



JOHN W. BARTLETT, CHAIR

Board Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2023

A. Open Public Meetings Act Compliance

Chair John W. Bartlett, Passaic County, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Beverly Morris, Central Staff, reported that, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L.1975, adequate notice of this meeting was forwarded to the *Star Ledger*, the *Asbury Park Press*, the *Courier News*, the *Daily Record*, the *Home News Tribune*, the *Jersey Journal*, *New Jersey Herald*, and *The Record*. It was posted on the bulletin board at the Essex County Hall of Records in Newark.

B. Roll Call

Ms. Morris called the roll. Seventeen voting members were present (Attachment 1).

C. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2023 meeting was made by Ocean County, seconded by Union County and carried unanimously.

D. Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Bartlett said he joined Commissioner Charles Kenny, Middlesex County, at the ribbon cutting for the new South Amboy Ferry service, an effort 30 years in the making that creates redundancy and connectivity. He said the NJTPA Board had awarded a \$1 million Transportation Alternatives grant to South Amboy in 2021 to construct a multi-use trail connecting the nearby transit station to the new ferry terminal. The project includes bike lanes, intersection improvements, a paved path, and security cameras.

The Chairman said he also participated in a news conference with Congressman Pascrell and Passaic Mayor Hector Lora on the \$15 million investment in the Passaic Bus Terminal Project that the NJTPA Board approved as part of the August redistribution funding. This project will allow Passaic County and the City of Passaic to move forward with recommendations from the Main Avenue Local Concept Development Study, which will make this critical corridor a safer place for walking, biking, driving, and riding mass transit. He noted that the City of Passaic

hasn't had a roadway fatality in two years, thanks in part to some of the federally funded improvements happening there.

Chairman Bartlett said the NJTPA is committed to reaching zero roadway deaths by 2050 and is making progress in some areas. He said it is concerning that the region is seeing increases in the number of injuries and fatalities among its most vulnerable road users – pedestrians and cyclists. He said the Board will be asked to adopt roadway safety performance measure targets specific to the region, and these benchmarks, along with a wide range of programs and projects developed in cooperation with the subregions and many other partners, will help the region reach its goal of zero fatalities. The Chairman said eight counties so far are working with the NJTPA to develop Local Safety Action Plans (LSAPs). Middlesex County already has one in place, and four subregions have received federal Safe Streets for All Funding to develop their own plans. Several municipalities have also received grants to develop LSAPs. as part of this effort. The Chairman noted that the NJTPA and the Federal Highway Administration this fall hosted a three-part webinar series to share information on developing LSAPs. Once the subregions have safety plans in place, they will be eligible for additional federal funding to implement their plans' recommendations.

The Chairman noted that there are many other NJTPA programs that are helping to improve safety, including infrastructure improvements through the Local Safety and High Risk Rural Roads programs, Road Safety Audits, and municipal planning efforts through the Complete Streets Technical Assistance Program. He said the NJTPA will be accepting applications for the next round of Complete Streets Technical Assistance beginning December 5. Chairman Bartlett said staff also continues to work with communities and organizations throughout the state on Street Smart New Jersey, the NJTPA's public outreach campaign that aims to change behaviors that contribute to pedestrian-vehicle crashes.

Chairman Bartlett reminded everyone that the NJTPA Board will elect new officers for two-year terms at the January 8, 2024 meeting. Bergen County Executive James Tedesco and Monmouth County Commissioner Thomas Arnone have agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee with him. The Committee will meet to determine a slate of candidates for the Executive Committee positions. The nominations will be announced at the January meeting, followed by a call for any additional nominations before a vote is taken.

At the conclusion of the Chairman's remarks, Andy Swords, New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) said the agency does not yet have an approved State Transportation Improvement Plan and hopes to have something further to report by the end of the month.

Jeremy Colangelo-Bryan, NJ TRANSIT, said the Federal Railroad Administration announced the availability of about \$16 billion in funding through federal and state partnership grants, some of which will come to New Jersey and the NJTPA region.

E. Executive Director's Report

NJTPA Executive Director David Behrend announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) approved the region's air quality conformity determination for its recently adopted Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (PANYNJ) received a \$32 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration to reconstruct a berth at Port Newark, which will increase the port's capacity to handle projected cargo increases and improve resiliency to flooding.

