



CENTRAL JERSEY TRANSPORTATION FORUM

Meeting Highlights
Thursday, December 15, 2022 | 10:00 AM
Zoom Recording

Welcome & Introductions

Bill Neary, CJTF Chair and Executive Director, *Keep Middlesex Moving*

Letter of appreciation for Barry Seymour, DVRPC Executive Director, who is retiring at the end of the year.

MPO Executive Directors' Remarks

Barry Seymour, former Executive Director of DVRPC, was unable to attend the forum but was represented by Karen Cilurso. She relayed the following message from Barry:

"I regret having to miss this meeting, but I've enjoyed working with and getting to know [you all] over the years. I greatly appreciate [your] willingness to work together, and I am confident that continued cooperation and collaboration will lead to continued success in Central Jersey."

David Behrend, Executive Director, NJTPA, provided updates about Hudson County's and Middlesex County's efforts on trucking and freight related subregional studies, scheduled for completion in June. The Port Reading Secondary South Main St. Grade Crossing Elimination study in Bound Brook (Freight Concept Development) is due to complete in Spring 2023. The NJTPA has two Complete Streets Technical Assistance projects in the NJTPA portion of the CJTF area, both in Somerset: In Dunellen, a CS policy initiative, and, in Bound Brook, a walkable community workshop. EV data and numbers are available on the NJTPA website. Middlesex County has the 2nd highest number of EVs in the region and Somerset has the highest percentage of EVs. ([njtpa.org/ev](https://intransitionmag.org/)). Finally, the new edition of InTransition features articles on EV infrastructure, hydrogen fuels for larger vehicles, and micro transit. (<https://intransitionmag.org/>)

Presentation Items

Briefings on Regional Warehousing and Goods Movement Initiatives

Anne Strauss-Weider, Director, Freight Planning, NJTPA provided brief comments on the state of goods movement in the NJTPA region. Freight is the leading indicator of economic growth and conditions. The Port of New York and New Jersey is the largest port in North America, larger than the Port of Los Angeles and Port of Long Beach in California. The Port is anticipated to handle over 9.5 million TEUs in 2022, compared with 7.6 million TEUs in 2019. The full year 2022 data will be released in late January. With over a billion square feet of industrial property in the state, the industrial real estate market in New Jersey has peaked and is approaching an overbuild state. Currently, the biggest concern in freight and trucking is labor and worker access to housing near their place of employment. NJTPA is working on making updates to freight forecasts, county profiles, commodity profiles and more to the Freight Rail Grade Crossing Assessment Update Study. The document is expected to be completed in June 2023.

Distribution Warehousing and Goods Movement Guidelines
(<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/pdf/warehouse-guidance.pdf>)

Donna Rendeiro, Executive Director of the Office of Planning Advocacy, presented the guidelines, which were adopted in September 2022. Logistics are critical to the economy of the state, and these guidelines were developed to help counties and municipalities balance the needs of the Garden State with the needs of goods movement. Warehousing is an important part of this economy, and can cause concerns in rural, suburban, and urban communities. These concerns range from air quality in urban areas to loss of farmland in rural places, as well as traffic safety. The guidelines are not mandatory but provide a framework.

Discussion followed the presentation and focused on available municipal resources and best practices. This included making updates to local zoning ordinance and proactively planning for the impact of warehousing on local neighborhoods, existing infrastructure, employment and housing, and the environment.

Impacts of E-Commerce

Kristen Scudder and Dan Farina, DVRPC staff in the Office of Freight, provided an update on the Future Impacts of e-Commerce in Greater Philadelphia report. The goal of this report includes documenting key trends and future developments in e-commerce retail and distribution; identifying land use development implications, transportation impacts, and supply chain patterns that will impact the region. As Bucks County and Fall Township continue to develop warehousing sites, the DVRPC intends to find strategies to mitigate the impact of increased traffic in local communities and transportation systems. Staff is also updating the Philly Freight Finder and are reviewing the data inventory to develop enhancements to the tool.

Southern Middlesex County Freight Study Update

Doug Greenfeld, Planning Director, Middlesex County Office of Planning, provided an update on the NJTPA Subregional Studies Program Southern Middlesex County Freight Study. The study area is focused on Jamesburg, South Brunswick, and Monroe in Middlesex County, and may feature analysis of truck movements in neighboring counties. The goals of this study include fostering collaboration and building consensus with municipalities and private industry; evaluating existing transportation facilities; identifying routing alternatives for trucks; addressing safety, multimodal transportation, air quality, improvements to job access; and fairly distributing burdens and benefits and avoiding recommendations that put an unnecessary burden on environmental justice communities. There is an online survey and map tool that the public can access and identify problem areas in their communities <https://www.fhistudio-apps.com/smc-freight/#/>. The study will conclude in June.

Member Updates

- a. Leah Katz and Michael Viscardi from NJ TRANSIT announced that the final report on the Princeton Line Reuse Study was released in November. Next steps include detailed design and environmental work. NJ TRANSIT is also working to improve bike lockers and make progress on the NewBus Newark and NewBus BCG (Burlington-Camden-Gloucester) programs.
- b. Nipa Maniar from NJDOT provided an update about changes to red light signals on Rt. 129 in the City of Trenton.

- c. Cheryl Kastrenakes, Greater Mercer TMA, provided an update on the Walking School Bus program as well as initiatives to map trails and work with the Mercer County Action Team to further progress with the Circuit Trails and the Johnson Trolley Line over the 295 Bridge.
- d. Bill Neary, KMM, discussed the success of the Ticket to Work Program that provides free bus tickets to eligible workers, as well as the upcoming kick-off of the Ticket to School Pilot Program.
- e. Organizers engaged the participants in a poll on the format for future meetings in 2023. The Forum membership indicated that they would like to meet in person one or two times per year, and to use these in person meetings for workshops or strategic planning. The Steering Committee will consider this for future meetings.

Chairman Bill Neary adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Attendees:

Adam Bradford, Andrew Lappitt, Anne Strauss-Wieder, Bonnie Flynn, Brian Jackson, Bryan Bidlack, Cheryl Kastrenakes, Curt Emmich, Dan Farina, David Cohen, David W. Behrend, Deanna Stockton, Donna Rendeiro, Doug Greenfeld, Emily Goldman, Hailey Anilonis, Jack Kanarek, Jaclyn Davis, Jeevanjot Singh, Jeffrey Perlman, Jeffrey Wilkerson, Jocelyne Bello, Joe Donnelly, John Simone, Justine Recio-Patel, Karen Cilurso, Karin Morris, Leah Katz, Lois Goldman, Mark Herrmann, Matthew Lawson, Michael Popovech, Michael Viscardi, Mike Dannemiller, Miki Krakauer, Spencer Gober, Tom Houck