These high-density areas are the Allied Junction area; Harmon Meadows; the Empire area, near Carlstadt/Moonachie; and Berry's Creek, near the Sports Complex.

## Problems

Unless several critical modifications to the area's transportation system are constructed, it is unlikely that the proposed densities can be supported. Unless both highway and public transit capacity are increased, further development in the Meadowlands will be hampered.

## Solutions

- **Improve flow on major roadways.**

Although NJDOT will commit more funds to improve traffic flow in this region, the TEC urges that some of these improvements be advanced locally through developer contributions.

- **Implement a trip reduction ordinance.**

In the long run, the environmental sensitivity of the area, coupled with the need to improve air quality in the corridors that traverse the Meadowlands, will require greater attention to demand management. Since the Meadowlands is in a unique position to encourage demand management among its constituent developers/employers, the TEC recommends that the HMDC take a lead in the implementation of a trip reduction ordinance for this area. The TEC recognizes that this may risk pushing development to the fringes of the Hackensack Meadowlands. Thus, in the long run, a statewide trip reduction ordinance similar to that proposed by Senator Walter Rand may be more effective.

- **Advance major transit connections.**

A key to higher density development in the Meadowlands will be the creation of major transit hubs in the area, including the **Secaucus Transfer**. As previously discussed, this project faces significant environmental and financial hurdles before it can be fully implemented.

Construction of the Secaucus transfer station would give NJ TRANSIT's Bergen, Main and Pascack Valley lines access to the Northeast Corridor. Northeast Corridor passengers could transfer to trains bound for Penn Station Newark or New York or to shuttle buses headed for the Meadowlands. The transfer station itself would allow the area immediately surrounding it to support higher levels of development than would an area supported only by auto access.

In addition, the project would attract trans-Hudson auto and bus traffic from Bergen and Passaic Counties to rail, relieving Route 495 and its priority bus lane. It would also open labor pools served by the Bergen, Main and Pascack Valley lines to Newark employers.

Although the project cannot be fully constructed within the next five years, the TEC believes it is a vital investment that must be made to carry out its policies of improving connections between systems, re-orienting existing transit systems to serve intra-New Jersey travel, improving air quality and making transit competitive with the private automobile.

- **Build a Turnpike interchange near the Secaucus Transfer.**

The TEC recognizes that high-density development near the Secaucus transfer cannot be supported without additional highway access. Design, permitting and construction of the interchange will take six or seven years. Therefore, in the next capital program, the Turnpike should carry out the design and permitting of an interchange in this area in anticipation of construction in the mid-90s.

## **Bergen County**

### **Problems**

Among New Jersey's 21 counties, Bergen is currently the largest employment center and, according to the New Jersey Department of Labor, the county will maintain that status into the next century. Bergen County now imports 33 percent of its workforce from beyond its borders, a trend that is expected to grow. Over the next 20 years, employment in the county is expected to increase by nearly 30 percent, so that by 2010 over half a million people will work in Bergen County.

A significant portion of Bergen County's jobs spring from office and retail development, creating considerable peak hour traffic and bringing commuters into the county from distant, more affordable, residential areas. Roads in the area are severely congested.

However, commuters traveling to Bergen County offices are not easily served by the public transit system.

More people commute from Bergen County to Manhattan than from any other New Jersey county. One third of the people who cross the Hudson River on weekdays between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. come from Bergen. When this number is added to the number of commuters from nearby Orange and Rockland Counties, New York, the total comprises one half of all trans-Hudson commuters.

More than half of Bergen commuters travel on NJ TRANSIT or privately operated buses, one quarter in cars. The remainder ride on NJ TRANSIT's Bergen, Pascack and Main Line trains, drive to a PATH train or vanpool.

## **S t r a t e g i e s**

- **Make highway improvements that expand capacity of the existing system.**

NJDOT has identified \$22 million in system preservation, safety and infrastructure improvements along Route 208 from Route 4 in Fair Lawn to the vicinity of High Mountain Road in Franklin Lakes. Construction has begun on a partial overpass at Route 17 and Lake Street which will improve traffic flow in the area. Completion of I-287 will provide some relief for north/south parallel routes.