Mr. Behrend briefed the Board on Central Staff activities underway:

- Finalizing consultant selection for the Local Safety Action Plan efforts.
- Sharing knowledge and expertise at several recent safety-related events, including three LSAP webinars, the October State Strategic Highway Safety Plan Summit, and the November Complete Streets Summit.
- Local Concept Development studies are now underway. They will explore different options to identify preliminary preferred alternatives while providing the environmental and feasibility documentation needed to prepare projects for possible inclusion in the TIP. Websites are under development for all the projects, and meetings with local officials and stakeholders have already begun and will be followed by more extensive community outreach and public meetings. The four studies are as follows:
 - The Route 3 Corridor in Manalapan Township, Monmouth County;
 - The Easton Avenue Corridor in Franklin Township, Somerset County;
 - Kennedy Boulevard and County Line Road in Lakewood Township, Ocean County; and
 - Lenape Island Road Bridge in Denville, Morris County.

Mr. Behrend said, on October 23, he joined Commissioner Kenny and NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti at a news conference on the Southern Middlesex County Freight Movement Study. He said the study was completed through the NJTPA Subregional Studies Program in June and is a notable example of how federal funding can be used to plan improvements at the local level that will make travel safer, while also supporting the region's economy. He said the study identified both short- and long-term recommendations for addressing truck traffic serving the many warehouses in the area. NJDOT is lending support to these efforts and looking at truck-related improvements along state Route 130. Mr. Behrend said the study employed best practices that include creating specific, reasonable and actionable recommendations and involving a wide range of state, county and local officials and the private sector. He said the County did an excellent job of publicizing the study's findings, and it is always encouraging when one of these studies quickly leads to the next steps toward implementation. Central Staff works with the subregions throughout these studies and are available to assist with publicizing study findings once they are completed.

Mr. Behrend said several subregional studies are underway this year. Jersey City kicked off its Traffic Calming Toolkit study in October with a demonstration project to introduce traffic

calming strategies and gather public input. Passaic County held the first public meeting for its Infrastructure Investment Study and Monmouth County will hold a public meeting in Asbury Park for its “Monmouth Paths: Access for All” study, which will identify barriers to mobility. The City of Newark will be creating a bike plan, and Warren County recently issued a request for proposals for consultants to develop its Comprehensive Complete Streets Policy Implementation Plan.

Mr. Behrend said other studies will be proposed as part of the upcoming Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which is under development. The UPWP will guide the planning work of Central Staff, the subregions, and the state’s Transportation Management Associations. Development of the work program is an annual opportunity to set priorities for day-to-day planning and identify activities that will help realize the vision and goals of the Long Range Transportation Plan. He asked for ideas and feedback for the draft program by January 12, 2024. The document will then go to the standing committees for review and endorsement in February and to the Board for approval in March.

Mr. Behrend said, while there are a variety of new tasks proposed for the coming year, many build on or extend existing activities. He noted that a major focus will be beginning the update of the region’s long-range plan, which the Board must adopt by fall 2025. Consultants will help with the financial element of the plan and public engagement. Mr. Behrend said the new work program will reflect a continuing commitment to planning for active transportation, including improving the regional walk and bike network in keeping with the recommendations of the Active Transportation Plan completed this past year. Mr. Behrend said walking and biking have become a priority for many communities as they look to provide residents with alternatives to driving, recreational opportunities, and better access to the transit network.

On a related note, Mr. Behrend said the NJTPA continues to support development of the Morris Canal Greenway, with the goal of creating a 111-mile trail across six counties and is working with the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council to study a possible 20-mile multi-use path linking the George Washington Bridge to the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge in the vicinity of the Palisades Parkway and Route 9W.

Mr. Behrend said the NJTPA will staff a booth at the New Jersey League of Municipalities conference in Atlantic City November 14-16. There, staff will be talking to towns, cities, and others about NJTPA municipal programs that can provide resources and make local transportation improvements happen.