- **Advance the Secaucus Transfer.**

On the transit side, Bergen County commuters will benefit significantly from the Secaucus Transfer which will provide a vital transfer station. Commuters would have a more direct route to Newark, the Meadowlands or midtown. As a result, this connection would also help employers attract workers from Newark and Manhattan to jobs in Bergen County. Bergen County employers will also have to work with NJ TRANSIT to support greater "reverse" service.

- **Preserve the existing highway network.**

The NJDOT will advance the projects to rehabilitate roads and bridges throughout the County, including:

- **Route 4 bridges in Hackensack;**

- **I-80 bridges and roadway on eight miles from Elmwood Park to Ridgefield Park, and Routes 1 & 9/46 in Bergen County.**

## **The Interstate Transportation Market: Staten Island and Manhattan**

Manhattan attracts a large proportion of the region's commuters, more than 160,000 daily. Projections indicate, however, that travel to this market will not grow as fast as in the previous decade. Nevertheless, the Manhattan market is extremely vital to the New Jersey economy. Estimates for 1990 indicate that New Jersey

residents working in New York City will bring \$7 to 8 billion of disposable income back to New Jersey.

## **Problems**

Growth in Waterfront and Meadowlands traffic will compound the already acutely congested approaches to trans-Hudson crossings. Although 80 percent of the nearly quarter-million trans-Hudson commuters use public transit, a disproportionately high number of those beginning their trips in Bergen, Passaic and parts of Morris Counties use automobiles to reach midtown destinations. This is due, in part, to a rail system that requires an awkward and time-consuming backtrack and transfer in order to reach midtown. The only other public transit alternative, the exclusive bus lane (XBL) on Route 495, is near capacity, with few opportunities expected for expansion. In the lower Manhattan market, PATH does have some available capacity. However, the growing Waterfront traffic will compete heavily for it.

To the south, the Staten Island bridges have become a vital link between Staten Island commuters and New Jersey jobs, between New Jersey warehouses and retail outlets on Long Island, between New York shoppers and New Jersey shops and between recreation seekers and playgrounds. Traffic on these bridges is growing rapidly as are the queues, particularly on weekends. More importantly, the bridges are functionally obsolete for modern trucks.

## **Strategies**

- **Explore additional long-term transit capacity to midtown, the Waterfront and the Meadowlands; increase Staten Island bridge capacity.**

Office development and vacancy rate projections suggest that any growth in the Manhattan market will likely occur in the midtown area. Autos and trucks currently suffer 15 to 20 minute delays heading into Manhattan. Continued growth will threaten the operation of the XBL on Route 495. The PANYNJ should explore and support the implementation of alternatives to expand the capacity of public transit serving the Meadowlands, the Waterfront and midtown Manhattan to sustain and improve mobility in this vital area.

The transit projects discussed earlier, including the Kearny and Waterfront Connections and the Secaucus Transfer, will serve both Manhattan and other major northern New Jersey travel markets. A trans-Palisades transitway will also provide substantial relief to trans-Hudson crossing queues while providing access to the Waterfront.

- **Support the PANYNJ review of Staten Island crossing capacity.**

Expansion of the Goethals Bridge itself will be of little value without expansion of both the Turnpike approach roads and the Staten Island Expressway. Together these projects have considerable ability to reopen this congested and antiquated southern goods movement route. Because the primary justification for this capacity expansion rests on the strategic value of this route for goods movement, the TEC recommends that the PANYNJ give careful consideration to the development of truck and/or high occupancy vehicle priority lanes along this corridor.

The solutions outlined above will play a crucial role in sustaining and improving northern New Jersey's mobility. These strategies are part of a larger package that will establish a connected statewide transportation system functioning under defined goals and objectives.