F. Presentation: Climate Resilience in NJ

Nathaly Agosto Filión, Deputy Chief Climate Resilience Officer, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), said New Jersey is warming faster than the Northeast, seeing an increase in temperature of 3.5 degrees, compared with 1.5 degrees globally, in the last 120 years. She said, since 2012’s Hurricane Sandy, federal mandates to address and prevent climate impacts have increased, and, in 2019, Gov. Murphy established a statewide climate change resilience strategy, which created a climate and flood resilience program and an interagency council on climate resiliency. Also, Ms. Filión said NJDEP is preparing to release a

Resilience Action Plan this spring focusing on extreme heat and steps to address it. Ms. Filión highlighted some tools available for resilience planning:

- The New Jersey Flood Mapper allows users to zoom into their communities to see how they would be impacted in various scenarios, including sea level rise of 1-, 3- and 5- feet.
- The New Jersey Extreme Precipitation Project Tool provides users with an interactive map to identify regional and local estimates of projected changes in extreme rainfall under different scenarios.
- The Land Surface Temperature map shows surface temperature captured by satellite as proxy for heat.

Ms. Filión said NJDEP has created Resilient NJ, an assistance program to support local and regional climate resilience planning. Ongoing initiatives of Resilient NJ include a regional planning program, a municipal assistance program and an online toolkit for municipalities to conduct resilience planning on their own. A brief Q&A session followed.

G. Committee Reports/Action Items

Planning and Economic Development – Commissioner Charles Kenny, Chair

Commissioner Kenny said the Committee considered two action items at the October 16 joint meeting. The first was adoption of NJTPA-specific roadway safety performance measure targets for 2024. He said the NJTPA chooses to set region-specific targets that are in keeping with the long-term goal of eliminating fatalities and serious injuries by 2050. The safety targets encompass five performance measures, including fatalities, fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, serious injuries, serious injuries rate, and non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. The Commissioner said the region's progress on these measures varies. Fatalities are on track for a 16 percent reduction from 2022, exceeding the 4 percent annual reduction needed to reach zero by 2050. Serious injuries are down by about 3 percent, but fatalities and serious injuries for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized travelers have increased by 12 percent from 2022. To address that increase and meet other targets the NJTPA works with its subregions and partners on various programs and initiatives to improve road safety, including the Local Safety/High Risk Rural Roads Programs, Street Smart New Jersey, road safety audits, Complete Streets Technical Assistance, and more.

The Commissioner said the second action item was endorsement of the NJDOT adjusted 2020 urban area boundaries. The boundaries are updated every 10 years following the decennial census and are the first step in updating roadway functional classifications. State departments of transportation, in collaboration with Metropolitan Planning Organizations, can adjust urban boundaries to smooth them out based on physical features like roads and rivers or municipal or county boundaries. Commissioner Kenny said NJDOT issued draft boundaries in June, and NJTPA and subregional staff reviewed them and provided comments. NJDOT responded to the comments, and all but two resulted in changes to the region's urban boundaries. He thanked all those involved in the update process.

Commissioner Kenny said, also at the meeting, staff provided an update on the development of the FY 2025 UPWP.

Action Item 1: Adoption of NJTPA-Specific Roadway Safety Performance Measure Targets for 2024 (Attachment 2)

Michael Manzella, Jersey City, said he applauds the Board and Central Staff for working on setting safety targets and thinks the actions that staff will undertake are crucial to driving down the rates and crashes, but he has concerns about the requirement to set targets annually when much of the MPO's work is long range planning. He said we should all determine what actions will best meet the targets being set. Chairman Bartlett said the high numbers are frustrating, but the region has some great models to aspire to when trying to drive those numbers down – Jersey City achieved Vision Zero last year, and the City of Passaic had no pedestrian fatalities for the last two years.

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

Action Item 2: Endorsement of New Jersey Department of Transportation Adjusted 2020 Urban Area Boundaries (Attachment 3)

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

Project Prioritization – Commissioner John P. Kelly, Chair

Commissioner Kelly said the Committee did not consider any action items at the October joint committee meeting but heard a presentation from Central Staff on electric vehicle (EV) adoption in the state and region. He cited key points: as of June 2023, there were 128,000 Plug-in EVs in New Jersey and almost 100,000 within the NJTPA region. The most populous counties, Bergen and Middlesex have the most EVs, but Somerset County has the highest percentage, approximately 3 percent of all vehicles. Statewide, in the first six months of the year, EV registrations increased by a record 36 percent, and sales continue to grow rapidly, making up 13 percent of all purchases. The Commissioner said much more progress is needed to meet the state's goal of 330,000 EVs in the region by 2035, and to make that possible, charging stations must expand. He noted that staff prepared an interactive map that shows existing charging stations in the region and EV corridors. That and more information is available on the NJTPA [EV Resources website](#).

The Commissioner said the Committee was also briefed on a new Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunity, the Thriving Communities program, which offers technical assistance rather than direct funding. The Program aims to support communities in planning and capacity building, particularly targeting areas with high pollution levels, poor air quality, persistent poverty, or historical disadvantages. While the deadline for this program was November 15, there will be future rounds of grants before the funding expires in fall 2026. More information can be found on the NJTPA's [IIJA webpage](#).

Commissioner Kelly said committee members also were informed that the Gateway Development Commission approved its first construction contract for the Hudson River tunnel project, the region's highest priority transit investment. He said the contract is for a Tonelle Avenue overpass above the tunnel portal in North Bergen. Federal funds will cover \$25 million of the estimated \$28.6 million contract cost.

Freight Initiatives – Commissioner Jason Sarnoski, Chair

Commissioner Sarnoski said the October 16 meeting of the Freight Initiatives Committee featured updates on truck staging and parking at industrial properties. The first speaker, Brian Hite from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, spoke about the challenges associated with large-scale freight-related developments in eastern Pennsylvania. More than 30 million square feet of warehouse and logistics facilities have been developed in the past seven years, and many more projects are proposed. The Planning Commission assists its municipalities in developing and applying local regulations consistent with “freight as a good neighbor” practices. This includes encouraging developers to include on-site truck parking and amenities for the well-being of truck drivers to improve efficiency of operations at their facilities.

The Commissioner said the next speaker, Ben Spinelli, Executive Director of the New Jersey Highlands Council, noted that the environmentally sensitive Highlands region encompasses 88 municipalities across seven New Jersey counties, and freight-related challenges arise due to three major interstate highways crossing the Highlands: Route 80, Route 78, and Route 287. Given the public's concern about warehouse development, the Highlands Council acts to balance development with resource protection by providing municipalities and state agencies with guidance on land use, evaluation, and local regulations.

Commissioner Sarnoski said the final speaker, Andrew Lappitt, from the Middlesex County Office of Planning, presented an overview of the recently completed Southern Middlesex County Freight Movement Study, an initiative funded by the NJTPA, which Mr. Behrend mentioned earlier in his report. Recommendations from the study cover truck movement and parking, wayfinding, neighborhood protection, workplace access, and reconfiguring some infrastructure.

The Commissioner said, also at the meeting, the committee heard that the NJDOT Office of Freight Planning is in the final stages of drafting their scope of work for a truck parking study and that PANYNJ has recently tested an aquatic drone that has applications for underwater inspections. He said Central Staff noted the completion of the Delaware and Raritan River Railroad's F&S Connection in Ocean and Monmouth counties. The reactivated freight rail line, completed through a public-private partnership, removes freight trains from the North Jersey Coast Line and includes six improved grade crossings.

H. Public Participation

Andy Weiss reiterated his call for expanded NJ TRANSIT bus service in Hudson County. He urged the creation of bus lanes on Kennedy Boulevard to enable buses to travel faster, the extension of the Hudson Bergen Light Rail into Bergen County, and the appointment of a NJ TRANSIT customer advocate.

Mr. Behrend recognized and thanked Mr. Swords, who is retiring from NJDOT, for his work with the NJTPA and expressed appreciation for the role he has played in the strong partnership between the NJTPA and NJDOT. Also, Mr. Behrend said the NJTPA staff looks forward to working with Eric Powers, NJDOT's new alternate trustee on the NJTPA Board, and other NJDOT staff.

Mr. Swords thanked all and said he appreciates the opportunity he had to work with the NJTPA, noting he always learned something new at its meetings.

I. Time and Place of Next Meeting

Chairman Bartlett announced that the next in-person meeting of the NJTPA will be held on Monday January 8, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.

J. Adjournment

At 11:45 a.m. a motion to adjourn was made by Jersey City, seconded by Middlesex County and carried unanimously.

**NORTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AUTHORITY, INC.
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Attendance Record: November 13, 2023**

Subregion/Agency	Voting Members/Alternates	Staff & Others
Bergen County	Peter Botsolas	
Essex County	David Antonio	
Hudson County	Thomas Malavasi	Ashley Dominguez
Hunterdon County	Hon. Susan Soloway	Katherine Fullerton
Jersey City	Michael Manzella	
Middlesex County	Hon. Charles Kenny	Linda Weber
Monmouth County		
Morris County	Hon. Stephen Shaw John Hayes	Kevin Stephens
City of Newark	Dolores Martinez Wooden	Trevor Howard
Ocean County	Hon. John Kelly	
Passaic County	Hon. John Bartlett Andras Holzmann	Adam Bradford
Somerset County	Walt Lane	
Sussex County	Tom Drabic	
Union County	Hon. Bette Jane Kowalski	
Warren County	Hon. Jason Sarnoski David Dech	
Office of the Governor		
NJDOT	Andy Swords	
NJ TRANSIT	Jeremy Colangelo-Bryan	
Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (PANYNJ)	Jay Shuffield	
Citizen's Representative		

Other Attendees	
Dan Callas	Avenues in Motion
Bob Werkmeister	GPI
Michael Russo	McCormick Taylor
Jim Yeager	Michael Baker Intl.
Various members of Central Staff	NJTPA
Isaac Forero	STV Inc.

DRAFT RESOLUTION: ADOPTION OF NJTPA-SPECIFIC ROADWAY SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURE TARGETS FOR 2024

WHEREAS, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Inc. (NJTPA) has been designated by the Governor of New Jersey as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the northern New Jersey region; and

WHEREAS, Title 23, Section 134 of the United States Code requires that each MPO undertake a transportation planning process that establishes and uses a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making to support national goals; that each MPO shall establish performance targets that address the performance measures, tracking progress toward attainment of critical outcomes for the region; and that each MPO shall integrate those targets into its planning documents and processes; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published the final Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Safety Performance Measures rules (23 CFR Parts 924 and 490, respectively), requiring states and MPOs to annually develop and adopt targets assessing the number of motor vehicle crash-related serious injuries and fatalities; serious injuries and fatalities per vehicle miles traveled (VMT); and the number of serious injuries and fatalities of non-motorized users; and

WHEREAS, on May 27, 2016, FHWA issued a final rule on metropolitan planning (23 CFR 450 and 771 and 49 CFR 613), under which MPOs must adopt safety targets within 180 days of state target adoption; and

WHEREAS, the final rule also requires that MPOs coordinate with the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) to set performance targets for the specified measures and integrate those targets into their planning documents and processes; and

WHEREAS, the NJTPA coordinated with NJDOT, the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, and the other MPOs in New Jersey on analyzing trends and developing appropriate safety targets; and

WHEREAS, the final rule on metropolitan planning states that MPOs have the option to (1) agree to program investments in support of NJDOT's targets, or (2) set its own quantifiable targets; and

WHEREAS, the NJDOT notified the NJTPA of statewide roadway safety targets on June 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the NJTPA has developed quantifiable targets for the NJTPA region that serve as suitable benchmarks along a trajectory to achieving an elimination of traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2050; and

Approved November 13, 2023

WHEREAS, these targets align with the planning goals and desired outcomes for the projects and programs of the NJTPA Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program; and

WHEREAS, no action authorized by the NJTPA shall have force or effect until 10 days (Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays excepted) after a copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees has been delivered to the Governor for review, unless prior to expiration of the review period the Governor shall approve same, in which case the action shall become effective upon such approval; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the NJTPA hereby adopts the attached targets for the roadway safety performance measures listed in National Performance Management Measures: Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP); Final Rule (23 CFR 490); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the New Jersey Department of Transportation for submission to the Federal Highway Administration.

DRAFT RESOLUTION: ENDORSEMENT OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ADJUSTED 2020 URBAN AREA BOUNDARIES

WHEREAS, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Inc. (NJTPA) has been designated by the Governor of New Jersey as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the northern New Jersey region; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration requires that states, in consultation with MPOs, classify all roadways by their functional classification based on a map of adjusted urban area boundaries completed every 10 years after each decennial census; and

WHEREAS, the first part of functional classification is to designate all roadways as urban or rural; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Census urban areas have been released, showing the updated designations within the NJTPA region; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Transportation has prepared, in consultation with NJTPA and its subregions, a map of adjusted urban area boundaries; and

WHEREAS, this map of adjusted urban area boundaries will serve as the first step in revising roadway functional classifications within the NJTPA region; and

WHEREAS, no action authorized by the NJTPA shall have force or effect until 10 days (Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays excepted) after a copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees has been delivered to the Governor for review, unless prior to expiration of the review period the Governor shall approve same, in which case the action shall become effective upon such approval; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the NJTPA hereby endorses the attached map of adjusted urban area boundaries; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the New Jersey Department of Transportation for submission to the Federal Highway Administration.